

Worship - Bringing Our Alabaster Jar

by Todd Atkinson

The sermon emphasizes the importance of worshiping God with our most valuable possessions and being open-hearted in His presence, as exemplified by the unnamed woman in the story of the alabaster flask.

Duration: 43:24

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 22:37-39, Mark 12:41-44, Luke 7:36-50, Luke 15:11-32, John 8:1-11, Romans 8:38-39

Topics: "Worship"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares his personal experience of how his prayer life has been transformed in the past eight months. He emphasizes the importance of prayer in his Christian life and how it has always been a central focus for him. The speaker also reflects on a past traumatic event that caused him to suppress his emotions, leading to a lack of ability to express his emotions in worship. He contrasts this with the story of a woman who anointed Jesus' feet with costly ointment, highlighting the importance of treating Jesus' presence with honor and giving him our best in worship. The speaker concludes by emphasizing that true worship is giving something costly and valuable to Jesus, rather than giving him our leftovers.

Transcript

Good morning everyone. My goodness, it's nice to be back with you. If I had more time, one of the things I would maybe chronicle a little bit with you is, I've just had the funnest eight months of prayer.

The last eight months, the Lord has just been doing something crazy in my prayer life. Prayer has probably always been the center of my Christian life. I've always felt a little bit weird from other people.

What do you like most to do? I'm like, pray actually. Second most thing, my kids, you know, that's fine. But about eight months ago, I felt like I don't really know where to go next in prayer.

And so I got some help on one thing or another. And so I have had a crazy last eight months that has been off the charts. And I am just meeting with the Lord every day.

I've never felt more loved by God. I've never felt more cared for, more shepherded by him, looked out for, protected, nourished, and nurtured. Through my Christian life, I've been very glad to have, you know, happiness and contentment.

But I would say when I read the book of Acts, this one expression kind of haunts me. It says they were filled with the Holy Spirit and joy. You know, there's a joy that we have that we can respond to God.

And then there's a joy that kind of goes up. And there's a joy that comes down, as it were. I call it heaven's joy.

It's not just a joy because things are going good in our life, and they're headed our way, and we're joyful. And that's a good joy. But there's a joy that comes down.

And I've always wanted that. And in the last eight months, I have been visited by the Lord's kind of ecstatic joy so many times. I'm kind of with him and just giddy to be with him.

Giddy? Can a bishop be giddy? And so I wanted to share with you just only one meditation that I've been doing in the last. It's also been a wonderful time of praying through Scripture in the last eight months. And so there's anything of 50 things I could share with you today.

But there's one that has been affecting my worship life in a positive way. And so I'd like to share that with you. And I don't think I was kind of lost in prayer.

Did we do a reading of the Scripture? Okay, okay. So why don't we start with that. If you have your Bibles, let's turn to Luke chapter 7. And we're going to start at verse 36.

Is everybody there? It says, One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at the table of the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster flask of ointment.

And standing behind Jesus at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head, and kissed his feet and anointed them with ointment. Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is that is touching him, for she is a sinner. And Jesus answered, answering, said to him, Simon, I have something to say to you.

And he answered, Say it, teacher. Well, a certain moneylender had two debtors, one owed five hundred denarii, the other fifty. When they could not pay, he canceled the debt of both.

Now which of them will love him more? Simon answered, The one I suppose for whom he canceled the larger debt. And he said to him, You judge rightly. Then turning toward the woman, he said to Simon, Do you see this woman? I entered your house, and you gave me no water for my feet.

And she has wet my feet with her tears, and wiped them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in, she has not ceased to kiss my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment.

Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven. She has loved much. But he who is forgiven little loves little.

And he said to her, Your sins are forgiven. Then those who were at table with him began to say amongst themselves, Who is this who even forgives sins? And he said to the woman, Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.

Amen. I became a Christian at the age of 15. Since that age, there have been many people who I have found to be kind of Christian heroes for me.

People who, for a part of my life, I have looked to. I have wanted to be like. I have hoped that I could emulate.

I have drawn inspiration from. Anybody have someone that you think that is kind of a hero to me? Either someone dead or living. Well, I have had lots of them through my Christian life.

But as I studied this particular woman, she began to have that kind of effect on me. She is kind of like an unlikely hero. Someone that I didn't settle in life thinking that would be a person I would like to emulate.

