

You Sunk My Battleship

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MAIN VERSES

[1 Kings 18](#) • [1 Kings 19](#) • [Matthew 5](#) • [John 11:35](#) • [Romans 5:6](#) • [Jeremiah 6:16](#)

And so during the second temple era, we have writings that the Levites actually had a band that played at the temple, which is pretty cool. They write about how it wasn't just to have good background music. The purpose of the band was actually to minister to people. When you came to the temple, it was typically for engaging with God in an intimate manner—maybe praise or worship, or you're bringing a sacrifice of repentance. And when people would come in, the scripture talks about how you can't ascend the hill of the Lord unless your heart is pure, you have clean hands and a clean heart.

So if you have something laying on your heart—a vulnerability, maybe some unforgiveness, or just something that's bugging you, some grief, something that's distracting you from where you know God wants you—before you come to him, you wouldn't turn right to go towards the altar. You'd turn left, and there'd be kind of a staging area for those folks who aren't quite ready yet. You just kind of hang out there for a minute until you know you're ready to approach the Lord.

The priest, from what we understand, would sit there and wait for people and see who would turn left. The band would be waiting. Now, I don't know if this is completely historically correct, but I've seen writings that describe what would happen: the priest would see someone turn left, realizing that they needed to be ministered to, and they'd say, "Okay, guys, drum it up," and they'd hit the music. They'd want to lift the spirits. For me, I picture big old—it was probably something more authentic than that. But the band would begin to play, and the priest would go and approach the person to see what they could do to help them and minister to them with the facilitation of music, with the atmosphere that the music created, meant to minister to people and to create an atmosphere of worship so people could engage with the Father.

I'm so thankful that here, I can come and the praise and worship group spends their time, their effort, and their talents up here to assist in creating that atmosphere. I just want to thank you guys for putting in hard-earned practice and time. You guys meet during the week. They drive

from all over the place just so they can come together and create an atmosphere of worship for us.

The Battleship Strategy

That was my insight when I was praising the Father earlier. But you guys ever play a game called Battleship? You know the game, right? The object of the game, if you've played it—I think most of us have—is that you have two people and you each have a grid. You have a divider between your grid and the other person's grid, and you have these little ships. This is your fleet. This is all the things that you need to protect, or at least you want to keep a secret from the other guy. You strategically place all of these ships on your grid, right? A row 1, A row 2, F row 6, and so forth.

The object of the game is to take turns and try to attack the other person's fleet while you're hiding. The tactic is hiding while attacking. It's really like a game of bingo on steroids if you think about it. B6, B4—and finally, you don't yell "bingo," you yell "you sunk my battleship." It's a negative thing.

But I was thinking about it, and I realized: wow, that's a real-life strategy. It's about learning how to hide your vulnerabilities, hide your fleet from other people while trying to attack them. When we're attacked, we're typically quick to launch a counterattack. Get a little angry, launch those torpedoes, launch the shells—B6, B5, E2. You just get mad and start going through the grid from right to left or whatnot. We think to ourselves, if we can just take out their battleship before they take out ours, I'll be safe. If I can just take down all their battleships before mine is completely sunk, I'll win the game and I'll still be able to protect the things that I'm hiding.

Hiding While Attacking

It occurred to me that sometimes we use this very same strategy in real life—with things that we feel vulnerable about, with things in our lives that we don't want other people to know, things in our lives that we want to keep inside. I'm not just talking about sin. Of course, you want to keep that addiction out from everybody's eyes because you don't want people to know about it, because you might experience shame. But I'm talking about vulnerabilities in general.

Men, do we have vulnerabilities? Do we feel vulnerable at times? We do. When do we feel vulnerable? I feel vulnerable when I get emotional and everyone else is in the room and I want to cry but I can't cry. Because if I cry, what happens? You feel like a wuss. I might be viewed as weak. Maybe I'm going through a time of grief. That's when that strikes home. Maybe I'm going

through a time of grief and people want to come up and ask, "Hey, are you okay?" Because they can obviously see that I'm hiding something from them. And what do I say? "No, no—yeah, I'm fine, I'm fine, I'm fine." Why? Because for some reason, we feel that if we expose how sad we are, if we expose that we're grieving about something to some level, we'll be embarrassed or viewed differently.

