



Lysa TerKeurst: Okay. If you have your Bible, if you'll open it up to Hebrews. Now let me make a little confession here about Hebrews. Are you guys ready for a confession?

Meredith Brock: I love it when you confess.

LT: Yes, well, not only did I have a hard time finding Hebrews in the Bible when I first started studying the Bible over 20 years ago. For some reason, I was very convinced Hebrews was in the Old Testament, because it sounds Old Testament.

MB: It sounds very old. It's not like Mark, Luke or John, right? Like I have friends named Mark, Luke and John.

LT: Yes, but you probably don't have a friend named Hebrews.

MB: Negative.

LT: Right?

MB: No friends named Hebrews.

LT: And so, I was a little confused as to where it was in the Bible. But I have a trick, really two tricks to help you find it.

MB: Alright.

LT: First of all, there's no shame in turning to the table of contents. Now, that's number one. But number two is if you go to Revelation, which is the very end of the Bible, and you just make a very few left-hand turns, you're going to pass through, like Revelation to 1 John. And then, just keep going a little bit, you're going to get into some Peter stuff and James stuff. But then you're eventually going to land on Hebrews. And so, start at the back of the Bible and start flipping the pages.

MB: Great pointer.

LT: And you will find Hebrews.

MB: You just simplified my life.

LT: I know because sometimes it's hard to find.

Kaley Olson: It is hard to find.

LT: Okay, so now that we found Hebrews . . .

MB: Yes.

LT: I want to go to Hebrews Chapter 2. And I want to read some verses that are probably not the most popular verses from Hebrews. But for me, they are some of the most meaningful and most helpful. So, if you've been going through a hard time lately, today's teaching is just for you. Hebrews Chapter 2, starting in verse 14: *“Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity, so that by his death, he might break the power of him who holds the power of death - that is the devil - and free those who, all their lives were held in slavery, by their fear of death. For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants.”* (Hebrews 2:14-16, NIV) And let me tell you why I love these verses so much. Because sometimes I think when we are going through a challenging time, and the last I checked, pretty much every human has some challenge currently that they're facing. I would imagine I could turn the microphone on to anybody in the studio today and just say, “name a challenging situation that you're facing right now”, most of us would have at least one answer; many of us would have many answers. I have many answers. Right now, I have a lot of challenges in my life. And sometimes I can start to get this perception that because I'm going through a really hard time that God is somehow far removed and distant. And even if I think He is there with me, I usually don't think, “Wow, the Lord really understands what it feels like to be me”. And, and I just can lose perspective, that the intensity of human emotion, and the intensity of human sorrow is really understood by God. Therefore, if I feel like God can't understand it, then I start to doubt He's actually going to have compassion on me to get me through it and on the other side of it. I don't know if that resonates with you at all. But something that helps me so much is to remember that when God sent His one and only Son Jesus, He was sent, yes, to be the Savior of the world. He was sent to forgive us of our sins. Absolutely. He was sent for the power of redemption. 100%. But it should never be lost on us that He was also sent to share in our humanity, and to feel the depth of the human reality, the grit, the grime, the gruesome heartbreak, the rejection, the brutality, the judgment of other people, all of that. But also, Jesus shared in our humanity, to the point where He had a marked moment with God, where He said, “God, I don't want this to be the plan, change the plan.” (Mark 14:36) And there's really nothing that Jesus has ever said that I relate to more than this moment that I find Jesus in right before He went to the cross. So, let me read Hebrews Chapter 2, verse 14 again, and then I'm going to take you over to Mark Chapter 14. “Since the children have flesh and blood.” So, who has flesh and blood? That's me. That's you. That's every human right? *“Since we have flesh and blood, He, [meaning Jesus] He too shared in their humanity.”* Wow, He shared in what it feels like to be human. He was perfect through the divinity. He had no sin, but absolute humanity. He felt the weight

