

Living Hell Up vs Kingdom Down

- We're in a book of the Bible called James, he's Jesus kid brother, we call him the blue collar scholar of the New Testament, comes from a small town construction family, and then what we do at Real Men, take a little section of that and then turn it into a leadership lesson for men, and so our belief is if you get the men, you win the war, and if you don't get the men, you're never gonna win any war. So it's an honor to have you men here with us. And so the texts we're in, here's what we're gonna look at, we're gonna look at a simple little concept, living hell up versus heaven down, and James 3:15 is where we're gonna be. He says, "this is not the wisdom that comes down from above." So that's living kingdom down, but as earthly demonic, that's hell up. So let me talk a little bit about how this all works. So right now, here we are on the earth, and one day this world is coming to an end and all there will be at the second coming of Jesus are two cultures, there'll be the kingdom of God and there'll be hell, those are the only two cultures that will remain. Right now we live kind of between heaven and hell, some days we get really encouraged, especially if you're a Christian Guy, you're like today felt like a little visit to heaven, and then other days you're like, oh, today was a visit from hell and life has these moments where we're between these two worlds and so as we live our life between the cultures of heaven and hell, every day the decisions we make, the values we hold, the words we speak, the things we do or do not do, they either invite the kingdom of God down or they pull hell up into our life and the result is that around us as men is a culture and a culture is an environment in which people live, it's an environment in which people live, and so you and I as heads and if you are a man, you are a head and one of the things that a man does, a man decides what the culture is for those who he is responsible for or leading so if you're in a company and you're in leadership in that company, you're determining the culture for that company. If you're a father you're determining the culture in which your children grow up. If you're a husband you're determining the culture in which your wife lives. If you're a grandfather you're determining the culture that generations of your legacy and lineage are gonna live in. And so a couple of things about culture. Number one, culture is the environment in which people live. Number two, a child grows up assuming that the culture that they live in is normal, and many of you grew up in kind of a hell up culture, and then you went into another family or another environment and you realized, oh, mine is not healthy it's unhealthy, mine is not godly it's ungodly. But the reason that it's so important is that you as men will determine the culture for generations and the children born into that culture will assume that what experiencing is normal, which is why if you grow up in a home where there's never been any dads, it just seems normal not to have a dad. If you grew up in a home where dad loved Jesus and was there, then it just becomes normal to have present fathers who are involved and committed and it just becomes habitual for generations. Third thing about culture is that the head determines the culture environment in which people live, that's one of the primary jobs of the head, and so it tells us in the Bible that Jesus Christ is our head and before we meet Jesus Christ, our head is Adam. Well, what Adam chose for us is a hell up a culture, and then Jesus chooses for us a kingdom down culture. The head always determines the culture and here's one thing you really need to know, this will save you a lot of work in family ministry and business culture is two things it's what you teach, and it's what you tolerate. We're gonna talk about culture and the culture that you're bringing is it kingdom down

or hell up, and you could teach kingdom down, but if you allow hell up, that's the culture you're gonna get. And this can even be well in our family we have certain values and we do things certain ways but then when we deal with certain relatives, we allow them to do whatever they want. Well, then you're allowing hell into your environment and the result is, it's not just what you teach, it's what you tolerate so what he's gonna do for us, he's gonna compare and contrast what does kingdom down culture look like? What does hell up culture look like? And I want you as men to think two things, number one, what was the culture that you grew up in? What was your environment? And number two, what is the environment that others are experiencing around you? What is the culture that you're creating? So hell up and it's comparison and contrast, earthly, unspiritual, demonic. It's