



# *10 TESTS FOR REAL MEN (PART 2)*

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Guys night out best night of the week amen so good to see you guys we love you we're honored to have you it's a blessing that you would be with us you could be anywhere and you're here or you're joining us online it means the world to me and I'm here I just want you guys to know this like I freaking care I care about you I care about your marriage I care about your kids I care about your grandkids I care about your legacy you guys mean the world to me and it is such a tremendous honor to teach you and I thank you for the honor of being your pastor and opening the word of God and if you're new you're with the best men you're ever going to meet and if you're having a bad day it's about to get better and if you're having a good day it's about to get great amen all right it's good to have you men um I'm finishing a two-part series on a dude named Samson so there is a study guide if you're a nerd and you want to go deeper uh if you like footnotes I'm your guy I'm your blue collar scholar so you get yourself a study guide so Samson's in an Old Testament book of the Bible called judges in chapters 13-6 he is one of the most wild incomprehensible men not only in the Bible but in the history of the world and a lot of people that don't even know the Bible they've heard of Samson he's like this massive hulk-like figure in the Old Testament uh but pastors tend not to teach on him uh because his example is horrible uh like the last thing I would tell you men is be like Samson if you don't know the story what that would mean is fight a lot drink a lot gamble a lot find a prostitute find a Philistine chick who will help you get your eyes gouged out and then commit suicide that's his life and as we look at Samson's life what's particularly shocking is it started with such hope so we looked in Judges 13 Jesus comes down tells his mom and dad and his mom and dad are Godly they love the lord they're they're a good family they were unable to have children God said I'm going to do you a solid give you a miracle you're going to give birth to a baby boy and he's going to be the deliverer of Israel so Jesus comes down and they're going to get a baby boy and he's got a calling on his life his life just goes down down down down over and over it literally says particularly in chapter 14 he went down and it just kept getting worse and as we're looking at the life of Samson he is a believer this is what's a bit shocking there's a book in the New Testament called Hebrews chapter 11 mentions him as a Believer so he's a Believer but he's a believer that self-destructs and here's what has been on my heart and what I want to share with you is that you can be a believer and you can self-destruct and the reason I think that Samson is in the Bible is at least in part to serve as a stark Stern warning to men that it's possible to self-destruct your own life now without shouting out names how many of you know a guy and he's just he's self-destructed his own life he he can't blame the government he can't blame his parents he he can't blame his ex-wife he just he literally self-destructed his own life we all know men like that and here's what's scary about Samson I'll be honest with you as we're studying Samson we'll get into the details in a moment how many of you men realize that there's at least a possibility that without God saving you from yourself you could be a lot like him this is what's sobering to me as I read Samson I'm like okay here's a guy who's got a high pain tolerance doesn't mind conflict uh is a bit of a public figure um and uh and has sort of the fortitude to continue for decades and I'm like I I could be like him um I could be a guy who completely self-destructs and it it it sort of scares me and concerns me and it warns me and I don't want to just read the story of Samson and say uh what an idiot I can't believe he did that I want to ask okay how am I capable of self-destructing and God help me to not go down but to go up help me to not continue making the same stupid decisions over and over but help me to repent and pivot and save me from myself and so what we're going to look at tonight is we're going to look at Samson but I don't want to do so in a way that is sort of condemning him but instead it is examining ourselves and we're going to look at five tests in his life and you can sort of vote you know thumbs up he passed thumbs down

he failed last week we looked at five this will be the second five and I want you to just look at your own life and I want us to do some investigation of our own souls in what ways am I capable like Samson of being a Believer but a Believer who self-destructs you guys with me all right first one is anger this is the only emotion in Samson's life that is mentioned hot anger God wrote the Bible and he's like he didn't even use the word anger that wasn't enough hot anger you guys know what a guy looks like who lives in hot anger right so what Samson lives he lives in a Perpetual state of hot anger he is motivated and driven by anger how many men self-destruct because they live in anger any of you know those men right so Solomon's emotional spectrum is this asleep and hot anger those are his emotional options the reason that he self-destructs is he's always angry there's no manifestation in his life of Love or Joy or peace as a result um he is a very powerful man uh but he's a very dangerous man and he becomes a very lonely man uh let me say this many men are driven through their life by anger and here's let me ask you this if a man gets angry what are the quote unquote potential benefits that that man experiences through his anger he's strong he's tough he's resilient right testosterone's firing endorphins are firing fight ORF flight mode