of human emotion and human heartbreak. He felt that. So, He shared in humanity, so that — so why did He share in our humanity? — “... so that by his death, he might break the power of Him who holds the power of death — that is the devil—.” Okay, so that's one reason He shared in our humanity. “*And free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.*” But He also shared in our humanity, so that He might make an atonement for our sin. So, if we keep going down just a little bit further from where we read, let's go to verse 17 of Hebrews Chapter 2. “*For this reason, he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of this people.*” (Hebrews 2:17, NIV) So, He shared in our humanity, not just to break the power of death, by conquering death, and not just to make an atonement for our sins, but so that He might become a merciful and faithful High Priest. In other words, we can trust the advice that Jesus gives us 100% not only because He is the Savior of the world, but also because we know He felt the depth of what it feels like to be so very human. And yes, He was without sin. But He was not without heartbreak. He was not without complicated human relationships. He was not without the feeling the weight of being so misunderstood and being so hurt. And He was laying down His very life for people that in the end, spit upon Him, rejected Him, mocked Him, beat Him mercilessly and made fun of Him, stripped Him of every bit of human dignity. And His words from the cross were “*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*” (Luke 23:34) And so, I am so hyper aware that Jesus really is a faithful and merciful High Priest, because He really does understand what it feels like to be so very human.

Now, let's go over to Mark Chapter 14. This is in the Garden of Gethsemane, which, if you know me at all, you know that there are a couple of places in the Bible that I'm absolutely obsessed with. If you can have an obsession, I guess this is a good one. I love Genesis. But I also love the moment where we find Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, Mark Chapter 14 is one place in the Bible where this is recorded starting in verse 32. It says, “*They went to a place called Gethsemane. And Jesus said to His disciples ‘sit here while I pray.’ He took Peter, James and John along with Him. And He began to be deeply distressed and troubled.*” (Mark 14:32-33) So again, hitting the pause button, when I feel deeply distressed and troubled, I want to turn to these passages. And I want to remember it using Hebrews Chapter 2 and those verses that we just read. I want to remember it in this frame; that this is one of those moments where Jesus felt the weight of humanity in deep distress and deep trouble. And this is part of why I know He is a merciful — and He's a faithful, but He's merciful - He's a merciful High Priest. And so, I want to see what does He do? What does Jesus do? I mean, if He's my High Priest, He's leading me. And He's leading me with mercy and He's leading me in a faithful way. So, when He's deeply distressed and troubled, what does He say? what does He do? It goes on to say in the next verse, verse 34, “*My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death.*” So, think about how, how would we phrase this today? I'm going to throw out one example and then I want to see Kaley and Meredith, do you have any examples of like when your life is just coming apart at the seams. How do you phrase it? So, Jesus said, “*My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death.*” I might say, “I feel like this is going to kill me.” So, what's something? What's a phrase that you might say, either one of you, when . . .

MB: It's just too much.

LT: . . .It's just too much? Or what about, "I can't. I can't do this one more day."

MB: I can't handle this.

LT: Kaley, do you have anything?

KO: I say I can't ever stop thinking about this, like, I will never get past this thing that I'm struggling with.

LT: And it feels like the struggle in front of us has suddenly defined our entire existence and it's always going to feel this way. It's always going to be this hard; it's always going to be. So, Jesus saying "my soul." It's not just, "I'm overwhelmed". Jesus says, "*My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death*" I mean, this is, this is intense emotion. This isn't just like, "Oh, no, I missed a meeting and I'm feeling guilty about it. This is the dark night of the soul. I mean, this is, this is that deep distress deep, deep down. So, He says this to them, "my soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death". And He said to them, "*stay here and keep watch.*" And I've always thought, "I wonder if there's a double meaning to this, 'stay here and keep watch'?" I think the most obvious observation might be Jesus saying, "stay here and keep watch", because He knew that the detachment of soldiers were coming to arrest Him. And He didn't want the disciples to get caught off guard. Obviously, Jesus is Jesus. So, He knew when they were coming. He wasn't going to get caught off guard. But maybe He didn't want the disciples to get caught off guard. But I wonder if there's a double meaning. Maybe He was also saying to them, "stay here and keep watch, watch what I do, because you're going to need this". And then the scripture said, "*going a little farther.*" He didn't go up on a mountainside. He didn't go out to the sea walking on water. You know, He just went a little farther, which means they could see Him if they were looking, going a little farther. "*He fell to the ground and prayed that, if possible, the hour might pass from him. "Abba, Father, he said, everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me."*"