literally coming up from hell and hell is where Satan and demons and unrepentant people go, it's where bitterness is and lies are, and hatred is, and death is. The contrast is kingdom down and he says it's quote from above and these words, I'm gonna share with you in this list these are taken verbatim from this section of James chapter three, so we're gonna take that big idea, we're gonna take every statement in the section of James three and just put it in one of these two categories. Hell up is every vile practice, that's just anything that's kind of disgusting, base, that can be sexual, that can be abuse, addiction, it can be just constantly foul language and cursing, kingdom down he says is good conduct or pure. Hell up is boasting and it's talking about all the things that you used to do or that you will do, or you are doing, works in the meekness of wisdom, you're not telling everyone what you're doing, you're just humbly doing what God has asked you to do, you're not spending a lot of time bragging, You just spend a lot of time serving, well, he says the result is from hell up culture is disorder, there's divisions and factions, and you can see this even in family systems, are you're on mom's side, are you on dad's side? Are you for us or you against us and all of this betrayal and political environments and intrigue and the contrast to that is kingdom down, which is peaceable, meaning there's a generally healthy environment and I don't know about you, I mean, I just am repulsed by disorder and I'm attracted to a peaceable environment and what oftentimes happens is that the least healthy people set a culture, they set a culture of conflict, disorder, intrigue, betrayal, politics, and the contrast to that is peaceable it's like, you know what? This is a nice place to be, I like being here, it's a place that is good for my soul, it's a place where I actually can see human life and flourishing. He continues, he says a hell up is bitter jealousy and what this is, this is when something good happens to someone else, something bad is triggered in you, you're like, oh, you got a promotion, I didn't, you are succeeding, I didn't and let me say, as men, we need to instead not have bitter jealousy, but gentleness, when something good happens, we need to be for them, we need to be encouraging and nothing destroys a relationship more swiftly than bitter, envy or jealousy and all of a sudden, when you should be encouraging one another, you are discouraging one another, rather than being excited for someone you're frustrated by, well, why didn't I get that? Why didn't that happen to me? Why is that not dropped into my life? Hell up is false to the truth, kingdom down is open to reason, you can talk to him, some of you grew up with a dad you couldn't reason with him, 'cause he was unreasonable, you can say, well, let me tell you the facts I don't care about the facts, well dad, let me tell you about how I feel, well, you shouldn't feel anything, well dad, let's talk about it, no, you just need to shut up and do what I tell you to do, that's not open to reason, that's not reasonable, and as a result, you'll be false to the truth, you'll never

come to the truth unless you're open to being reasoned with, hearing the other side of the story, considering, trying to get all the facts, figure out what the truth might be. He says that hell up is unspiritual, meaning the Holy Spirit is not involved in it, demons are, he says, it's earthly, unspiritual, demonic, and Satan is constantly working to create a culture that the Bible calls the world and it's just turmoil and its intrigue and it's pride and it's boasting and it's conflict and it's adversarial and it's exhausting and it's unpleasant and it's just restless and it's frustrating, and the contrast to that is full of goodness and mercy, and then the hell up culture is selfish ambition, meaning I don't really care what God's will is and I don't care what your needs are, I just care about me that's all I care about. Contrast that he says kingdom down culture is sincere, meaning it cares for others and it's impartial, it's just trying to do what God says is best and not seeking to do what is in the best interest of the individual. So all that to say, culture is the environment that people live in. If you're in a hell up culture, you're gonna be an unhealthy person that has a rather painful conflicted unenjoyable life and people around you are gonna be repelled if they're healthy, 'cause what happens is healthy people, they are repelled by an unhealthy environment, they're like, I just don't wanna be there, I don't wanna do that and we all sense this as we're heading into the holidays, there are certain of you, you're like, I kind of like COVID we can't travel, I don't have