You ever wonder—especially in the South, we love to do this. "Hey, how you doing?" And we always say, "Yeah, good, right?" I mean, your house could just have been foreclosed on, your car got towed away, and you're going to say, "Good." I mean, "How you doing? Great, fine, fine."

It's that game of Battleship. We don't want to expose the things in our life that make us feel vulnerable. And so we're taught this by society. Why? Because we fear being viewed as weak. We fear being viewed as different. We fear being viewed as emotional, or we fear shame.

The Fear of Disconnection

Now what's interesting is, if you guys remember, we talked about honor and shame a long time ago in *Saving Face*, part two, and also in *Shameless*. We talked a lot about guilt societies and shame societies. But it's interesting: when we look at shame, what is shame?

If I say I'm scared of being shamed, from a social studies aspect, being shameful or being shamed is equivalent to the fear of being disconnected from society. If you're being shamed by society, you're being disconnected, you're being excluded. "You are not one of us. You are different. Shame on you. You are no longer part of the body as a whole."

And so that's a big fear for a lot of people in the States. Because for me at least, I don't like to show anything that makes me feel vulnerable.

Brene Brown and Vulnerability Research

I was watching—everyone watch TED Talks? TED Talks online, right? You can learn a lot from TED Talks. I thought I had a general idea about stuff in the world until I watched a few of these TED Talks episodes. I'm like, wow.

If you're unfamiliar, it's basically just a platform for smart people to talk about stuff that they've studied, right? They're great public speakers, and there's everything from politics to war. I saw one guy—he was an EMS driver—and he was talking about his experiences arriving at accidents and transporting people who were going to die. His experience went from one part of his life

where he used to tell people, "You're gonna be fine. I'm not gonna die." "Nah, it's just many guts hanging out, but you're gonna be fine."

And he went from that until one day there was a guy who was obviously going to die and looked at him and said, "Hey, am I gonna die?" "Yep." "Sure are, right?"

And it was incredible because everyone just kind of was like, "You would do that?" And he began to explain that from that moment forward, he realized that when he started doing that, it brought the opposite effect of what he thought it would bring. He thought it would bring panic to a person or despair. But he said every single person—of course, we can't ask the person because they're gone—but every single time he told the person that they weren't going to make it, they accepted it. They calmed down. They said, "Okay, okay." And they were at a state of peace with it.

So it's very interesting because on TED Talks, you've got some people talking about politics, some people talking about different stuff. And I was watching a lady by the name of Brené Brown—I think is how you say her name. And she is—get this—a vulnerability researcher. Only on TED Talk would you find someone who has made a career of studying vulnerability. She's a psychologist. And I think the name of the video was "The Power of Vulnerability." It was incredible.

The Wholehearted Ones

But she said that in her research, she studied people specifically on the topic of shame and vulnerability, and she found a group of people that she labeled as the wholehearted ones. This is a group of people that she found were more joyful in life than everyone else. They were happier in life than everyone else. They felt more fulfilled in every single thing that they had in their life. And their relationships were deeper and stronger with everyone around them—whether it be kids, parents, friends, enemies, whatever. They were able to engage with others better than everyone else.

And she found that the one thing that separated them from everyone else is the fact that they understood that they didn't need to hide their vulnerabilities.

They showed who they were to people. When something was bothering them, they said it. They didn't hold back emotions. If they were grieving, they would show it. And there's something about showing vulnerability that brings down walls. I was talking to Jason about this, and it's true because one thing that we're taught is, especially as men, I don't know about women, but as men, we're taught that we need to look strong and we need to keep everything inside and we

need to play this role of what a manly man, John Wayne man should look like. But then we realized through research and social studies that if someone comes to you—let's say you're mad at someone. A real life example. Let's say you're mad at someone and you're going to have to have a conversation with someone. You're going to have to face them and whatever point of disagreement that you've had in the past that caused you to be adversaries is going to come up. So you're gearing up. This is like a Jacob-Esau incident. You're gearing up and you're going to meet them. So you sit down with them and you're talking with them and yeah, how you doing? Good. Same old, same old. And you've got this elephant in the room. And then they look at you and they say, "Hey, remember that thing that divided us? I'm really sorry that I did something that put you in a position where we're now at odds with each other." How do you feel right now? Jericho—walls come crumbling down. Why? Because subconsciously you sympathize with them because they're vulnerable. They've placed themselves in a vulnerable situation in front of you. And now, oh, I don't have to fight them. "Oh yeah, it happens. Yeah, me too. Yeah." Something like that comes out.