But after spending quite a bit of time in her story, that is the impression she made on me. I thought I would like to be like her. And I would like to explain a few of the reasons why that is this afternoon.

First of all, verse 36. Jesus was invited to dine at the house of a Pharisee. Judaism was, of course, only one faith.

But it had lots of groups within that one faith. And probably the strictest of all those groups were the Pharisees. They were known for lots of things.

But the one thing that nobody would have ever said about the Pharisees is, my goodness, they are very gracious people. I mean, there are lots of things they would have said about the Pharisees. But what people never said is, they are really known for their kindness.

They were known for their severity. They are known for their strictness. And their quickness to judge and things like that.

And so the second verse of our reading speaks of a woman of the city. And it just says this, who was a sinner. And when she heard that Jesus was at this Pharisee's house, she made her way to that house.

Twice in the story, this woman is described as a sinner. We are not told what her sin is. We are not told what she did that was deserving of that label.

But there are hints in the passage. I could go through them with you. But she was probably either a prostitute or an adulteress.

Most certainly some kind of sexual immorality was involved here. What is noticeable, however, from the start of the story, is that she is never named. She is only ever called a sinner.

So even the Pharisee who is hosting Jesus, his name is Simon. His name is mentioned later in the text. But not her name.

The whole community seemed to have lost her name. She is like the unnamed woman. All they see here is that woman.

They just called her the sinner. There is a great sadness to this part of the story. That this woman was only known by her past mistakes.

As soon as she enters the house, guess what? She is recognized. But what is she recognized for? Only one thing, her sin. It is the only thing that people know about her and it is the only thing that people want to

know about her.

It is that they have labeled her like this permanently. And I think what is very grievous to me in the story is that the Pharisees, these are people who have given their entire life to the study of Scripture. These are people who have given their entire life to the anticipation of the Messiah.

These are religious people, but they do not have a shred of good news for this dear lady. They are people who would think would represent God, who know lots about God. But there is not one bit of good news they can say.

Whatever happened to you in the past, whatever your life was like, whatever your story is like, we know God, and so therefore we would like to tell you there is something really good coming your way. They do not have a shred of good news for her. Living.

They are just like, you are the sinner, you were a sinner, you are a sinner, you will always be called a sinner, and you will never be different in our eyes. This is God's representatives. So they have a very distorted image of God.

And it is affecting their community. And it is affecting this dear woman's life. And dare we ask, what would this have felt like for her? What do you think this would have felt like to her? It would have felt like there was no getting away from her sin.

She does not seem to be a woman that was trying to deny her sin. But it would have felt like there was no getting away from her. Like she was permanently marked, and permanently marred.

Like her past was inescapable, and irreversible. Now because of that, imagine the remarkable courage that it would have taken for this woman to go into the Pharisees house, uninvited, to go into the lion's den. The place where you would most likely be shamed, mistreated, disrespected, marginalized, rejected.

And yet this woman shows this remarkable courage. She is going to go into the Pharisees house for one reason, one reason, because Jesus is there. There is one goal that she has in mind.

And it is not actually the goal we might think. So first of all, I want you to, it is just the fact that He is there. And this woman will do anything to be where Jesus is.

And oh I want to see that in the Canadian church again. That is something we need to see as a corrective, restored to Christians across our country. A deep rooted conviction.

That we have to be where Jesus is, and we will go against all the odds in order to do that. So this woman, it didn't matter what people thought of her. It didn't matter what they were going to say about her.

It didn't matter how risky it was going to be to enter this public setting. She just knew Jesus is there, and I have got to be where Jesus is. And that has got to enter our passions again.

Let me tell you something else that is remarkable about this woman. Why did she want to be in Jesus' presence? What was her one determined goal? Do you know it is not what we might think. Everything she did this day, she did with one end in mind.

And it was this. She had something of considerable value to her. And she felt like she just had to go, and give it to Jesus.

That is not the reason I go into worship. And so this has been a good corrective to me. Sometimes I even had to say, why do I go into worship? But I thought I needed to be a little bit more like her.

She took the one thing in life that mattered, and was like a sign of wealth. The thing that was most costly to her. And she risked everything to be found in Jesus' presence, and to give Him something.

I am like at my best days, I might risk something to go be in Jesus' presence, because I need something so badly. And that is not always bad. Jesus tells me you have not, because you have not.