to go see my relatives, their in-laws act like Outlaws, you know, there are certain and what happens sometimes around the holidays, it creates a lot of anxiety and a lot of conflict because you're going into an environment that you just don't wanna be in, I just don't wanna be in that environment, I just don't enjoy it there, I don't find it life-giving, I don't find it rewarding, I don't look forward to it. What happens when there is a hell up, unhealthy culture or environment, it repels healthy people and it instigates unhealthy people, they just show up and boy, it's just going to be a culture that they are familiar with, but it really just feels like a little field trip to hell. Conversely, if you find yourself in a kingdom down culture and the kingdom of the culture of heaven came down with the Lord Jesus, and it comes down with the Holy Spirit. When Jesus goes back up into heaven, he sends the Holy Spirit down and the Holy Spirit throughout the New Testament, he comes down and he visits his people and what he does, he brings the culture of the kingdom and when the culture of the kingdom comes, all of a sudden you are flourishing, you are hopeful, you are joyful, you are unburdened, you're gonna forgive them rather than be bitter, bitterness is where you pull hell up, forgiveness is where you invite heaven down, lies or where you pull hell up, truth is where you invite heaven down, fighting with them is how you pull hell up, loving them is how you invite heaven down and as you and I as men pursue that kingdom culture and invite the Holy Spirit to help us live from above, not from below, what happens then is life starts to flourish around a man because you are the culture center, all of a sudden you will find that your wife probably wants to be with you more and might even be a little more friendly and warm because she feels safe. Your kids will wanna do what? Be around you because you're a life-giving source of kingdom down culture. If you're the man who's bringing hell up into your marriage, your wife doesn't wanna be there, if you're bringing hell up into your kids, they don't wanna be there, they're gonna go to their friend's house, run away from home, just beyond their device or hiding up in their room, and oftentimes what happens for men they wonder why do I have conflict? Why don't I have good relationships? Why am I not super close with my wife? How come my kids don't wanna just hang out with me? Why is that? You've got to look and ask, what culture am I creating? What environment am I

bringing? And is it more hell up? Or is it more heaven down? If it's more hell up then of course I'm gonna be isolated and lonely and have unhealthy broken relationships, if it is heaven down, that becomes an attractive environment where other people, especially your wife and your kids, they wanna be in that environment, in the same way that you and I would wanna spend our time in that kind of environment. So start to think of it in this way, What is it like to be married to you? Okay. Yeah, is it like, well, is it a field trip to heaven or is it mad max? You know, what is it? What is it like? So let me ask you this, just get real practical with you, you've been at work all day, you walk in the door, what are the kids expecting? They're like, here comes hell or here comes heaven, dad's home or is it dad's home? It all depends on the environment, the culture that you bring with you and if you're living kingdom down, you're like when doubt shows up, the kingdom shows up, when the kingdom shows up, that's amazing, we love being home, we love being with our dad, the men who can do kingdom down culture and there are times that we all pull hell up into our life, I'm not saying we're all perfect, any of us is gonna be perfect at this, but the men who are able to live kingdom down, they have relationship with their kids for generations because their kids wanna have a relationship with them. Well, dad brings wisdom, that's from above, he told us that earlier in James, dad is generous, he says, every good gift comes down from above, he's been talking in these themes of James, that wisdom comes down and gifts come down and grace comes down and we know that Jesus came down and the Holy Spirit comes down and when the man shows up and God brings the kingdom down through the man, then everyone and everything around him is blessed and benefited and it's life giving. And so it's like, well, of course I want my dad involved, when he shows up the kingdom comes with him, of course, I want my husband involved, when he shows up the kingdom comes with him, of course, I want my grandpa involved when he shows up the kingdom comes with him, and so for you and I, as men, it really is vital and important to have the humility, to actually ask our wife questions