Vulnerability Brings Down Walls

I had the experience a while back to do this with an employer that when I left, one of the managers that I had, I wasn't sure if we left on great terms and when we had to go meet at a party at one point in time, I remembered this concept and I walked up to him and I'm like, "Hey, I hadn't talked to you in a while and just wanted to say I'm sorry for the way I left or whatever." "Oh, that's no big deal, man. I'm sorry. I'm sorry that it went out the way it did. I'm sorry that we couldn't facilitate your employment and so on and so forth or make things better for you that you would want to stay longer and so on and so forth." Just the power of being vulnerable in a society that rejects vulnerability is amazing. That's what this woman was studying. She says that the people she realized were happiest and had the strongest relationships had something she called courage. Courage. And courage, the root of the word courage comes from the Latin word to mean heart. Literally, the word courage means to live with all of your heart, right? And so she goes on to say that these people are living and telling their story with their whole heart, and their whole heart includes their vulnerabilities. Their whole heart includes their weaknesses. They have courage to live imperfectly before other people. And because of that, they have happier lives, they have happier relationships, they are not in conflict nearly as much as everyone else trying to play the battleship game. And I found this amazing.

Living With All Your Heart

Because we're taught to hide our vulnerabilities. Whether it be stress, whether it be anxiety, whether it be grief, whether it be disappointment. We're taught to numb them, right? Think about it. Who here has ever been scared of being fired at work? It's a vulnerability. Who here has ever been scared that they might have to fire someone at work? That's a big one. It doesn't feel good, right? And you don't even want to address it because it makes you vulnerable. It makes you feel very uncomfortable because now you're going to have to have conflict and how are they going to feel and how are you going to feel? And it's just not something that we deal with. And so what do we do? We look to numb these senses of emotion. And there's an issue with this, with what she says in her research. It's very interesting because I don't want to feel this emotion, so I'm just going to go home and have a couple beers and have a banana nut muffin and a pint of ice cream, and I won't have to feel it anymore, you know what I mean? I mean, is that true? She points out that we are the most obese, addicted, in debt, and medicated cohort in all U.S. history right now because we're looking to numb our vulnerabilities.

The Trap of Numbing

And so it's interesting because if you want to numb emotion, it's a very difficult thing to do. You can't just—what are the little—what do they do when I write? They got the little drone strikes. Obama loves them, right? And so they pinpoint missiles, right? And so if you want to hit just one building, you don't have to carpet bomb the whole city. You can just drop one of these cool little—what are they—Hellfire missiles or whatnot? And it'll take out the one building and maybe crush a few windows, but you're not going to take out the whole neighborhood, right? You cannot numb emotion like a Hellfire missile because all emotions run on the same platform. You have no choice. If you're going to drop a bomb on emotion, you've got to carpet bomb it all. In other words, if you're going to try to numb your vulnerabilities and the things that make you scared in life, you're also going to, as a result, numb happiness, numb joy, numb gratitude, numb everything that is good, and then you're going to find yourself being miserable. And then you're really going to want to numb the pain, right? And so she realizes that this is just such a vicious cycle that we have gotten ourselves into.

Vulnerable People in Scripture

And why? Why? So this caused me to go back and kind of look—and this was not the message I was going to talk about today. And I don't know why I could not shake this specific message. It kind of took over my week, reviewing this stuff. And I don't know who here has a problem with vulnerability. Maybe it's every single one of us. But I hope this message is edifying for at least

somebody because it caused me to go back and look at vulnerable people in the Bible and it caused me to go back and look at people like Noah, Moses, Ezekiel, Ezra, Daniel, Elijah—geez. Elijah was just mad. We talk about that [1 Kings 18](#), right? Like he's a superhero. He's chopping off, he's killing prophets, all 450 prophets at Baal, with his sword, right? He just stood there, the last prophet of Yahweh, and fire came down from heaven, vindicating him and separating him from all the prophets of Baal.