My needs really matter to Him. And so that is not a bad thing. But the other side of the worship equation, I have not thought like this woman.

She just will run every risk she is going to go against. Because there is one thing she has got to do. I have got to be in Jesus' presence, and I have got to give Him something.

Wouldn't you like to be like that? She didn't go there to get anything. Now believe me, by the time she left, she received stuff of eternal significance. But she went there to give Him something.

This is the first thing about this woman that has made her something of a hero in my eyes. Scripture says that she brought Jesus an alabaster flask of ointment. Alabaster was a soft stone that was used to make vessels for perfume.

And the ointment inside was an expensive perfumed oil. Mark's Gospel talks about another woman who had an alabaster flask of perfumed oil. And Mark said it was worth 300 denarii.

A denarii in the ancient world is the amount of money a laborer would make for a full day's work. So 300 denarii is a year's wage. A year's wage.

That is some perfume. So ladies, however expensive your perfume, you say to your husband, it's not that bad, honey. So I don't know what the average annual income in the lower mainland.

That's going to be a lot different if you work at Starbucks versus some other company. But it's relative, isn't it? Imagine a gift of a full year's income. So if you make \$30,000 a year, or if you're in a different line of work, and you think, well, actually I make \$70,000 a year, that's a lot of money.

A year's wages. So it sounds to me that this was her life savings. Her entire life savings.

Her nest egg. So how is it she meets Jesus and says, I want to give him \$50,000. I want to give him an entire year's wage.

It's my nest egg. It's my insurance. It's my entire life savings.

Except that it does not have the place in her heart that it did 10 minutes earlier. Because she looked at this as her life savings, and then met a Savior. He's my life savings now.

That's why we call Him the Savior. And then suddenly she meets Him, and all of her sense of what is meaningful in life goes through a complete metamorphosis. And this thing that was just like all costly and all meaningful suddenly is like, it's not actually so meaningful anymore.

And so what does she want to do is, her worship is to take the thing that was previously most costly, and all she wants to do is go and give it to Him. When you give something away, part of what that means is, it

doesn't hold the place in your heart it used to. But it still matters to her, so it becomes worship.

Worship is giving something beautiful. Worship is giving something costly. You know, when the offering plate is passed around, we give the last few pennies that's left over.

That's not worship. Because worship is what you think has ultimate worth to you. So we never give Jesus our leftovers and call it worship.

Because that's like saying, you're worth my leftovers. So this one goes to the opposite, and just gives so big and beautiful everything she's got. Whatever security this wealth had previously given to her, she says, that guy, that's where my security is now.

And that's why she goes into Pharisee's house. She knows that she can just camp near him. The most secure place in this hugely risky world is if I'm near him, I am secure.

I don't need money to make me secure. I need him. And that's why she can risk this thing.

Even into Pharisee's house. And so whenever I go to worship now, every Sunday, I go into the Lord's house, and I tell myself, I'd like to be like this lady. I want to come in, and I ask myself, what is the equivalent of my alabaster flask? What's the most expensive, beautiful, costly thing I can give Him? And in life, recently, that's going to change from season to season for you.

So for me, I just spent 15 years building the house of the Lord in Lethbridge, had the privilege of handing that over to one of my spiritual sons in Lethbridge, Father Stephen. And so I get 15 years of my life to do that. And people that know me, I don't do virtually anything kind of half-hearted.

So I poured myself out there for 15 years. So guess what the most costly thing is I have to give right now? Was 15 years of my life. That's my most recent offering.

Is to say that 15 years, I don't know, did I do well? Did I pour it? I don't really know. All I know is I gave it my all, and I want to say, Jesus, that's worth more to me than oil and perfume. 15 years of my life.

And then there's the 35 before that, but let's just talk about 15. I do that for you, Jesus. That what I just did in Lethbridge, I don't need the thanks of that congregation.

Or I did guys' worship. I hope you like it. That was a lot costly to me.

Whether it was costly to anybody else or not, or important to anybody else, all I know is it's as costly as it gets for me. So what's your alabaster flask in this season of life? And how can that have worship in it? You have your retirement coming up. A lot of people think that's the time where they're going to get most self-focused.