like, so when I come home, is it more heaven or more hell? And then listen, and don't defend yourself, say honey, I need you to be honest with me, ask each of your kids when dad's around does it feel more like heaven or hell? Like heaven is a party, everybody's forgiven, there's life and joy, there's generosity, there's relationship, in heaven people are laughing, right? The reason that everybody in Arizona wants to throw parties and go outdoors and have fun is we were made for heaven and all of the metaphors and analogies in the Bible of the kingdom are pretty much parties, there's food, there's drink, people are having a good time, building relationships, children are playing, running around the kingdom is an environment where it literally is like one of the best days you've ever had in your whole life that's a little internship for the kingdom and when dad's around, is that environment happening? Is that culture coming? And asking your kids, when I come home, is it hell or heaven? When we have vacation together, is it hell or heaven? You ask your wife or your kids, as we're heading into the holidays, so usually it's Thanksgiving with me, is it little hell or is it a little heaven? If she's like, it's a little hell, just say, honey, I'm so sorry, how do I do heaven instead of hell this year? How do I make Thanksgiving practice for heaven not pain from hell? How many of you don't raise your hand especially if you're with your dad, but growing up the holidays were just kind of hell, a lot of conflict, a lot of drama, a lot of volume, a lot of sadness, a lot of disappointment, it's because somewhere the man who was the head, he either didn't bring heaven down or he let somebody else bring hell up, he either was the one who didn't set the culture or he tolerated someone else

setting the culture. And so even for you, as men, as we head toward the holidays, it's saying, okay, who do we want at our house? And who do we not want at our house? Who do we wanna spend time with and not spend time with? And if we're gonna spend time with them, what is the conversation that I'm gonna have with them offline telling them we are not doing it like we have done it in the past, we're not talking about this, we're not doing that, this is gonna be a different year, and if you can't agree to make some adjustments, then we're gonna do something else and we're not gonna be there. And sometimes the hard thing is that we tolerate things from those who are related to us, that we would never tolerate from someone else. You're like, I'd never let somebody talk to my wife like that, oh, unless it was my brother, Why does he get a pass? I would never let anybody, say that in front of my kids but you know, they are family, and what I'm telling you is culture is so critical because it determines whether the people in your life and family are gonna be healthy or sick, whether they're gonna make good memories or bad memories, and the truth is if they're unhealthy and you're trying to be healthy, why would you let them make you sick? Why wouldn't you try and make them healthy? And sometimes it means that there needs to be boundaries with certain people who are just determined to pull hell up. There are certain people that's like, they're just gonna be bitter, they're gonna be jaded, they're gonna be angry, they're gonna be accusatory, they're gonna raise their voice, they're gonna drink too much and just make a spectacle of themselves, all of that hell up culture, if you're the head, you go, no, we do kingdom down here and you are welcome to do it with us but if that's not how you're gonna do it, you're gonna do it by yourself, you're gonna do it by yourself. So couple of thoughts for you, I'll make this super practical, use a verbal process and some of it's helpful and some of it's not. So I'll try. So if you are the one who tends to bring the hell up culture, you've got to get some new habits as a man, let's say you've had a hard day at work, how many of you some days at work, it's like a field trip to hell? Now, if you've had a field trip to hell at work, you've got to make sure that you don't bring it home. What that means as a man is sometimes you've gotta literally on the way home, you've got to pull over and stop and you got to pray, you gotta talk to heavenly Father, you gotta forgive some people, you gotta search your own heart, you've gotta meet with God, get unburdened, invite the Holy Spirit, okay, Holy Spirit I need to forgive somebody, I've been very frustrated, I'm anxious today, I don't wanna bring this home, God I feel like hell came up at work today, I don't wanna bring hell home, I would like home to be heaven. How many of you it would be better to have home be heaven than hell? True? Just so you know, this is why most men get