

Lions and Lizards and Lies  
Steven Furtick

**I wanna show you something, today, that I think will be so helpful from 1 Peter 5:5-9. I'm gonna go ahead and tell you there's only one verse in this whole passage that I actually like. I believe all of it. I know that I'm supposed to do all of it, but from the natural standpoint of my mind, there's only one verse that appeals to me, and you'll see what I'm saying when I read it. Of course, we can't talk about triggered without paying a visit to Peter. Easily the most triggered disciple that Jesus called. Cussin' and cuttin' off people's ears and stuff. But he's calmed down by the time he writes this letter to the gentiles who are assimilating to the Greco-Roman world. He has some great advice for us concerning our anxiety and our cares. Not that you have any. But someone on your row worries too much. Not that you do. But they think about stuff. They make little movies in their minds and they edit together things that didn't actually happen then they tell themselves that that's how it really is.**

So that's who I'm helping today. I'm sorry you had to come hear a sermon designed for someone else. But Peter was actually talking to a church that was undergoing a great deal of persecution and he has some experience from wisdom and I want to share his words with you today and pray that God will speak to you personally. He says, 1 Peter 5:5. Humble yourselves. What did I say? "In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders". I almost skipped that verse, but it's a great verse that I like as a parent. "All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, 'God opposes the proud, but shows favor to the humble.' Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand..". I like how he says that. He says God lines up on the other side of human pride. So if you wanna be on the same side of the ball as God you gotta make sure that you come in at the right level and realize that you are not Him. That you are the creation, not the Creator. "Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you".

If ever there was a verse to cross stitch and to put on a coffee mug it's 1 Peter 5:7. That's the one I like in case you're wondering. "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you". I really enjoy that verse. Feels good. "Be alert..". Verse 8 I don't like so much. "...and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings". And I wanna stop right here and talk to you for a few moments today in this opening foundational session in our study called "Triggered" on this subject. I wanna talk about "Lions and Lizards and Lies". Lions and lizards and lies.

Before you say "Oh my", let me put you in the frame of mind of me five or six years ago when I called a pastor who is older and wiser than me. And I wasn't having like a nervous breakdown from a clinical standpoint or a panic attack as I understand a panic attack, but just feeling overwhelmed not in the clinical sense was I experiencing anxiety, but in the everyday sense of adulthood. I think sometimes we say we're suffering anxiety when we're really just suffering adulthood. I called him in my driveway in my house that we lived in at the time in Mint Hill. I was doing this thing that I was doing a lot during that period where I would sit in the driveway between work and home 'cause my kids were really small and I couldn't figure out which one was more work: work or home. Because at work I'm the boss and at home, my kids weren't calling me pastor at that stage.

So I was sitting in the driveway and I thought, "I'm just gonna call him and I'm gonna ask him, and I don't care what he thinks," 'cause, you get to a certain point of being overwhelmed, it just all spills out. When I started talking to him I started, You know how when you're trying to tell somebody you're struggling and you share with them in little slivers? You try to see if anything you say shocks them. If it feels like it shocks them, you back up and you go, "Well, I'm not struggling with that, but I'm saying, like, some people do. You kind of feel your way into a conversation? At least, I do. It's like I was

telling him "I'm kind of overwhelmed," He didn't judge me. I said, "And, this is how I feel". And he didn't judge me. So every time he didn't judge me, and I didn't feel like he was surprised, I would share a little more and share a little more and share a little more. By the end of it, I'm in my driveway, crying on the phone to him, telling him how overwhelmed I feel being just in my early 30s pastoring a church that was larger than the town I grew up in.