Here's Mike getting ready for, you should hear the conversation about him, he's just blowing my mind, because he's getting ready to offer himself to the Lord in a greater way. He's getting ready to up his worship with his retirement. So it's his retirement.

That's why they call it his retirement. It's his. He can do what he wants with it.

And he wants to use it in people's healing. So what's yours? Your alabaster flask. Every time I go into worship now, I just think, I'm going to just give something crazy to you.

I'm going to give the most important thing. And for me, my most important thing is my heart. I'm a heart guy.

I operate out of my heart. So I'm not just here to occupy a physical presence. I operate out of here.

And so I'm going to give you something out of there. Everything out of there. What is your alabaster flask? Verse 38 says, Jesus is reclined at the table, which means he's probably propped on his elbow or pillow before a low table's feet are out behind him.

And this dear woman's come into this house uninvited, and she stands behind Jesus, and she just simply weeps. She doesn't even say anything. She just stands there and cries.

I've read a number of New Testament scholars who have asked the question, what is she crying about? Are these tears of joy? Are these tears of regret? Are these tears of sorrow? Are these tears of remorse? Whatever the case is, she is simply overcoming Jesus' presence. She comes into the house, doesn't say a word. She just stands there at his feet and cries.

And I love that about this heroic woman. The question isn't, why is she so moved? The question is, why isn't everybody else in the room so moved? The question isn't, why is she crying? The question is, why isn't everybody else in the room? Everybody else is in the presence of Jesus. They're as close as she is.

They're getting the exact same experience. And so why is it that one heart is so soft and one heart is so stony in that room? So my question is, not why is she so moved, why is everybody else so jolly unmoved? They seem so unaffected. So as you go on in your Christian life, this is a good prayer to pray, please Lord, don't let me ever get to the place that I could be in your presence and be unmoved.

Don't let me ever be in the presence of Jesus. And be in a spot where my heart is so hard that I am unaffected. Many years ago, I was in a community, a wonderful Christian community, but I learned so much because these people were, oh my goodness, they would be moved in Jesus' presence.

And I sat there and I felt like a piece of granite. See, I pretty much spent a year saying, I'd like to be more like them. Their hearts seem so free.

I spent a whole year, and the first day, well, I realized, I realized that when I was a young man, we had something traumatic happen in my family, and I wept very hard by myself in the furnace room of our house. I wept so hard that afterwards I told myself, I will never do that again. I did not realize the damage I did to myself.

So 25 years later, I'm in this community, people are crying in worship, and I can't at all. And I spent an entire year saying, I'd like to be more like them. And the day that first tear ran down my cheek, I could feel God opening my heart again.

And that's what I love about this woman. It's not like she cries, she's open-hearted. And if ever there was a woman you'd met that had every reason in the world not to be open-hearted, it was this woman.

Her heart had been run roughshod over more times than she could count. She had been abused by non-religious men. She'd been abused by religious men.

I mean, if it wasn't people trying to take advantage of her, and now she's a sinner and she can't get win either way. If there was ever a woman that you think she should just be like, no way, I'm not letting

anybody in. I'm not trusting anybody.

I'm going to shut my heart down. That'd be her. And yet she's the only person in the room with a truly open heart.

See why she's like a hero to me? She didn't say, oh, I've been through too much. She knew Jesus wasn't them. Jesus was unlike anybody she'd ever met before.

She knew in her heart, I could trust him. I can open my heart to him, and I will never regret that. Epic.

Epic. For most of us, when we've suffered rejection, we close our hearts to people and to God. When we've been shamed, we hide the best parts of ourselves away.

When we've suffered disappointment, then we refuse to risk vulnerability ever again. But not so with this woman. Worship is the place where we open our deep selves to God.

And sometimes that entails living our tears to God. Notice that she wept so much that her tears fell on Jesus' feet. Remember, she's standing behind him.

She didn't come prepared for this. It wasn't rehearsed. It was spontaneous.

She didn't come intending on crying. She hadn't packed a towel. So she improvises and uses her hair.

What's significant about that? 1 Corinthians 11 says that in first century Judaism, a woman's hair was her glory, her splendor. So she uses her splendor to get low and washes his feet with her splendor. She takes what is glorious about her and does something very humble and servant-like and unglorious, washing someone's feet with her hair.