is in if he goes to fight now he's aggressive he's ready for combat if you're in sports hot anger can be very helpful if you're in the military hot anger can be very helpful if you're raising a daughter hot anger is not helpful and so what happens for men like Samson their anger causes them to uh have a lot of passion and power but it destroys their relationships the result is at the end of his life Samson has we'll talk about his relationships next but he has no wife no kids and no friends he's a man who we would say he succeeded at work and he succeeded at War but he failed at marriage and he failed at fatherhood he didn't experience those Joys and many men are like this this is why men who live in Anger let me say this anger is not always a sin right Jesus gets angry God gets angry there is Godly and righteous anger but let me say this if you constantly or often live in Anger you're not an emotionally well person in the world World in which we live it is entirely designed to just continually trigger men toward anger social media the news constantly angering you turn on your phone it's like what is the Rage of the day you go to work what's the Rage of the day you turn on talk radio on the drive home what is the Rage of the day let me say this as well when a man lives in Anger that man creates an environment around him of anxiety that's why Samson is powerful but he's alone uh he can go to war but he goes to war alone as men if we are angry let me ask you this how do the women and children feel around us if we're living in frequent anger very fearful and unsafe the Bible says that women are the weaker vessel if the man is angry the woman feels unsafe if the man can't manage his anger the wife is in a very dangerous position how many of you have seen a child that has an angry father that's an anxious child that's a child that avoids their father or is in fear of their father if you're a man who lives in Anger the environment around you is an anxious environment that is not an environment where women and children feel safe and secure they feel very ill at ease and what that causes it causes a lot of anxiety and stress on a wife and on the kids and or grandkids the reason being is you just need to know as a man you're tougher you're stronger you're more domineering overbearing and intimidating uh that you and I as men we have a higher pain tolerance and threshold in women and children and women and children don't have any difficulty with a man who's strong for them but if the man is strong against them that is a dangerous place to be and so um I I realized this when my kids were little I've shared this story before but um my daughter one day she was doing something wrong very minor like really compliant obedient kid and I said her name I didn't say it loud and I didn't say it rude I just said her name and she threw up okay because I I have power and authority as a father a power and authority that I didn't even know I had cuz as a man if somebody says my name I've thrown up

zero times when someone has rebuked me right like I can read comments about myself on the internet without throwing up you know but but when a man who has Authority when he comes with any sense of anger it comes to the women and children as a dangerous environment okay so Samson fails the anger test many of you men need to ask when I come into into the room and there's women and children am I bringing peace or anxiety do I come with the strength that Comforts them or do I come with a strength that causes them consternation when I walk in the room do they feel safe or unsafe and if I walk in and I'm a man who's often angry or their anger is quickly triggered it causes the women and children to be in a very unsafe environment okay without raising hands or outing your dad how many of you your dad hot anger short Wick could blow up at any time and what was it like to be in the house with that man number two relationships and these do go together so this is near the end of Samson's life judges 1512 we the Israelites his own people when your own people turn against you you've got relational issues the Israelites come down to bind you that may we may give you to the hand of the Philistines and Samson said to them swear to me that you will not attack me yourselves so here's what we see with Samson he's almost entirely driven by uh selfishness and pleasure and as a result he has a lot of anger and as a result he's a very lonely man so what it says here is at the end of his life the Philistines were the enemies of God's people God's people showed up and they grabbed Samson and they handed him over to the Philistines his own people didn't support him in addition let me ask you this how did for those of you that know the story how did how did the Romantic relationships go for Samson disaster Mary's a Philistine gal not supposed to marry an unbelieving Philistine he abandons her doesn't even continue to live with her the father assumes that he hates her marries her off to another guy so then a little bit later in his narrative he walks into enemy territory and there's a broel there and he's supposed to be the man of God everybody knows who he is it's Samson it's pretty obvious it's him he goes right into the brole and hires a prostitute and then in the end he gets hooked up with a chick named Delilah who's a black widow of a chick and she seduces him and ultimately she betrays him and then they gouge out his eyes and he's arrested and then he's incarcerated as a prisoner of war he never has any healthy romantic relationship in his whole life another question for those who know the story what does his friends look like he has no friends every page of his life he's totally alone there's not one guy who's alongside of him okay men who go It Alone self-destruct see in in our West Western