You know, Baal-Hadad was kind of a storm god. And remember that whole big famine that came? Why do you think they were praying to the storm god? "Send us rain!" Right? Of course, Elijah just did all that with the whole end of the famine thing, but regardless, 450 prophets of Baal—all of Israel was worshiping this other god, Baal-Hadad, the storm deity that had taken over Israel. And here's little Elijah, last prophet. I'm gonna die if you don't send fire down. And that's okay, God. I'm ready to do it. And so he gets a little arrogant. He's like, if I'm gonna die, at least I'm gonna... God's not sending fire. Let me try mine. And we know the story. Fire comes down from heaven and Elijah's victorious. And then he goes down and he kills all 450 prophets of Baal. And he declares that Yahweh is the God of gods. Better than Baal, better than El, better than all the other gods in Canaanite myth. And then what's he do? He's pretty happy. He has a victory, right? Victory behind his belt. God used him to complete something. He called him to ministry and he called Elijah to be there for a purpose. And yes, though it was a little stressful, he made it through it.

And then Jezebel, remember the queen at the time, queen of—what's his name—Ahab, sends a letter to Elijah and says, hey, I'm going to kill you. What? You think I didn't know that already? I just killed 450 of your favorite prophets that eat at your table. What are you going to do, Jezebel? Bring it on. I got Yahweh on my side. I'm ready to fight another battle with you. Now see, the chapter changes right then and there to chapter 19, and it says that Elijah, as soon as he heard this, ran for his life out into the wilderness and cried out to God to kill him because he was just so tired of this mess and so tired of the journey. He was tired of feeling weak at times. He was tired of always having to prove his faith. He was tired of everyone looking at him like he was a freak. He was tired of everyone looking at him telling him that his God is not fake. He was tired. He was tired. And he finally just went out in the desert and was like, God, just kill me, man. I'm tired of this. I don't want to do this anymore. Suicidal, depressed, weak, lack of faith, vulnerable. But out of all these people, I see people that had courage. I see people who at one point or another did not allow their vulnerabilities to stop them from being used by God for a greater plan.

Real Relationships Require Vulnerability

Something I realized about relationships is interesting. There's no way to have a real relationship without first becoming vulnerable to hurt. Let that sink in. You cannot fully trust someone unless you show yourself to them. It's amazing. There was a movie. I was going to show a clip, but I decided not to. A Knight's Tale. Remember that? Who was the actor? Heath Ledger, right? Great actor. Played the Joker. That was great. So A Knight's Tale, right?

And it's a story about a knight, right? He comes up from nothing, but all he wants to be is a knight, but he can't. He's not a son of royalty, right? Oh, we could teach a sermon on that. He's not a son of royalty, so he can't really compete in the joust and all of the knight combat games, right? And so what he does is he fabricates an identity. I forget his name—it was a weird name in the movie.

And while he's jousting, he sees the queen—a pretty girl, a lady, a noble woman. And so he starts to have a crush on this girl, and he's trying to impress her. And there's one point where they're being flirtatious. He's pretending to be this noble man, and to have this lineage, and he's really just a poor homeless guy. And he chases her into a church at one point, and they're going back and forth, and she ends up calling him on a bluff. It was a funny scene.

Vulnerability and Love

But he finally yells at her. He's like, "What do I have to prove to you? How can I prove to you that I love you? Tell me how, right?" And he's like, "I'll tell you what, I'll win the games for you. How about that?"

And she turns around and said, "If you truly want to show your love for me..." He says, "All right, here we go. What do you want? You want me to win the game? What do you want me to do?" She says, "You will do your worst. You will show me your worst if you love me."

"What do you mean?"

"You're leading in the games right now. Lose."

"No, I don't. What? What do you mean lose the games? I'm doing so well."

"If you love me, you will show me your worst. You will show me how vulnerable you can really be in the games for my sake and you will lose the games."

Now, guys, this is a big deal because we're playing battleship. We got all of our vulnerabilities hidden. We think we got all our ships hidden at this point. No one's ever going to get them.

Like, we're bombing everyone else's ships. We're doing great. And then this cute little girl shows everyone your board. Just turn battleship around and show everyone. Yeah. No, I ain't gonna do that.

Then you don't love me.

He makes a face. The very next scene is him fixing to go jousting because he's really good at it. And he got that funny guy who was introducing him and everything. And they swing the flag and his opponent starts running at him with his big old long stick, jousting. And then he starts to go but just stops. And you can see the frustration just in his character. And of course, this noble woman's up in the stands just watching and she perks up a little bit and he's just standing there. He just drops his joust a little bit and the guy runs up on him, hits him square, boom, in the chest. Hurts him. It hurts. Ah! What is he doing? The girl's up there. Oh, he's losing. He loves me, right? And it's, oh, yeah, right.