What do you do with your glory? What has Jesus made most glorious about you? Where are your strengths? Where are your gifts? What are the attributes about you that Jesus has equipped you with? You know, interesting, this woman, considering her past, one time this was the very hair she used to probably attract men. And now it's being used for worship. What a picture.

At this point, the Pharisee who's hosting the event, Simon, reaches his boiling point. This is just enough emotion. This is not... How does she get to be the center of attention? He's just completely upset by this picture and he begins to judge Jesus in his mind.

You know what he thinks? If this guy were really a prophet, if this guy was really like a man of God, if he was really in connection with God, he would know that she's a sinner and he would use his prophetic powers to scold her. That's what he thought of the prophetic. You would use your prophetic to reinforce that she's a sinner.

And Jesus, who is prophetic, uses his prophetic not about her, he uses it about Simon. The guy that is making the judgments is the guy that is being weighed in heaven's balances. Do you understand? The very guy that says, that's where I hope God turns his sternness, God is weighing him, the one making the judgments.

Jesus knows this and in the gentlest possible way, this is what he says to him, Simon, when I entered your house, you gave me no water for my feet. So it wasn't a customary necessity that every guest that visited your house, you would wash their feet or do some of these niceties for, but it was custom that an honored

guest, a special guest, you would make some special efforts for. So Simon sent a very clear message that Jesus wasn't much of a guest to him.

He said, when I came here, you gave me no water for my feet, but this woman wiped my feet with her tears. You wouldn't even give me water. And she wiped it with her hair, Simon.

You gave me no kiss. She's not ceased to kiss my feet. The story of the prodigal son, when a son returns from his arduous journey and the father is waiting there and greets him and loves him and says he gave him a kiss.

That is the Greek word that is used here. It's not a sensuous kiss. It's a kiss of restoration, of being back again, of welcome home.

And so I came into your home, Simon. You didn't give me any sign of affection. You didn't treat me like an honored guest.

This woman has done that since the moment she came in the house. You didn't anoint my head with oil again. That would be a sign of honor that you would come in, someone's come out under the sun, dryness, and you could anoint their head with just olive oil.

It doesn't even cost you anything. He says you didn't anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with costly ointment, a full year's wages. There's so much we could say from the passage, but how do you treat Jesus' presence? How do I treat His presence? Do I make Him feel like an honored guest? Does He feel like I go the extra mile? Or am I like Simon? I'd like Him in the house.

He's a curiosity to me. I want to invite Him, but I really honor Him. And so we're called to follow the example of this woman.

Every time I come into worship now, I think of this story, and I think I know Jesus is in His church. Jesus is there. He's in that house.

I'm going to go to church because I got to be in Jesus' presence like that woman. That when I get to church, she didn't really care what people thought. She knew there was all kinds of false judgments about her.

She didn't care. She just had to be where Jesus was. I'm going to go be that.

I don't really care what people think. I got to go be in Jesus' presence. When she got into Jesus' presence, she was so interested in giving Him something really spectacular from her.

I want to do that. And I go there thinking, what is that today that I could give from my heart to Jesus? Which is very small compared to the gifts He's going to give me, but it's my best. And I ask myself, am I as open-hearted? When I go into Jesus' presence, will I allow myself to be moved and affected by Him? Or am I shut down? Am I showing signs of big-heartedness and open-heartedness? Because that is the life that will see a move of God in that life.

You ever tried to love somebody who didn't want to be loved? Pretty tough, isn't it? I don't know what's happening in our city. There's a dear lady. I don't really know that well, but I know every time I go to shake her hand in public, she holds her hand back.

So I know her and her husband a little bit, so I asked them, have I done something? They're like, no, why? And I was like, no. And I can tell, they're being very sincere. There's nothing there.

But I'm like, she doesn't maybe understand her social cues or something. All I know is every time I go to take her hand, there's nothing there, and it's just hugely awkward. St. Paul says in the letter, he actually says it as an apostle to the church, I have opened wide my heart to you.

Won't you open your heart to me? Because you can't have a relationship when one side is closed down. So can you hear the voice of Jesus in that? I've opened my heart wide to you in the gospel. Won't you open your heart to me like that woman? So whatever's happened to you in life, and we've all had our trials, this woman had.

Whatever's happened, we've had our disappointments. We've had things go wrong. And it may take some time for you to regain a sense of trust in humanity.