World whether it's you know Rambo or Clint Eastwood or whomever it is we sort of objectify the best men as the most independent and isolated those are actually the men that are in the process of self-destructing and so I want to honor you men for being here and what we're looking for is healthy relationships so that we can encourage each other to be the best version of ourselves not the worst version of ourselves what I'm telling you is Samson have really benefited from a table lead at real men right I mean the guys the guys that actually would put their finger in the chest and say that's enough prostitutes and alcohol Pastor you know cuz he's supposed to be a man of God in addition at the end of his life does he have any children no here's a guy lives a long life no wife no kids no friends no co-workers completely alone if you're a man and you're a loner you're going to self-destruct that we all are blind to our blind spots we all are capable in our worst moments of self-destructing our own life and that's where you get your brothers before your battle so when your battle comes you can lean on your brothers so I want to honor you men for being here what men don't do well is relationship but let me say this if you have the right guys around you they're going to save you from you and the story of Samson is the most dangerous person to you is you and the conviction to me is the most dangerous person to me is me and so we need good men around us and had Samson had some good men that he was willing

to listen to so there's two pieces of this one you've got to choose good men and number two you got to listen to them you've actually got to listen to him I'm not sure that Samson was willing to listen it may be why he didn't have a lot of good men around him but the Hope PR and goal as well is that you raise your sons and then one day they become those men um I had a conversation recently with uh my sons and they pointed out some things that they thought I was doing wrong and I could do better and I needed to improve on they did it respectfully but they're grown men and you know what they were right and had I not listened to them I would have made some foolish choices and decisions now they're young men but they're they're men and so the hope is men that we surround ourselves with good men we listen to those men and then we raise our sons as they become men they're also those men that we're giving them advice they're giving us advice I just wish Samson had guys like you and I wish Samson had Sons like mine it would have changed the course of his whole life number three and so how did he do in relationships well that's a thumbs down test number eight leadership okay he's a judge a judge is an ad hoc military spiritual leader so let's just have this conversation how is Samson as a leader he's terrible he's terrible so how does he what things does he not do that a leader should do everything everything yeah that's a shortcut yeah he doesn't communicate he's not selling Vision instead he's picking up you know jaw bones of donkeys and murdering people um he doesn't lead by example he doesn't lead by any example how many of you would say if you were in Israel at that time Raising a Son you'd be like son look when you grow up be like Samson there's no way he never forms a team he never comes under any Authority he even bosses his own dat around he never has a strategic plan literally you can read the book he walks into town and if there's guys there he picks up whatever's nearby and he fights them that's it he doesn't even come with a weapon he's not even that prepared so he completely fails as a leader how many men do you know they have no authority over them they have no team that they have built they have no followers and they have no strategic plan they just get up every day and life happens and they're just responding and reacting the point is that if we don't have a strategic plan if we don't form a team if we don't um have followers and if we're not intentional then every day we're letting our enemies determine our decisions he just waits to get attacked and then responds that's all that he does he's basically a guy on Twitter that's who Samson is he's just waiting for people to hit him and then he hits them back that's all he does all day okay and so you can be a believer but you can be a believer that fails the leadership test and it starts with questions like what Authority are you under what team do you have where are your followers what is your strategic plan he doesn't have one so the result is by the end of his life it's a complete cataclysmic failure at the end of his life does he even have anybody to hand his quote unquote Ministry over to there's no successor see like Paul had Timothy and Titus and Elijah had Elisha and Moses had Aaron when they're better leaders in the Bible when they finished they sort of hand it off to the next guy Samson has got nobody he doesn't have one person that he's trained up he's not got one person that he's invested in he doesn't have one person that he's prepared to lead he he's a he's a man that is given so much opportunity but he doesn't Avail himself to it test number nine forgiveness uh he just is driven by Vengeance and bitterness we'll read these together judges 15:7 Samson bowed I won't rest until I take my revenge on you that's Vengeance judges 15:11 they're like why do you keep fighting everybody and he's a guy who's always got conflict always angry always drama for the wrong things he said as they did to me so I have did to them that is the definition of revenge and then here's the last chapter of his life as he's dying oh Lord God judges 16:28 please remember me and please strengthen me only this once oh God that I may be Avenged to the Philistine for my two eyes I'm telling you men bitterness is going to destroy your life either you remove the