Vulnerability as Foundation

But I found it interesting because in order for her to truly know that he loved her, she needed to see his vulnerabilities. She needed him to show her his worst, right? Take down this fake wall that he's holding up and show her just how much he loves her. And it's true. Any person that you truly have a relationship with is based on the foundation of how much you're showing your vulnerabilities to them. The more you show them, the more they are capable of hurting you, the stronger the relationship is, the stronger the trust and the faith is, right?

And so it caused me to go back through looking at people in the Bible and we always, every single person we have in the Bible that we look up to, we look up to as honorable and we look up to as strong and these are perfect people. But then I realized that Abraham didn't have any lineage, which was actually a shameful thing. If you remember us discussing that, you know, his family was not going to continue. All the wealth in the world was not going to continue after him. And it was a kind of shameful thing. We have Elijah, suicidal, crazy, fickle-minded. Joseph was abused. We don't think of that, do we? It wasn't until I came into ministry, right, and it wasn't because of here, but just in the broader areas of things with counseling and opening up this scope of people and how broken we really are, I didn't realize the statistics of how many people actually have a history of abuse in their family. Joseph was abused. Moses had a speech impediment. Gideon was afraid. Samaritan woman divorced. Vulnerable status. Noah got drunk. David was a murderer, among other things. Naomi was a widow. Jonah ran from God. Peter. I love Peter. Strong guy, right? He became the Pope. So Peter was... I use that joke a lot because I

think it's just funny. I mean, it's true. Like Peter was one of the top on the 12. You know what I'm saying? Good job, Peter. Only this was revealed to you through God. You know what I mean? Peter, you're going to deny me three times. I'm not Lord. Are you talking about? No, no, no. You're gonna deny me three times. I already know it's coming. I will not deny you three times. No way in Sheol that I'm gonna sit up here and deny you three times, right?

Peter's Vulnerability

What happens? What happened? So the relationship with Yeshua became a vulnerable thing, something that made Peter vulnerable in the public eye. And after the trial and everything, someone pointed up, "Hey, aren't you the guy who follows Yeshua?" "No, no. Battleship, go, go, hide, hide, hide. No, I don't follow Yeshua." Three times he denied that he had anything to do with Yeshua. Why? Because he felt vulnerable. How easy is it for us to do these things? Martha couldn't stop worrying about everything. Disciples fell asleep while praying. Thought that was fun. Paul was a Pharisee that persecuted believers before he became one. That was his legacy. That was his history. So vulnerability. He could be accused every day. What do you know? He used to kill us.

Weakness and God's Strength

All men that at their moments when they were going to be used by God, they showed their weakest attributes. I love that because [Romans 5:6](#) tells us that "For while we were still weak, at the right time Messiah died for the ungodly." And I've heard lots of sermons and teachings and messages about this verse, and it never gets old because it makes me feel good about being vulnerable at times and having some weakness in my life. Not being the smartest all the time or not being the most courageous at times because it seems like God enjoys using weak people to manifest his strong kingdom. What it's saying here is while we were weak, not while we were perfect, not while we were strong, not while we were invincible, but while we were weak, Messiah died for us.

Makes me think of olives in Israel. They have really good olives. I don't eat olives. When we went to Israel, my wife and I, we started eating olives and you can pick them off the trees there because they actually tasted good. I don't know something about them. Tried to eat olives when we got back. Nasty. The thing about olives is in order to get the olive oil, they have to be crushed. They have to be made their weakest in order for the true essence of their purpose to flow out. And not that I'm saying that we need to always go around and mope around and be weak. And I'm certainly not saying, yeah, I need to go out and be a sinner so God can use me.

No, that's not what I'm saying. But what I'm saying is we don't need to be afraid to be viewed as vulnerable in this world.

Remember when Yeshua was going to feed the 5,000? He got that bread. What did he do with the bread? I know it's so simple. Matt, that's a stretch. He broke it. He had to break the bread in order to feed 5,000 people. Weakness is not something that's viewed as shameful in God's kingdom, and I love that.