Understand that. What I encourage you to do in the meantime is to trust divinity. If you make an exception for one person, make an exception for Jesus and open wide your heart and say whatever you have for me, my heart is yours.

I won't hold back. I won't feel shut down. I will worship you and love you with openness and abandonment.

And watch what heaven will do in your life as a result. Let's bow our heads in a word of prayer. Just before we go to the table, I want you to think of how does this apply to you.

For some people it's very scary to join a church plant. Why? Because the last church plant didn't end up the way you wanted. And you may hear the Lord saying, I know, I know.

That's a tough one. But I'd like you to open up your heart. You might say, but Lord, I was part of a community.

I was very involved. And then I suffered some rejection. And you may just have to hear the Lord say, I know, I'm so sorry.

I didn't want that to happen to you. But please don't let that shut you down. And if you take that story and turn it on its head, give it back to him in worship.

Say, Lord, I gave my heart to that community. It didn't end well, but I really did it. And I'm going to say this.

You were worth it. I gave it my best. And so your wonderful gift to the United Church, however this story ends up, that's your alabaster flask.

You're not giving it to the United Church. You're giving it to Jesus. And he'll determine what he wants to do with the United Church.

So whatever that chapter is that didn't end up well, make it a springboard of worship. Say, Lord, I really tried there. It was that relationship that didn't go good.

That business idea. I gave it everything. I thought it was you.

I pursued you. I prayed about it. Then all you can say is, Lord, all I know is I did my best.

And I did it for you. I may never know why that thing didn't go well. But I'm going to say this.

You were worth it. And it wasn't you that let me down. So before we proceed, what part of your story would Jesus like to speak to you about and say, just offer that to me.

Make that your flask. Give that to me. Because I know you did it for me, and I felt worshipped when you did that.

I know it was costly for you. In ways that few people will ever understand. Just take a moment right now.

And so this may be new to you these times. I just want you right now before you go, ask the Lord, what is my alabaster flask? What is my alabaster flask? Just keep praying. Kids don't, they're wonderful.

They don't keep you from praying. They give you a reason for praying. Do we have any woodworkers here? Is there a woodworker? Can I just give someone a commission? We need a communion table.

So I'm going to commission someone. Because I need a communion table. A communion table is supposed to stand about this high.

So I can actually see the words and stuff. No, no, no, no. I think someone here, I think you might just really help us as a community by building us a communion table.

And we need one of these that actually has some angle to it. So when you start a church plant, the beautiful thing about it, you just got to start with what you got. And then God brings people in.

So someone please, can you build me a communion table? And someone, this should have a few notches or something. And just a simple one. But if there's someone that would do that, I would really be kind of thankful.

Because this was built for garden gnomes. Yeah. Okay.

You're wonderful. Okay, here's the invitation. I know it's for Sunday.

Kids are here. So what you'll do is you just let them be themselves. And if you focus on the liturgy and stuff, it just kind of normalizes.

Okay. If you get really worried about them making a sound, then the sound ends up prevailing. And if you actually just throw yourself in the liturgy, it all goes down.

And so we do this every Sunday. And it's just awesome. And so if your kids are making a little noise, don't worry about them.

We're okay. They're not more noisy than I am. So here's the word of invitation.

You that do truly and earnestly repent of your sins are reconciled and at peace with your neighbors and intend to lead the new life, following the commandments of God and walking from henceforth in His holy ways. Draw near now with faith. And take this holy sacrament to strengthen and comfort you.

And make your humble confession to your heavenly Father. And so I want us to right now pause for a moment before our public confession. And I want you to ask God a question.

Where am I paralyzed? Because of some past chapters. I'm a little shut down and paralyzed. And today's the day to leave that paralysis behind.

Where am I a little shut down and hesitant? And you'll all have different answers. Some of you might say, I used to trust God financially. I went through a hard financial season.

Now it's really tough. I'm very shut down when it comes to faith. Another says, well, I really got broke relationally.

And so relationships have been hard for me ever since. I don't really trust. You know, and today I'm paralyzed.

I haven't wanted to let people in and get to know people. And so in this time of private confession, just ask the Lord, where is that for me? Where am I a bit paralyzed and shut down? Ask Him.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/28/SID28877.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/todd-atkinson/worship-bringing-our-alabaster-jar/>

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