bitterness or the bitterness will ruin your life that's the way that it works bitterness is dangerous bitterness is toxic bitterness is deadly I've never seen a man who didn't struggle with bitterness and I've never seen a healthy man who chose bitterness you can have health or bitterness but you can't have both you can have a future or bitterness but you can't have both you can have relationships or bitterness but you can't have both as a man just like Samson you need to know that you're going to be wronged and I'm sorry about that people are going to lie to you they're going to lie about you they're going to steal from you they're going to damage you they're going to attack you they're going to ignore you they're going to use you they're going to abuse you God made you as a man and men have innately hardwired within us a sense of justice when that sense of justice is violated we get we get angry we get bitter we get hurt we get frustrated we want we want the wrong made right and in those moments you can choose bitterness or forgiveness and if you choose bitterness you literally go down to Hell and if you choose forgiveness you go up to heaven it's literally that simple hell is where all the unforgiven people go if you choose unforgiveness you're choosing literally the path to hell heaven is where all the forgiven people go if you choose forgiveness you're literally going up closer to God in heaven and some of you men you have had bitterness hurt offense for too long and what happens is you start to seek Vengeance and revenge all of a sudden you are so consumed or obsessed with someone that you lose sight of looking up to God you're so trying to just get it right that something in you is very very wrong it is a great Act of Faith for a man to say I'm G to forgive them and I'm going to let God deal with them okay because God might forgive them as he forgave you God might take his time to deal with them and you don't want to wait that long um God may end their life and bring Swift Justice upon them and maybe that's not what you were hoping for them as a man you and I are going to hit these moments in our life and we have to decide forgiveness or bitterness trust the Lord Vengeance his mind says the Lord or choose Vengeance solom or excuse me Samson's entire life it is just revenge and Vengeance the reason why he keeps having more betrayal more people oppos him and also more conflict is because it's just escalating Vengeance true or false if a man chooses Vengeance and then he retaliates does it then escalate yeah if you retaliate they will escalate and so he would fight the Philistines and then they would fight him and then and so it just continues to escalate by the time Samson's life is over he will have been at war with the Philistines 20 years every day a head-on collision escalating tension anger violence and Vengeance at the end of that 20 years just ask yourself what kind of man is he he's just broken who wants to be with him no one what what healthy things can he do nothing he's just it just devastates me because I'll just be honest with you guys I can feel it in the room how many of you guys I mean Vengeance would be your friend first path forward right I mean how many of you guys like right now let me just ask if you could kill someone and know you wouldn't get caught what's their name okay I mean didn't ask you to shout it out but yeah you know like like and to me it's like well I've kind of got a page of a phone book of you know like you know like but we can't allow the the the worst days of our life to determine our future we can't allow the worst people in our life to determine our destiny right forgiving others as God in Christ has forgiven you um it just it I really do care about Samson and it just it's devastating to me and I've seen men like this I I won't say names and I'll try not to share too many details but there are men that I know that are men that I care about and and some men that were Christians and had an anointing like he did and great opportunity and they just chose a path of bitterness and hot anger and Vengeance fighting conflict escalation and as they get older they get worse let me tell you man as we get older we want to get better right we we we want to be a better version of ourselves not a worse version of ourselves we want to be a more gracious and a less dangerous version of

ourselves some of you men this is God's word to you that you're on a path of Vengeance and bitterness and that you need to forgive and by forgiving them you're not letting them get away with anything you're letting yourself get away from everything you're saying you know what this is where we separate bitterness and Vengeance it keeps you connected to the person that is causing you the most pain and harm forgiveness is how you just part ways and you're like you know what I'm going to let God deal with you and I'm not and I'm going to leave you in God's hands and I'm not going to take it into my hands what's haunting about Samson is he probably started out as a regular guy like most of us and just over time the Vengeance got darker and darker and darker and the conflict got deeper and deeper and deeper and I just feel inclined in the Holy Spirit to say this um some of you need to just stop following those people on social media some of you just need to block those people on your phone for texts or calls or emails some of you people just need to stop responding to their instigating some of you need to just declare some boundaries and say you know what you move on with your life I'm moving on with mine some of you need to stop cursing that person and you need to just pray for them and bless them and let God deal with them okay and number 10 finishing well um this is haunting to me I'm 53 