**Imagine that, and then with kids. He actually laughed. In the middle of me crying to him, he laughed. I can't explain why, but it was the most comforting thing he could have done in that moment. What he said next is just what I needed to hear and I know God put it in his mouth so I could hear it. He said, "I'm not surprised that you called me and said this. I'm not surprised that you're melting down. I'm surprised you didn't call me sooner". Partially he was saying that because, you know, as our church grew, obviously, the pressures mount with it, and he was also saying it from a stage of life standpoint that, look, every father feels relatively worthless at some point in the early stages of their children's visit to planet Earth. It takes time to learn how to interact with aliens. By the end of the call, I just felt better just because he said it's supposed to be this way. You're supposed to struggle. When he said I was supposed to struggle, the struggle didn't go away, but the fact that I was no longer surprised by it made me more able to deal with it.**

God has been speaking to me recently that I am too surprised by my struggles. Part of the reason that I struggle so much is because I'm surprised when I do. It's as if we've set an expectation of salvation that if we come to Jesus and lay all our burdens at the foot of the cross that none of them will climb back in the car with us and go home. But how many have ever laid your burdens down in church and found out that they followed you home with a few friends you never met before. It's like I came to Jesus to get rid of my struggles, but my struggle didn't even start until I came to Jesus. Because before I came to Jesus if I wanted to cuss you out I just cussed you out and I felt better. Didn't care how you felt or what God thought. I felt better and that's all that mattered, but now I got this Holy Ghost on the inside of me and when I cuss he makes me feel bad about it. Not I can't sleep till I apologize to you and it got harder.

So Peter says everybody's struggling. Everybody around the world is suffering. You have to take the two together. You can't come to a cross for salvation where the Savior suffered for you and never expect to suffer in your desire to follow Him and be like Him. Tell the person next to you, you're supposed to suffer some. That's what Jesus said. That's what the CEO said. CEO of the galaxies. The Man said that. The Master of the Milky Way said that. He said if they hated me what makes you think you're always gonna be popular and liked and accepted? So I pray that's inspirational for you to know that you are supposed to suffer. But it helps us. It helps us because the enemy often operates in our lives in the secrecy and you know it's very sneaky. The enemy's sneaky. So he wants to sneak up on you. You think life is supposed to be easy because life looks easy for everyone else. But you don't know. You have no idea. Easy for you. That's easy for you, Preacher. Will you get up here and preach? You don't know? You don't know. I don't know your struggle, but I know that there are some struggles and some sufferings that come with the package.

So the call to follow Christ comes with a cross. We get that. Especially in this time. Peter is like look, you wanna be a part of this movement? The only way to see the glory of God revealed is to suffer sometimes. To suffer. To sit with your suffering and even with your sadness. Now we're setting the wrong expect, we're teaching people they can get swole without getting sore. It's supposed to hurt sometimes. It's supposed to strain sometimes. That's the spiritual muscle fibers breaking down so they can grow back together stronger or somethin' like that. I don't know. So what surprises me is that knowing that we must suffer sometimes because our Savior suffered, Let's be honest. Some of our suffering is not because of our Christian faith. It's because of our... You said it. He said 'cause we're stupid. I didn't say that. I wasn't gonna talk to the guests like that. There's a lot of first timers here today. I was gonna say sometimes we suffer because of poor decisions and we are ill-

equipped. But you said stupid so I'll go with it.

**Sometimes we suffer 'cause we're stupid. It surprises me that with all the suffering that we already have to deal with that we somehow as a species will invent new ways for ourselves to suffer and experience pain and call it progress. As if it's not enough to worry about in the world we invent torture device, I mean, communication devices that keep us constantly connected to everyone's opinion, everyone's offenses and we feed on stuff. The enemy's looking for someone to devour. We feed on stuff and we feed our minds with things that eat our peace alive. Then we pray for God to give us peace after we open the front door and let the enemy show his fangs and stood right there. I'm really praying that God would show us a strategy for this because it seems to me that some suffering is inevitable, but certain suffering like the suffering of our shame and the suffering of our sin that Jesus already paid for is dealt with. So, wouldn't it be unthinkable for us as God's children to suffer under pressure that he never intended for us? We live in a culture of performance.**