And I so relate to these words of Jesus wrestling with this thought, "God, everything is possible for you. So why aren't You fixing this for me right now? Why aren't You fixing this for my child right now? Why aren't You fixing this for my family right now? Why does this have to be the plan? I don't want this to be the plan. Let there be a different plan. I mean, God, everything's possible for You." And isn't that part of what's so complicated in our relationship with God? That part of what makes our faith so strong is we're utterly convinced that God is capable of everything. But isn't it true that part of what can make our faith feel like it's falling apart is that we're so hyper aware that God is capable of everything? And we're so aware that God is capable of everything, and we perceive He's not doing the one thing that we've begged Him to do. That makes so much sense in our mind. It can really make us panicked, and start to feel like "God, where are You? This makes no sense at all."

And yet, Jesus doesn't put an exclamation point there, and then walk into the next part of His existence with gritted teeth, and clenched fist and heels, dug into the dirt, resisting God and mad at God and

questioning God. No, He doesn't do that. He utters these next words that I feel like are some of the most powerful words in all of Scripture. And I'm really good at the first part of this verse telling God, "everything is possible for You. Take this cup for me. Change my circumstances. Make this different." But I forget these last words, "*Yet, not what I will, but what you will*" (Mark 14:36, NIV). In other words, "Yet God, I don't like this, and I don't want this. And this isn't the way that I would write the story. And yet, I'm declaring that You know better even when it doesn't feel better to me right now. And I'm exchanging my will, for Thy will, because I'm so confident You will do what a good God should do in the circumstance." And these words, but Jesus ended this very distressed and troubled, soul overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death, prayed to God these words "*Yet, not what I will, but what you will,*" are so important for us to remember. And I haven't perfected this. I'm not good at it. Especially not right now. Because I'm going through something so hard, I feel like I'm in the first part of this verse. And I'm fighting every day to get to the second part "yet, not what I will, but what You will". And so, I'm not saying this today, because I've mastered it. I'm saying, because I need this reminder so maybe you do too. And that is this, that if I start every day focused on all that's wrong in my life right now, it will lead me to a pretty extreme frustration with God. Because I have big faith that God can do everything. So, when He's not doing this thing, it can make me convinced of the wrong things. And I've started to see in my life, it's not the doubts that I have in my life. Those aren't what's making my fate sometimes feel like it's falling apart. It's not doubts. It's being too certain of the wrong things that can sometimes make me feel like my faith is unraveling and making me feel like I'm shaky. And it's not unraveling to the point where I'm like, "I don't believe in God". That's not it. It's just this heaviness of wondering, "where are you God, and how could a good God allow this. I just don't get it".

So instead of starting with all of the hard things, and, and really staying so focused on "this is another day where I'm facing another situation where I'm facing another issue. I'm facing another hour, another 24 hours of unresolved angst". Instead of focusing on that, I need to focus on the reality that my God is good. And He is good to me, even when it doesn't feel good. And that God is good at being God. And He's not far removed, and He's not distant, and He's not uncaring about the pain that we're going through. It's actually quite the opposite. He very much knows the pain we're going through. And He has decided this today. Whatever is in front of me, is part of His answer. I don't have to understand it, I don't have to like it. But if I start with the reality of who God is, I can keep it in perspective. And I'm more convinced than ever, that God doesn't want to be explained away. He wants to be invited in. And when I invite Him in, I can say to Him just like Jesus did, "Everything is possible for You God. Change the story. I don't like this." It's okay for me to say that. But then, I don't want to leave my soul in that place. I want to quickly transition to "yet not what I will, but what you will". Because God, I know You see more of the picture than what I'm seeing. I know You know what's best. And I know, in the end, You are working a good out that will never be worked out in the same perfect way as what You have is, if I was writing the story. I so desperately want to grab the pen and write the story. But what I am slowly reminding myself of is if I did that, I would never get to God's ultimate good. And the only way to get there is to trade my will, for His will and to keep walking in faith. And just to say over and over. God is good. God is good to me. And God is good at being God.