The Bismarck

I want to tell you a history lesson. It's my favorite part. I had to study a little bit of history. So we're talking about battleships, and of course I was looking for history of ships, and maybe I could find something, and I found a cool story because in 1941, we know World War II was starting to really rage up, and especially the battles over the Atlantic. You have the ships coming out in all the different countries, and the Nazi war machine decided to come out and flex its muscle with this huge ship called the Bismarck. And it was the largest and most fortified warship ever made, weighing in at 50,000 tons, and 40% of that weight was just in armor. Even with extra weight, the Bismarck, with its 150,000 horsepower engines, was capable of cruising at 30 knots. Her decks had 64 massive guns on them. They had four float planes, which could catapult from either end of the ship. And the Bismarck was home to over 2,200 of Germany's finest soldiers, sailors that manned the ship. Upon its maiden voyage, and even before it reached the Atlantic, the Bismarck flexed its muscles in a battle by engaging England's most prestigious battle cruiser, the HMS Hood—a ship that was the pride of England, if you will. The guns were so powerful that it literally blew the ship in half.

The Unsinkable Oscar

In response, Prime Minister Winston Churchill energized the frightened troops by saying we must avenge the loss of the pride of our Navy. So within days, every single possible unit was committed to hunt down this Bismarck ship. After a frantic and exhaustive search, the Bismarck was found and converged upon by a fleet of four battleships against this one major ship. Five heavy cruisers and six destroyers plus two aircraft carriers surrounded this ship. On May 27th, as the morning lit the sky, the Royal Navy opened fire on this huge ship and the Bismarck responded with force, fighting its way out of the battle. 12 hours passed as this battle ensued. Aircraft were in pursuit, torpedo bombers dropping bombs. With all of the British ships either out of torpedoes and shells or low on supplies, the Bismarck finally went down. The loss of life was so staggering—only 140 sailors were found to be survivors. 140 sailors and a little black

and white cat named Oscar. 2,100 people just died and I mentioned a cat and everyone was like, "Oh."

Why the Cat?

Case in point, why? Why do we sympathize with the cat and not the sailors? Because the cat's vulnerable. Because it's cute and it's helpless, right? And those soldiers were Nazis and the cat was vulnerable. Every single one of us just goes, "Oh." You can use this, guys. This is no secret anymore. If you act vulnerable to everyone, that is how everyone will react to you and you will be so powerful in society, right? You think I'm joking, right?

So they got this little cat named Oscar and he was clinging to the side of some floating wreckage. And for months, the Cossack continued to be Oscar's home. So it was this battleship that adopted the cat. It became their mascot. And after five months, this ship was torpedoed by a German U-boat. Ship went down. Surviving crew and Oscar were rescued and returned to England. And that's where Oscar became known as Unsinkable Sam. He was reassigned to the aircraft carrier HMS Ark Royal, but some things never changed. On November 14th, 1941, all in the same year, while returning from a duty off Malta, the Ark Royal was torpedoed by another German U-boat. Down went another one of Oscar's ships. Thankfully, the crew and their mascot cat did come out alive. Vulnerable cat, yeah. The rescue ship's log recorded Oscar's condition, and it said, and I quote, "He's unhappy but quite unharmed." Unhappy but quite unharmed.

It was at this point that England officially decided to retire the stupid cat. And they dubbed him "Unsinkable Sam" and he went home and lived at a sailor's house for the rest of his life in the UK. His portrait titled "Oscar, the Bismarck's Cat" hangs in the National Maritime Museum. And I love this because I'm reading this and I'm like, "Wow, there's a lot of parallels between this cat's life and our lives, I believe."

Soldiers of the Kingdom

It's interesting because the soldiers in the Bismarck—God calls us to be prepared for battle in his kingdom. He truly does. And we love the idea of that, and we love the idea of being a soldier for God's kingdom, and we have these preconceived ideas of what we need to do. We're going to hop into battle stations, blow some ships out of the water, in the name of God. Right? And that's what, as a guy, that's what we think of when we talk about being in God's army. Right? But that's not the mission and that's not necessarily the same attributes of a soldier of Messiah.