I'm a dad and I'm a grandpa and I'm closer to the Finish Line than I am the starting line okay how many of you men older men in particular you've seen Christian men not finish well like the years you should be enjoying your family you self-destruct it the years you should be enjoying your children you declare war on them the years you should be enjoying your grandkids you're not safe and well to be around them it's tragic in the Bible and in life how many men don't finish well uh Samson is a terrifying horrifying example of not finishing well the end of his life is tragic and again I said it on the weekend but when we tell stories in our culture they always end this way and they lived happily ever after and the myth is that everybody does that's not true see the Bible is the most honest book ever written and it says you can not finish well and not live happily ever after the the last day of your life can be the worst day of your life this should be a sober warning for all of us as men the path that I am on will I be finishing well okay here's the the last day of Samson's life judges 16 29 through 31 and Samson grasped the two middle pillars on which the house rested let me set up the context here so he started dating this chick named Delilah she's a yeah so she's attractive and seductive and controlling and manipulative she deceives him she gets him arrested she participates in this plot to gouge his eyes out so now Samson is arrested uh she sh has his head shaved his eyes are gouged out he's held as a prisoner of war and he's taunted by his enemies and he finds himself in the temple of deeon it's this demonic Pagan Temple so he decides at the very end that he's going to commit suicide that's how the man of God dies and it's like a suicide bomber in a war he's like I'm going to die but you're going to die too and so in killing himself he's also killing his enemies so what he's going to do he's going to take the pillars of Deon he's going to pray to God for strength he's going to push the pillars of the Temple of deeon down so that the entire Temple Falls killing him and all of his enemies so the last day of his life is committing suicide to harm those that he has Vengeance against I mean we read the story back to chapter 13 he's born to believing parents Jesus shows up and puts a calling on his life the end of his life he's blind having been betrayed by a [ \_\_\_ ] a prisoner of war committing suicide to kill his enemies do you think when he was growing up teens 20s do you think that Samson was was driving toward this Grand finale to his life of course not well how do you get there hot anger bitter Vengeance no relationships poor leadership and you end up in a place that you never thought you could end up in I desperately want us all to finish well right to to run the race that God has given us and and to run through the tape at the end and to stand before the Lord Jesus and hear well done good and faith servant okay there are

men that I'm brokenhearted about men that I would have considered dear friends and I won't get into details but I've had Christian men that I know their last day was a gun at their head and they pulled the trigger there are Christian men that I know that their last day was an overdose there's Christian men that I know um their last day was literally uh driving their vehicle into a wall I mean as men it is not guaranteed that we will finish well even if we are Christians but I want us all to soberly assess where we're at and look at the story of Samson and ask okay the path that I'm on what is the conclusion that it brings and here's the story Samson grasped the two middle pillars on which the house rested and he leaned his weight against them his right hand on the one his left hand on the other and Samson said let me die with the Philistines let me just tell you this man I want you to die surrounded by your grandkids amen like I want your last breath not to be let me kill my enemies but let me bless my family I want your last day to be looking at your wife telling her that you loved her and your your grateful for her I want your last day to be laying hands over your grandchildren and blessing them with the final breaths that you have amen I mean that's that's how I want us to finish then he bowed with all his strength and the house fell upon the Lords and all the people were in it so the dead whom he killed at his death were more than those whom he had killed during his life then his brothers and his family came down you know what's really weird we didn't even know that he had Brothers until is dead his family doesn't even show up until the funeral he's so unhealthy and unwell that he's not even connected to his brothers and his family he's totally isolated and alone then his brothers and all his family came down and took him and brought him up and buried him between Zora and Estel in the Tomb of manoaah his father he had judged Israel 20 years okay how does he finish well he hangs in there for 20 years which is a lot of resilience he declares war against and fights and kills the Philistines which was his god-given mission but his last day is a very tragic day um I know this is sobering I just believe we live in a world of complete buffoonery and we just assume that life is going to get better no it doesn't have to get better it can actually get worse we just assume that when we get old you know we're going to be blessed no the decisions you make will determine the destiny you walk in tomorrow um what's sobering to me and I will wrap this up um what's sobering to me and this should be a sober assessment for us as men and it is starting with me I absolutely could be Samson that's what scares me I absolutely could be Samson and if I don't um if I don't submit and surrender to God consistently I could easily Veer into