married, right? They're like I got a leather couch and a big TV and I'm single and the whole place smells like a locker room, I'm gonna put a girl in there and see if we can redo this whole situation. Now, all of a sudden we got popery, we got doilies and linens and we've gone from a sport to fork and a spoon and a fork, like we got full cutlery, all of a sudden you're like, oh, something is being cooked and it's not in a microwave, that's amazing and oh, it smells nice and she looks nice and having her around is nice. The reason that most men get married is they're hoping that the environment of their home is a little bit of heaven and it's a little bit of a break from the hell that they have to go through a work all week. True? It's why we get married, at least those of us who were paying attention. So the question is, if you've been at hell all day, why do you wanna bring hell home? I mean, it was bad enough at work, why do you wanna bring it home? You're like, well, I was angry so I went home and then I was angry with my wife, well, that's hell up, well work just had me very stressed

so I'm gonna bring that stress home and I'm gonna let it go on my kids so I'm gonna be very short tempered with them. Well, why not invite the kingdom down? And literally sometimes men on the way home, it literally is just saying, God, I need you to send the Holy Spirit down, I need you to bring forgiveness, I need to forgive, I need to pray, let me pray for my enemies, let me pray for others, let me spend a little time with you, maybe even put a little worship music on, sing on the way home, stop, pray, get your breath, I've done this before literally I'll raise my hands before I opened the door, Holy Spirit please bring the kingdom to my family through me in Jesus name and then I'm walking in the door and I'm asked, okay, how can I bring the kingdom into the house? Because especially if you got little kids, you don't know what you're walking into, right? If your wife is the one who brings hell up, gotta be careful here, some of you, your wives are difficult, some of you try to bring the kingdom down and your wife brings hell up, some of you married a mean woman, some of you married, a broken bitter woman, some of you married a, a religious self-righteous, judgy, never wrong critical spirit woman, some of you married a lazy woman, some of you married a selfish woman, and we're not supposed to say that because in our culture, we're only supposed to be honest about men, but not women, I don't care so I'll just tell you the truth, some of you, your marriage is a tough one, and some of you, you allow your wife to bring hell up into your home, the way she talks to the kids you're like, that's not kingdom down, your setting the kids on fire, some of the times, the way she addresses or deals with you, it's totally disrespectful, completely out of order and it's embarrassing, some of you, your wives, you don't wanna be in public 'cause you're not sure what she's gonna say or do, she just doesn't have a lot of self-control or self-awareness, some of you, this is not in my notes, just when I'm thinking about, some of you don't go home 'cause you know it's gonna be hell, I'm just gonna work more, I'm gonna pick up a hobby, I'm gonna go find, hunt, fish, golf, whatever, not any of those things are necessarily sinful, but it's just like, what are all the things I can do rather than go home and think of it, if you've got kids, you're leaving them there, if you don't wanna be there, they don't wanna be there and some of you have let it go for so long, that you may even teach a kingdom down culture in your home, but you've tolerated a hell up culture and the question is, did you bring it or did your wife bring it? Did you both bring it? But if your wife's bringing it, if your wife is the one that's bringing hell up into the marriage, into the family, you know what you need to do? You need to get her some help, you can't let the least healthy person in the family determine the culture of the family, you can't just allow the most stubborn, unyielding, domineering person under the roof to determine what the culture is for the family, you can't do that. If you've got a wife who is in that kind of position, there's probably some brokenness in her that needs to get healed up. You probably need to go find a good Christian counselor, you need to probably stop arguing with her and have somebody else diagnose her and just get her some help and if you're that guy, you're angry, you're the one pulling hell up, you probably just need to go get some help, just like for some reason, I just keep setting everybody around me on fire, I keep setting everything around me on fire, I know it's not right, I know it's not good, I actually don't enjoy it, but something in me just keeps being the arsonist in my own life. If that's you, acknowledge that, get some help, ask the Holy Spirit to continually help you in the moment and if it's your wife, here's what I'm telling you, this will be very offensive, these are the reasons I get in trouble, you are responsible for the culture of your home, you will be held responsible by God for the culture of your home, it's your responsibility,