The interesting thing about 1 Peter 5:7 is that it preaches so well as a singular verse. Even when I was a little boy my mom used to play me this tape of "Psalty the Singing Songbook". Psalty like Psalms. P, S, Psalty. Not like your teenager's salty, but like yeah not like that girl. But "Psalty the Singing Songbook" he had one song on there and I used to fall asleep to this song. If I can remember it. I will cast all my cares upon you. I lay all of my burdens down at your feet. And anytime I don't know what to do. Psalty falsetto. I will cast all my cares upon you. Boom. Boom. Walk down. I will cast all my cares upon you. Can you play it? I lay all of my burdens down at your feet. And anytime I don't know what to do I will cast all my cares on you. Psalty would sing that. It's so sweet. I like verse 7. I wish I didn't have to be bothered by 6 and 8. You know these Bible verses were not in there when Peter wrote the letter. It was just a letter. It was one thing.

In fact, let me show you something. I showed this a few years ago to the church, but you weren't here yet when I was teaching this and we need to catch up because this is one of the craziest most mind blowing things God ever showed me. I actually brought two Bibles to church today. Yeah, that's right. I'm gonna preach twice as long. No. I'm gonna get you out on time, but this is a double barrel revelation that God gave me. One translation of it, it break it up. The one that we read from the New International Version. He says, "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you". It's a capital C and it's a new sentence and a new thought. It's a promise that we can claim. Or rather, it's a command that we can obey. I like it. I like casting all this stuff. I like casting all these cares. Like Psalty said in the King James Version. I like casting all of that on him. All the stuff that I don't wanna deal with and all the stuff that I can't control anyway. I like to just give that over to the Lord. I like to just lay it all at his feet. But in the original language of the Bible and this is what God showed me a few years ago is that verse 7 was not a new sentence. It was a continuation of verse 6. When you read it as a continuation it helps you to understand why sometimes we're trying to cast our anxiety on God and they keep coming back like a boomerang with extra velocity because we are trying to skip to seven which we want without six which we resist.

Now verse 6 starts by saying humble yourselves. See, I don't like that. I wanna be the star of the production. I wanna be the MVP of the game. I want everybody to accommodate my preferences. I want people to read my mind. I want to be the center of other people's affection. I don't wanna humble myself. I'm not even sure I really know what it means. 'Cause all I ever see humble is a hashtag where people are bragging about something and then hashtagging it humbled. Like that makes it humble when you follow your bragging with a hashtag. But for Peter humble was not a hashtag. Peter said humble is a way of seeing the hand of God in history that knows I'm just a small part of this. I'm just a little dot. I'm just a little tiny, I'm just a little bitty, little bitty, little bitty child of God in His big strong hand. So humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time He may exalt you. What a relevant verse.

**I feel like Peter must have been able to see into the year 2018 and see that we would be living in an age of self-promotion, see that we'd be living in an age where rather than praying for opportunities we would post before we prayed rather than sitting back and listening and learning from people who have something to teach us. We would be so intoxicated on our own opinions and our own point of view. And we would be so sucked into algorithms and echo chambers of people who think just like us and speak just like us. Before long we would be inebriated by our own vantage point. Inebriated by images. He says humble yourself under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time He may exalt you. Then if you're willing to go through six you get to seven. They're not separated by a period, just a comma. Lowercase C. If you will humble yourself.**

This is the foundational message for this series: to take back your mind you gotta humble your heart. When you do that, when you humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, what does that mean? What kind of image is Peter trying to evoke? Well for a Jewish person the hand of God recalls the sovereign act of God when He rescued His children from Egyptian slavery. There when God spoke to Moses he said Pharaoh is not gonna let the people go unless a mighty hand compels him. This is Exodus chapter 3. "Unless a mighty hand..". There's the phrase. "...compels him". So the hand of God for us is mostly a comforting image. Sentimental, but symbolically for the people reading this who had a little bit of background they would know that the hand of God is confrontational.