the same path that Samson tragically lived his entire life in how many of you men if you're honest if we're not careful you could be Samson too any men feel that like it's not so far gone right um you know just watch a few Liam niss movies uh go to Hooters and next thing you know you're in the temple of deeon right I mean that's just how it goes um and I know I'm supposed to end uplifting and encouraging I don't think we're going to do that but um but let me tell you um I'll just be honest just a verbal process so um the men in my family um generations of uh of alcoholism and self-destruction um my Grandpa died and uh I didn't know him I didn't know him um I went to visited him when I was a little boy and um we went to his house and he was I didn't know I was going to share this but I guess I am uh he was living completely alone no one the the house he was living in the the corner I'll never forget as a little kid it was held up by a car jack okay uh I go into the house there's like one cup one fork one knife one spoon one plate because nobody else was ever there um didn't finish well um there's a there's a there's a line of men in my family don't don't finish well um don't finish well at all um my dad called me a week or two ago um my dad got saved later in life my dad's probably watching this and I I love and I honor my dad my dad's a great man and my dad called he's like Marky still calls me Marky um I call him pops he's like I was praying for you the Lord laid some stuff on my heart there some stuff I feel like I need



to share with you my dad deposited a great amount of wisdom um my dad right now is actively heavily involved in raising his grandkids and loving them and blessing them and reading the Bible with them and serving them and I honor my dad he's finishing really really really well my dad's finishing really really well um and this week I'm going to go to my dad's uh my dad's 75th birthday party I'm going to go see my Pops and give him a hug um and uh and then this is kind of My Life um so last night I had dinner with uh all our kids and Grand with our kids and grandkids um the two grandsons were at each end of the table I kept going between the two ends of the table feeding one wrestling with the other they're fun they're you know they're learning to grab stuff and eat stuff and do stuff just super blast and they see their grandpa and they get all excited and like they they're not scared of me because I don't live in hot anger and when they see me they get really happy and excited and they light up and I just love that and um and last night I got home and after we went to dinner with the kids and the grandkids and um my wife Grace who you been with for well since we were in high school she's like hey honey you want to go for a walk I do for a long walk and held hands and just visited and prayed with my wife Faithfully married more than three decades happy we've ever been super grateful for my girl um that uh yeah today I spent time with my two sons who are in Ministry just praying for them and the responsibilities that they're taking and what God's laying on their heart for Ministry and their family and and just catching up with my sons and coaching them and praying with them um and the difference between me and Samson is um just the grace of God you know and uh I'm very confident that H because I don't believe that Jesus just saves us from hell I also believe that Jesus saves us from us and Jesus has saved me from me and I'm I'm living in this season of my life guys like I don't know anyone more blessed than me I literally don't know anyone more blessed than me and now that I'm Grandpa they're telling me that there's a lot of grandchildren coming which I'm very excited about um I want to finish well I hope I've got a long time I hope I've got decades by God's grace but I want to finish well and I want the last day to be a great day and I want the last day to be where I'm smiling at my wife and I'm thanking my kids and I'm handing Legacy off to my sons and son-in-laws and and I'm blessing my grandchildren okay it just breaks my heart that Samson had that opportunity but he didn't take it okay and I love you guys with my whole heart and if you are hearing this it's because it's not too late for you to make some changes and some pivots and to go up instead of down and to finish well and instead of poor does that make sense and the younger you are the better position you're in but even if you're older it's just not too late and I believe the story of Samson is in the Bible to give us a Stern warning as men that you have the possibility of self-destructing your own life and God doesn't want that for you because he loves you so I'm going to I'm going to pray and we'll give you some guys time around tables and I'll release the live stream and I got one thing for the men in the room um what did the Holy Spirit highlight in the talk for you uh what test are you taking in life right now we're always taking one and then how can we pray for you and I want to honor you for being here you're doing the one thing that Samson never did you're coming under Authority you're coming into Community you're inviting good men around you and building relationships so that you can go up instead of down and that's why we're here for you Lord thank you for these men thank you for an opportunity and honor to teach and God um Samson's story is a it's a shocking sobering one for men uh a man who was a Believer um but his life was so painful and it ended so poorly and so lonely God I pray against that for all the men who who would hear this starting with myself Lord that Lord God we would take to heart the things that the holy spirit is impressing upon us so that we could go up instead of down and that we could finish well instead of poorly in Jesus name amen