and so you can't simply say, well, this is what happens, say know what, I take responsibility, this is where Adam and Eve in the garden first marriage, first family, first couple, they've got two choices, we're gonna live kingdom down, we're gonna live hell up. What did they decide? We're gonna do hell up, we're gonna hell up, the first marriage. Who sinned first, Adam or Eve? Adam by omission, didn't do something, Eve by commission but Eve's the one that takes the fruit, gives it to her husband who is with her saying and doing nothing, he's passive, he's passive, what he's got is a wife is making an unhealthy decision, she's literally gonna bring hell into the family, she's literally bringing Satan himself into the marriage and he sees the whole thing and he doesn't say anything, he doesn't do anything, and then God shows up and who does God call out for first? The man or the woman? The man, Adam, where are you? Because he's the head, he's responsible for the culture of his home and his marriage and his family. Now what he does he says, well, the woman set the culture, God says that was your sin, you didn't lovingly lead your family and you could have chosen heaven instead, your family has chosen hell, he then does deal with Eve and he holds her responsible 'cause the husband and the wife are both responsible in the sight of God. This'll be a very hard word, but I believe that hard words produce soft people and I believe that soft words produce hard people. If you don't like your home, it's your responsibility, if you don't like being with your wife, it's your responsibility, if you don't like being with your kids, it's your responsibility, if your wife and kids don't like being with you, it's your responsibility, if at work you just bring a lot of hell it's your responsibility, if you're in management or leadership, the culture for your team, for your business, for your ministry is your responsibility and the good news is this, if you want to live and seek to live kingdom down, your Father is gonna help you. What he's gonna say is son, good job, dad's here to help, right? Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Jesus taught us to pray and he started that prayer with what? Our Father, if you go to your Father and you say, okay, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven, Father, I wanna live kingdom down, here's what I can promise you, your Father wants to help you with that, he's like I'll send the Holy Spirit, I'll send the Holy Spirit down right now and he's gonna help. Some of you need to get some help, some of you need to get your wife some help, some of you need to know that your child may have a difficult season, that they may be the one bringing conflict or disorder to quote James into the home but even if it's someone else's fault 'cause they're making their own decisions, it's still your responsibility as the head. I didn't think I'd get into this theological issue, but I think I'm just there in the verbal process so thanks for hanging in there, but there are things that are your fault and your responsibility, there are things that are not your fault that are still your responsibility. I told you this story before, but it really hit me some years ago, my oldest daughter Ashley is 24, she's the executive director of Real Faith, brilliant, strong, 4.0, master's degree, honors program, she's an incredible young woman, I had a front row seat to watch the Holy Spirit raise this girl, somebody asked me, how'd you raise her? I was like, he did, I got to watch, it was amazing, I got to watch the Holy Spirit raise the most amazing, strong, gifted young woman and when she was real little, I've shared the story with some of you, but we were in the pool swimming and this girl, teenager jumped in with two boys wearing not enough of a swimsuit, swam over kissed and was very physical with one boy and then swim to the other side of the pool was very physical with the other boy and there's only her and the two boys and me and Ashley and the pool, so it's me and my daughter and a girl and two boys and she's very

active with both of them, my little girl, she's really little at the time, she's probably four or five years of age, she looked at me and she swam over and she said, dad did you see that? I said, yeah, I said, what do you think about that? She said, I think she needs a better dad.

- [Audience] Ohhh.