That God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble. They come from the same hand. See, God will use the same hand to oppose the proud that He will use to distribute grace to the humble. My question is what do you wanna be on the receiving end of? The posture of your heart determines that. Yet there's a little bit of confusion because, you know, it seems like we want God's hand to do certain things for us. Like, I like the hand of God when it is filled with His provision. You know? Like, I want what is in God's hand that I can't give myself. Just a show of hands while we're talking about hands. How many have seen God provide for you in a special way? And you were suspecting this had to be God. This could not be me. This could not be people.

Wave your hand if you've ever seen God provide for you. I don't just mean money to make a car payment or to make the deposit on the apartment when you first got married. It could be God gave you energy when you were so exhausted and you didn't even know how you were still going. People would ask you how and you would make something up, but deep down you knew if I really told them how they wouldn't understand it. Because there's an invisible hand of God that is making things happen that I can't even explain. So I like the provision. You know? How he broke the bread in his hands. And Peter was there when Jesus broke the bread with his hands. So he might've been flashing back to that incident when he said the mighty hand of God that can provide for you. Or maybe he was thinking about the hand of God in terms of God's protection. How God drove back the sea with his hands so His people could cross through till they got safely through.

**Now if you've ever had God protect you from you, you're grateful for the hand of God. If you've ever had God protect you from people that were in your life, In fact, sometimes the way that God will protect you is to reach down and remove you from situations that you like, that you are actually praying for God to leave you in. God will sometimes reach down and say I know more than you. I'm big. You're little. I'm wise. You're limited. I'm infinite. You're finite. So come with me I'ma put you over here. 'Cause I know if you stay with them I know where it's gonna lead. Peter says you can either fight that or you can go with it. Because it's the hand of God.**

A lot of my anxiety comes because I get confused about who is in control and I get responsibilities confused with sovereignty. So, I start thinking that because God has given me responsibility, that God has also given me control. And that's where I get stressed out and a lot of my anxiety comes from making it about me when it's not about me. Making it about my strength when it's not about my

strength. It's not by might nor by power, but by His spirit. But I know God's given me a job. I know that when I stand before you like this, and people in the room are suicidal, and people in the room are addicted not only illegal drugs, but some are depending on drugs that at first, they were taking the recommended dosage, but now it's gone far beyond that.

And when I know that there are some of you who have not slept in three nights, except for a few minutes here and there, hearing this message, I know that I can't say the words that you need. I need God to speak through me to you. And I always pray for that, 'cause I know how disappointing it's gonna be if I speak. I know that I need to move my mouth and I know that my vocal cords need to rub together. And I know that I need to produce a sound, but I know that I need the substance of God behind the sound that I make. I need God to speak. I know you did not load up those demons, I mean, precious children, blessings, quiver full of arrows from the Lord, and get to this house of worship today in Gaston, or U.C., or Lake Norman, you did not log on to hear me speak. You need God to speak, and I believe that God will speak. I believe He is speaking. I believe He wants to speak. I believe He still speaks.

I don't believe He spoke one time in the past, and now we got this dusty book full of principles that applied at one time, but don't make sense in a modern age. I don't believe God is outdated or irrelevant. I don't believe I need BuzzFeed to tell me what's going on in the world. I got my Bible and it's living and it's active and it can penetrate through all the noise. So, I know we need God to speak and His word doesn't return void. And God will speak, but God won't study. I gotta study. God won't show me whether the sentence was one sentence or two sentences. He gave me books for that. And inspired, I can't figure it out sometimes. And sometimes I feel like I'm a control freak, and sometimes it gets in the way. I really do. Feel like it gets in the way. Feel like I wanna control things. I wanna control people, I'm manipulative, and I see it, and I hate it, but I do it. It's a habit and I know that God's hand is the hand is really moving things around. But, you know, I wanna put my hand on God's hand and just kinda nudge. Y'all are so holy.