So, I'm so excited about this Hebrew study. Mainly, because I see what the Lord is doing in Hebrews is setting us up to remember some things that we desperately need to remember. And that we don't need to let go of when we start to feel like things are hard or falling apart. Or maybe they're even good, but they're not the same version of good that we anticipated that should be.

MB: Wow Lysa. So, I can imagine a lot of our friends listening right now who are in the middle of one of those really hard seasons; feel like they just had somebody hear them and see them for the first time in a really long time. Because when you're in one of those places where it feels like "God where are You? Like, where are You? And why do hard things keep happening when I know You could fix it." So easy for our hearts to go hard, and to become cynical and distance ourselves from God. Because of it. You said something that I think I want to dig into just a little bit. He said, we become so certain of certain things. And I think one of the things that you're alluding to is I think we become so certain in our own minds of what good is, right? We define good in a certain way. And we think God should live up to that expectation. "My goodness, why can't You?" right? So, let's drill down into that a little bit. Like, what is good? And how can we disassemble our definitions of good in order to be able to adopt God's definitions of good for us? Any insight there?

LT: I think sometimes we define good as comfortable, peaceful, maybe easier, more resolved, and where all of our circumstances line up. And we're happy, where it's like, we're looking at all of our circumstances, we're like, "yeah, this is, this is good. You know, my people feel good. I feel good. Life feels good." And therefore, because we feel good, then it must be good.

MB: Yeah.

LT: But I think that if you're human, and you just go through a 24-hour period, life doesn't tie up in a neat, nice bow. And it's not just for those of us walking through really hard seasons. It's that we can have a really good day and have a really bad moment.

MB: Isn't that a truth?

LT: And we can feel so quickly like things just crashed. I mean, one phone call about, you know, our child got sent to the principal's office, and a good day can suddenly feel like, "Where did that come from?" and "everything is terrible." And usually we don't just say, "let's keep it all in perspective now. This was a good day with a bad moment." What we tend to say is, "My child got sent to the principal's office? Oh, my goodness. I am a terrible parent, and they're going to, you know, wind up, like, they're going to get kicked out of school, and they're not going to have any friends. And then they're going to get into the wrong crowd. And, and then, you know, their whole life trajectory is going to change, you know." And so, we run it so far down the court, that it's not just a bad moment. It's a bad everything.

MB: Yeah.

LT: And so, I think we're shooting for this version of good that really does not exist on this side of eternity.

MB: That's right.

LT: And it's an unrealistic expectation, which my counselors recently told me that when you have unrealistic expectations, or just any expectation is really a recipe for simmering resentments. Because if you keep expecting something, and life doesn't deliver on that level of expecting this high version of good. And it's, again, not that life isn't good. Life can be good and have really hard moments, and the two can coexist. But if we keep expecting all circumstances to line up to good, all relationships to point to good, then we're going to develop simmering resentments that are either going to be directed at ourselves, others, God, the world in general, or sometimes all four at the same time.

MB: That's really, really helpful. Lysa, I think to kind of see it from the perspective of you can have good and not so good at the same time, they can co-exist with each other. It makes me think about if you look back on Jesus's life, and when He was sent into the wilderness, right? If we don't know how that story ends — like He comes out on the other side of the wilderness and He like launches His ministry — you would look at that and be like, that is, God is not being good to Him. Right? Like we could have looked at that season of His life as, like, that's really awful. Like, He was hungry. He was in the desert. Satan was chasing Him down and tempting Him constantly. You know, like, that's one bad thing after another, after another. Add injury to insult, you know, and we would have defined that as a bad season. But when you can see the whole picture, I think you can see the goodness of God in the midst of a bad season. You know, but it doesn't take away the hardship of a wilderness, isolated, hard season of life.