- I thought, oh man, I have got a lot of work to do. But in her little mind, her dad had created an environment that set her up to be in that kind of conduct and you can't just look at a kid and say, why did they make those decisions? You gotta ask what kind of environment did I raised them in and did I groom them for those kinds of decisions or behavior, and what my daughter noticed, even as a very little girl at that point was that this girl, something probably very sad happened in her life, that it was her fault that she was doing this, but it was whose responsibility? Her dads, that's what it means to be the head, to be the head does not mean you're the boss or the bully, you're domineering, you're the king, what it means is that you're the humble servant who takes responsibility so that others can be loved and blessed and that the kingdom culture of our Father can come down on them. Similarly, when the Lord Jesus went to the cross, he died for my sins, it was not his fault, but he made it his responsibility. So for you men, I need you to know that if you don't like your home, if you don't like the context or the culture of your marriage, if you don't like what happens at your dining room table, if you don't like what happens under your roof, if you don't like what happens at the holidays, if you don't enjoy that, you gotta go to your Father and say, I'm responsible for that and I need to get some help and I need to fix that, 'cause the Father wants, he wants the culture of his house, to live at your house, he wants the culture of his eternal family to live in your little family and he wants you to experience life with your family that's kingdom down and so just a couple other things, if you're the problem, you need to get help, if your wife has the problem, you need to get her some help, if when you're coming in the door, you're ready to bring hell with you, you better stop meet with your Father, pray, bring the kingdom down so you can bring the kingdom in. The other just practical thing that I was thinking about as I was praying for you is make sure that you don't use technology to bring hell into sacred environments. Sometimes you can come home and you're like, okay, I'm talking to my wife, I'm at the dinner table with my kid, phone rings and now I'm having a conversation that probably shouldn't happen now, or they should not have ears to, I always take my tough calls either in my study at home, I shut the door, when the kids were little, I wouldn't have those really difficult conversations sometimes that you need to have as a leader or in business, wouldn't have those in front of my kids. I don't wanna bring a conflict or an accusation or some drive by media hit piece or some latest attack, I don't want that at my daughter's tea party, I don't want that at my son's wiffle ball practice, you know, in the yard, I don't want that at the dining room table with my wife, and so I will sometimes literally, I'll go take a call in the car, sometimes I'll just put my earbuds on, I'll go for a walk and just literally get out of the house, because what I want in my home is I want kingdom down, I want peaceable, life-giving, enjoyable environment, I want it to be a place where everybody who's under my headship can flourish, feel safe, breathe, life-giving, enjoyable, what I find is our kids come down, my kids still come over, I mean, our kids are around us, we're at that age where they're launching and getting married, they still like being together and we still like being with them and part of that is

just creating that culture, but you can undo it with technology. You can be sitting there with your family, get a call and next thing you know, you're having a really intense or awkward conversation and little ears are hearing it and it's just safeguarding the environment of your home, I don't know why I'm down this rabbit trail, let me just say this, where you live with your wife, where you live with your kids, where you live with your grandkids, that's holy sacred ground that belongs to the kingdom of God that does not belong to this world, that belongs to the kingdom of God, that should not be a place that's earthly, unspiritual, and demonic, that should be a place that is heavenly, Holy Spirit, it should be a place where the Holy Spirit is present and life flourishes and I'll ask you a few questions, but I'll just close with a story I jotted something down. So last few days, not a big deal, it's not hell but maybe like a little bit of hell, you know? So last season been a little, this and that, not to the intertwine and so I knew that I was gonna be on the phone, having a lot of hard conversations and I didn't even wanna have them on in my house 'cause I don't want that in my home, so I literally put my earbuds on, like Monday I think I had five hours of phone calls, so I just went up to the mountains and I just put my earbuds in and I hiked and I had conversations and planning and stuff to sort out and things to deal with but at least I'm in a place where I'm in God's creation, I can clear my head and I'm not having all of this tension or anxiety that things I'm leading in deciding, it's not in the middle of my house so then I could go home. So then I kind of dealt with everything and I was like, okay, I'm gonna go home and see Grace in the kids. Because for me, that's, I'll be honest with you, the closest that I get to heaven is at the dining room table with my wife and children, that's the closest I get to heaven, every Sunday night, Grace and our kids, we sit down at the dining room table, we pray for each other, we visit, Grace's mom comes over, I have an amazing mother-in-law that I love