**Sometimes, you know, sometimes God needs a little help. 'Cause He's just... Peter's writing from experience. He didn't come by humility easy. That's why I like to listen to him. 'Cause he didn't always think this way. Like, when Jesus was getting ready to go to the cross, He told His disciples, He's like, "Hey, come here". This is Matthew 16:21. Give it to us on the screen. Jesus said, "I have to go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders". At this point, Peter didn't think that the savior was supposed to suffer. Jesus' mission did not fit his mindset. He was still confused about whose hand was writing the schedule. And so Peter, in a younger version of himself, did not know how to humble himself under the hand of God or the plan of God. He liked the provision. Hey, Jesus, don't go die. Let's go feed some more people. That was awesome when you did it. That little boy, he was so happy, Jesus. It was amazing! Everybody got a bag of leftovers. It's crazy, you don't have to die!**

Watch what Peter did. Jesus said, "I gotta go. I gotta suffer. It's a part of a plan. I gotta fulfill the plan. I can't get caught up in my preferences. I can't get caught up in my ideas. My expectations or the expectations of others. I didn't come to be an earthly king. I came to inaugurate a reign and rule that is not the result of human hands. Peter, verse 22, took Jesus aside. Put Jesus in time out. The same dude that was saying, you know, humble yourself. This is like you telling your kids not to do exactly what you did when you were their age. Peter said to Jesus, younger Peter, first half of life Peter, says, "Lord, never. This shall never happen to you. I won't let it. If they try, I got a sword, and they got an ear, and watch what I can do. I got a plan. Let's go work my plan. And verse 23 says Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan".

Oh, that's a downgrade! He went from Simon to Peter. That was his first name. Simon is kinda like "shifty", and Peter is "the rock". So he goes from Dwayne Johnson in one verse to Satan in the next verse. And he says, "You are a stumbling block to me. You do not have in mind the concerns of

God, but merely human concerns". You still think you're in control and that is why your mind is a mess, because you are still trying to control things that are beyond your pay grade, Peter. You're confused. We get confused! Sometimes I don't know when to let go. When, sometimes, I don't do this very much, 'cause I've seen some really, really, really horrific things happen, on church stages, but sometimes I'll call somebody up on stage and have them share. And I don't know them. And I feel kinda like my responsibility is to control whatever happens on the stage as the pastor.

And so when they come up, usually I call them up and I'll ask them to share something. And I do this even with our staff. I'll call them and ask them to share, but one thing I learned to do, I always keep the mic in my hands. When they come up, they think they're gonna take the mic, but they're not. I'm the mic stand and I'mma hold this mic. In case you decide that now would be a good time to say something weird, I can snatch it back, and I just like the feeling that it gives me of being in control. In case you might decide, I might ask you something, you say, "Well, when I was three..". We don't have time for when you were three. Didn't ask you all that, and I got the mic, give it back. Now, so it gives me a good feeling, but the interesting thing is, 'cause there's crazy Christians. And sometimes when I call them up, I can't see their eyes. And when they get closer, I'm like, "Oh. God, I picked one of those"! And you don't see it from a distance. So, I like to keep the mic, and I like to hold the mic.

**But now, the interesting thing is, I'm holding the mic, but there's a guy that you don't see named Neil. And Neil this week, among many others at our different locations happens to be in the back of the room sitting behind a console. And you know what's interesting, I'm up here talking and I'm holding the mic, but at any moment Neil can decide, that he no longer... At any moment, he can decide. At any moment, he can decide, you know, maybe I fussed at him or something like that he doesn't like. At any moment Neil can decide. He can just decide that he no longer wants. At any moment, here's the principle. I'm holding it, but I'm not controlling it. They got it last night. That's what I know about my life. That's what I know about my time. That's what I'm learning about my money. That's what I'm learning about my children. My responsibility. I'm holding it, but somebody I can't see is controlling it. He's in control. He speaks, and winds obey. He speaks, and waves die down. He speaks, and seas split, because what I can see is controlled by that hand that I can't see.**