LT: Yeah. And so, when you go back to the quote that I think it was, in my book, maybe *Forgiving What You Can't Forget*? Or maybe *It Wasn't Supposed to Be This Way*, I don't know. But what makes faith fall apart isn't doubt. It's being too certain of the wrong things. And so, when we become too certain of the wrong things, then we start to really question God, we question where this is all headed. We question if any person is good. We question, you know, if we're any good. And we start to become too certain of the very lies that the enemy would love for us to believe. And that is sometimes his best tactic: to make us believe wrong things. And that is his tactic to steal, kill and destroy. And so, I have to be on guard with that, that we're not, we're not just trying to get through the day. There is an epic war against our very existence because we have an enemy that hates us. And so, we don't live in fear. But we do need to live in awareness that every single day, I need to watch those thoughts that are coming into my mind; and watch what my definition of good is; and establish my thinking with the truth that God is good. God is good to me. And God is good at being God. He is a merciful and faithful High Priest, and He knows what it feels like to be so very human.

KO: That's good. I want to ask one follow-up question about these expectations, because you just said, you know, we can be too certain of the wrong things. And so, there's one end of the spectrum where your expectations could be too high. And you just said, that's a recipe for resentment, because they will never be met. But then on the flip side, somebody might be thinking, "Well, do I just expect nothing

from anyone and live like that.” Then balanced with God is good. God is good to me. God is good at being God. And so, as believers, when we wake up and our feet hit the floor, what are healthy expectations that we can carry into the day? Confidently knowing like, “okay, whatever comes my way, this will be good.” And it's not too high. It's not too low, but it's right in the middle. Is there an answer for that?

LT: Well, I'm going to play a little bit of a fast one on you —

MB: All right.

LT: — that my counselor recently played on me. Because my counselor is constantly telling me, “Lysa, remember your words frame your reality.” So, if we wake up every day, and we say, “I have expectations.” Just that very word can give the connotation of premeditated resentments. In other words, it's like, if you're expecting something, then there's an air of “this better happen, or else I'm going to be disappointed.” And so maybe, instead of asking the question, “What are realistic expectations?” and swinging keeping our expectations too high down to keeping our expectations too low. Maybe let's use a different word instead of expectations. Why don't we say, “I'm bringing my longings to this day; I'm bringing a desire to this day, and it is good to give those longings and desires to the Lord.” And then I think just like what Jesus modeled for us “yet, not what I will, but, you know, what you will, let that be done.” I mean, think about even when Jesus taught us to pray, you know, He was so very crystal clear at doing this very thing, laying down His will, for Thy will. And he said, “Thy will be done,” you know, “on earth as it is in heaven.” And I think if we can establish that, “I'm laying down my longings and laying down my desires” this laying them down as and giving up on them, I mean, like presenting them to the Lord. “These are longings that I have, these are desires that I have. And yet at the same time, God, I know that you will direct me toward the longings that are good. And away from the longings and desires that could lead me to places that I don't need to go today.” And I think when we're that honest, we switch from having an expectation, which is like a demand - it needs to be this way - to rather just a very human request. “God, I have needs. I think this is the longing, the desire that I have to get these very basic needs met, but I'm trusting you” or we really shouldn't say “but” we should say “and I'm trusting you. Because I don't want lesser loves to satisfy me. I want You to be the great satisfier of my soul.”

KO: Wow, that's so good. Yeah, I'm excited to see all of this kind of unfold and in our Hebrew study and like Lysa said, study a book of the Bible that a lot of people might have trouble finding or you don't really know what it's about. And I love that in our First 5 app in our community, we're constantly going back to those books that maybe we've read, a lot of times, maybe we've never read. And there's always a fresh revelation and fresh teaching that can apply to anybody in any season. And so, we want you guys to study with us. You are invited. So, you've got two things to do. First, we want you to download the free First 5 mobile app. And second, we want you to purchase the study guide from Proverbs 31 Bookstore at p31bookstore.com.

MB: Also, just to remind everyone, from the top of this message, if you were called to communicate; if you believe that the Lord has a message tucked away in your heart, and you don't know where to get started, join us at the She Speaks Conference this year. It's June 24th to the 26th. Make sure to check it out at shespeaksconference.com. And we just want to say thank you to everyone who joined us today at Proverbs 31. We believe when you know the truth and live the truth, it changes everything.