with my whole heart and every week we all get together and we have a meal and we visit, we talk and we pray and we just connect and it's like the point in the week where we all breathe, just the soul just gets a little breath and then as the kids fall in love, they bring their, you know, person to join the table, and I'm sure at some point we're gonna have little faces and grandbabies around the table and to me, I sometimes I just wanna get home 'cause if I can't go to heaven, I just need to get home 'cause that's as close as I can get and so I got home and Grace had to go pick up Gideon, this was last night and I was just trying to figure out, okay, how do I do this in a way that would be kingdom down? And there are times, especially when I was a younger man, I would be so driven that I would kind of live in hell during the day and then I would bring how home, I'd be distracted, grumpy, working late, kind of short with the kids, a little Curt with the wife, you know, we've all been there and I looked at Grace and I said, honey, I said, here's what I need, she said what? I said, I just need to hold your hand and go for a walk, I said, I just need to verbal process stuff with you, and the verbal processor obviously, and I said, I just need to talk it through with you, I said, I don't wanna do it in the home because some of the things we've gotta talk about are complicated, I don't want the kids to overhear it and I just don't want that in our home. So we held hands and went for a walk, miles last night and it was amazing because just being with Grace, getting it physically out of our house, verbally processing and praying it through with her and then my wife did the most incredible thing, we were walking, she stopped, she looked at me and she grabbed my face and she just told me how much she loved me, we talked last week about cursing and blessing, she just blessed me, she thanked me for being a husband and a father and how I try to provide for her

and love her and the kids and how proud she was of, you know, the fact that we're serving the Lord together, she's spoke a lot of blessing over me and then my wife just held my face and she just prayed over me and the kingdom of God was there, it didn't fix anything, but it fixed a lot of things, and all of a sudden I just realized like, yeah, the Holy Spirit is here with me and my wife and we're together and we're working it out together and we're processing it together and then we prayed together and we literally just left it and said, Lord, we'll get back to that tomorrow, we opened the door to our home and then the kingdom of God was in our house and so last night I got to snuggle up with my wife, I got to pray with my wife, I got to sit there and what was amazing, Grace and I came in, we sat on the couch, we still got a couple of kids at home, hey, where were you guys? Immediately they find us and they come and sit on the couch with us and if I would have brought hell home, they wouldn't have, I really want the kingdom of God on your couch, I want the kingdom of God at your dining room table, I want the kingdom of God in your bed, I want the kingdom of God on your vacations, I want the kingdom of God on your day off, I want the kingdom of God on your holidays, I want the kingdom of God to be present through you as the head setting the culture of the kingdom so that your wife and kids flourish and that they want to be together and that as generations are added to your family, he adds this line at the end, he says, peace, peace, peace, here's the line from James, and a harvest of righteousness. Those are your friends, your family, your kids, your wife, your grandkids, harvest of fruitfulness. I love you guys with all my heart, it's such an honor to have you here and when you come to Trinity Church, we want you to experience something of the kingdom here, love and grace and mercy and encouragement and support and truth and hope and unburdening and curse breaking and generational sin negating, and I want you around the table to spend some time kind of kingdom down and then I want you to take that home to your wife and your kids and I wanna see peace and I wanna see harvest of righteousness and what I'm telling you is this, if you let the world set your culture, your whole family is gonna live in hell. If you, as the head determined to set the culture, there could be hell around you, but there is an Oasis of kingdom and heaven for you and because I love you so much, that's what I want for you and so I'll pray for you. Father thanks for letting me verbal process a little bit as your son and God I hope this is not a condemning word, but hopefully a clarifying word, and Lord, some of us grew up in homes and environments we didn't even wanna be there and God, it was because a man either created a culture or tolerated a culture that was not kingdom down, but instead it was hell up and so Lord, I pray against the enemy, his servants, their works and effects and we pray the prayer of James big brother, Jesus, our father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. I pray that on these men's lives, I pray that on their marriages, I pray that on their children, I pray that on their grandchildren, I pray that in their homes, I pray that at their place of work and everywhere that you have given these men influence, we pray that the kingdom would come down upon them through the Holy Spirit and that the kingdom would come through them so that others would taste and see that the Lord is good. And father, we just thank you, we thank you that we can get our culture from your culture and we thank you that our house can be like your house in Jesus name. Amen.