And now I wanna humble myself under that mighty hand, and, I'm coming to the place in my life where I say, "God, I don't even know what I need anymore so I trust You and Your timing. And I trust You and Your heart. And I trust You and Your wisdom. And I humble myself". And as I humble myself, my anxiety goes out the door with my pride, and my arrogance, and my plan and I become what Peter says is the goal of the Christian life in verse eight, which I don't like any more than I like verse six. But it's on the other side of seven. And I want the result of seven. Because I don't wanna live with the weight of the world on my scrawny shoulders. So I gotta be what Peter says. Strange phrase. He says, "Be alert, and of sober mind". I didn't even know I was drunk. But I am. Peter didn't know. He was stumbling. Telling Jesus what Jesus needed to do. He was drunk on his own, you see how we get intoxicated in the age we live in?

It's so much information coming at us, we're drunk, and we don't even know it. And we can't defend ourselves. And we're getting eaten alive. God gives us peace, and the enemy eats rights through it 'cause he's a lion. At least that's what I always thought. I thought he was a lion. And this week I slowed down and read the verse and I realized that the Bible never says that the Devil is a lion. He's a liar. I know he's a liar. You know when the Devil's lying? When he's talking. He's a liar, but he's not a lion. Give me the verse. Peter says, "Watch out". One translation says, "Pay attention. Wake up". Or, "Be alert and of sober mind". Here's why. "Your enemy, the Devil". Your enemy. God's enemy is pride. Your enemy is the Devil, who wants to fill your mind. As if we don't already suffer enough. As if we don't already have enough to deal with today. He wants to put you in a hypothetical tomorrow where things may or may not happen. Or, put you in a past replaying what you wish you would have said, to the person who offended you.

And how many come up with great comebacks about three weeks too late? God, let me see them again. Please let me see them again and let them say it just like they said it. I'm ready now. Argh! Devil's a liar. But he does not say, "Watch out for the lion". The devil is not a lion. What's it say? "Your enemy prowls around like..". He's not a lion! He's loud like a lion. But he's not as powerful as a lion unless you let him be. And this is what I'm gonna teach in the series. Are you coming back after this week? Because I really wanna get into this. And I wanna look at some of the lies that we have believed in the realm of our mind. That's where the attack happens. We've been looking for a lion, but it's not a lion coming to attack us. It's our minds! It's in our minds. And we've been calling the wrong stuff "the Devil". I got a flat tire. It's the Devil. It was a nail. It was a construction site. They're building houses across the street. I ate a doughnut. It was the Devil! No, it was delicious.

**It's the Devil! It's the Devil! It's the Devil! I'm under attack! Spiritual warfare! The Devil's attacking me! What do you mean Devils are attacking you? Well, my mother-in-law is coming to visit. That's not the Devil. That's your prayer request. Remember when you asked those women to pray that you would have more patience? Well, God wrapped patience in a package that looks like your mother-in-law. And she's about to get FedExed to your doorstep. God delivers. That's not the devil. So now, he's loud, but he's not a lion. What is he? I remember hearing years ago about the part of our brain, again, bear with me. I know there's like, neurologists in the crowd. You don't make me feel bad about that, I won't make you feel bad about the Bible. We just agree together that everybody stay in their own lane. But I did hear something about, the phrase got my attention, called the lizard brain.**

And I wrote a book one time about the chatterbox, and I think I was trying to talk about what they call the lizard brain. And I just remembered it the other day. 'Cause Abbie wanted to show her brothers, she's our youngest child and our only daughter. Our smartest child. I'm just kidding. My son's in here. But she does have a little advantage over the boys 'cause she's always had to stuff it up to keep up. And she's superior by virtue of being female so she, working my pulpit, winning some points. She wanted to go all the way across the pool and hold her breath, which her brothers couldn't do until they were ten. She's seven. So she's like, "I can do it. I can do it. I can do it". I said, "All right. Let's do it". And she wanted everybody to see her, and I said, "You can do it. But just know that the lizard brain is gonna be telling you that you can't do it. The lizard is lying". She said, "There's a lizard in my brain"? I said, "No, baby". And I, you know, she's seven so I just pretended to be an expert. I said, "The human brain..".

And I gave her some outdated theory on the Triune brain that probably isn't even accepted anymore. But I was talking about that thing that is real in our brain that doesn't process at the level of wisdom. And doesn't process at the level even of emotion, but processes at the level of fear. And they call it lizard brain, or they called it lizard brain. because it's no different than a reptile. A snake. Or a lizard. And so, when I told her, don't listen to the lizard, I was explaining. You're gonna go down, and you're gonna think that you're gonna die, but you're not gonna die. Just don't listen to the lizard. And she went down under that water. And she swam clear to the other end and she came up. She took the biggest gasp, the biggest gulp of air, and she was so proud, and she said, "Man, that lizard is loud"! I said, "Well, what did you say back to him"? She said, "I told him, 'shut up, lizard!' I'm doing this"!

Now hold on. I know the enemy has been telling you some stuff. I know he has. 'Cause that lizard has been talking to me too. But I came to tell you today that lizard has no power over you. He might bruise your heel. But you're gonna crush his head in the name of Jesus! I am gonna make it! I shall live and not die! I'm gonna raise my kids! I'm gonna make a difference in the world! Taking my mind back! We're gonna learn how to do what Abbie did. What Peter said. Be of a sober mind. Tell that lizard, "You can talk, you can scream, but I'm swimming to the other side". Now, everything in you has been telling you you're drowning, you're going down. But the lizard is a liar. Your own mind is lying to you. And that's why God put it on my heart to do a whole series on "Triggered". You know,

the trauma that you went through that transports you back to a lesser version of yourself and then you start reacting and responding out of anger because of rejection at the hands of people who aren't even in your life anymore.

I wanna talk about that. I respectfully request your presence in as many of these sessions as possible. But right now, I want you to stand and no one leaving because I just wanna pray for open and humble hearts. We can't receive what God has in His hands, when we're holding too tightly to what's in our hands. And when you're drunk on your own opinions and inebriated on your own ideas and ways of seeing the world you are not open to the wisdom of God and you're stumbling. Jesus said, "Get that behind me". You're stumbling. You're trippin'. Be of a sober mind because your enemy is trying to steal your attention. That's where the fight is. That's where the attack is. It's not out here. The attacks in our life are actually used by God. The trials are used to make us stronger. It's here.

And that's what we wanna pray over. And for too long, the people of God have been equipped with a few cliches to make it until about Sunday at four. And we're being eaten alive in our minds. And now we can't focus anymore. We live in the age of what one psychologist called, "constant partial attention". And we can't give ourselves wholly to anything, but God has a word for us and through this series we will meet several Bible characters who struggled with the same things we struggle with today and suffered in many ways like us. And I know this is no substitute for doctors and counseling. That's not my goal in this series, but I think it would be good for us to begin this journey together just in a posture of surrender. And I wanna ask you to do something that Christians have done historically, worshippers have done through the millennia. Just lift your hands to God in His presence because it's too much for you to carry. It really is. And you humble yourself under His hand and release what you're holding too tightly to, and He is able to release His peace.

*So, we just speak peace over your life, today. More than speaking it, Father, I pray that we would position ourselves so that we can receive Your peace. And we repent of all the ways we think things are supposed to be. And exhausting ourselves endlessly trying to align our agendas with the reality of our lives rather than submitting to Yours. So we stand here before You today, as humble as we know how. We ask You to fill our hearts with Your peace.*