So sometimes when we're in battle, shells explode around us, bullets whiz by us, mortar shells get close to us, and we get distracted with how vulnerable we are in our pursuit for winning a battle in the name of God and being in his kingdom. And because of our distraction of how vulnerable we are, we're not able to pay attention to what the mission at hand is. We're not able to actually adequately focus because we're so scared of: What if someone finds out my vulnerabilities? What if someone sees all my ships in my battleship? What if someone sees that I cry? What if someone sees that I'm grieving? What if someone sees that I'm addicted? What if someone sees that I have this sin in my life? What if someone sees that I'm depressed? And we become incapable of fulfilling the role that God has for us in his mission that he has put us on.

And sometimes we become so distracted that God sinks our ship. Sink it. Throw us in the water. Make you so uncomfortable that you have no choice but to cry out to him. And every time we end up like Oscar. You may be unhappy, but you are unharmed. And I find this interesting because what God really would like us to realize, in my opinion, is that we are unharmed, so why are we unhappy? We don't realize how big a deal vulnerability is in our lives—and the power behind it if we can learn how not to define it for what the world has for us.

God pulls us out of impossible situations to show us how great he is and how we are missing what we are supposed to be focused on.

Yeshua's Example

You guys realize one of the biggest attributes that we never give Yeshua credit for was how willing he was to show himself to be vulnerable? Think about that. He did a message in Costa Rica about Yeshua's focus and how he never allowed anyone to get him distracted, right?

And we know from Peter, when Yeshua was telling Peter about his coming death: "I'm gonna die, son of man's gonna be lifted up, all this mess, and it's not gonna be fun, but I'm gonna die." And what did Peter say? "No, no, Lord, that's not the case. You don't need to die." In other words, you don't need to fulfill your mission here. You don't need to carry out the completion of God's plan for the gospel. You don't need to do that. And remember when Yeshua turned around, he said, he didn't say, "Get behind me, Peter." He said, "Get behind me, Satan." Why? Because Yeshua understood that anything that distracts us from the gospel is Satan. It is that big of a deal to be distracted.

And so I ended up yelling at people in Costa Rica. But I was actually proud because I felt like the message was pretty good for the things I was telling them about—the things I knew they were distracted by in the Hebrew Roots movement and stuff like that. And I was like, "Man, I

can't wait to come back and share this message with Fit." But it's interesting because you guys don't have those distractions as so many other fellowships have. I actually told Joel, "I can't—this message isn't for Fit because people at Fit for the most part are actually focused on what Yeshua said to do as the mission." We're still vulnerable and we still try to hide our vulnerabilities, but it's not the same thing as everyone else. So I wanted to give you guys a little bit of honor in saying that.

But one of the most relatable things that I feel Yeshua has and was an example of is how vulnerable he showed us he could be. Remember the time in the temple when he got a little upset? He got a little irritated, right? A little. He didn't keep it inside, that's for sure. He got upset. Whipping people, flipping over tables. I don't encourage that. But I find it incredible. I find it incredible that Yeshua was not scared to be vulnerable and to show who he was to people. He wasn't scared of the accusations of his zeal standing up for the Father. He wasn't scared of what people were going to say when he was driving everyone out of his Father's house for the things they were doing. He didn't care. He opened himself up. He got attacked for it too, but that's okay.

Remember when he went to Mary and Martha's when they were burying Lazarus, he went to the tomb. Now this is a story that a lot of us just kind of skip over. We don't really realize the full impact of it. So Yeshua's going here and he's running a little bit late and Mary and Martha are there and they're upset. He's like, "Man, if you had just gotten here a little bit earlier, Lazarus would still be alive because you could have healed him then." And then Yeshua was like, "Yeah, don't worry about it. Lazarus, come on up out of that hole. Come on. We're going to have a party because you're going to be alive." No. [John 11:35](#) is the easiest verse to memorize. Jesus wept. Jesus broke down crying. Yeshua broke down crying at the news that Lazarus had died. And now, I've been in times of grief and I'm sure you have too. You don't just shed a tear when a dear friend or family member dies. I mean, you got the snot coming out. Snot coming out and everything. I think Yeshua was crying. That was vulnerability, guys. That was him showing everyone, "Listen, this is how I'm feeling right now. Are you going to support me in this or not?"

Servant Leadership

Remember when Yeshua was at the Last Supper? Big vulnerable moment for men, right? All the disciples are coming in and you could just see them walking in the door and they're looking down because they see the wash pan to wash your feet and they'd be like, "Eh, if I wash my feet, then maybe the guy behind me will expect me to wash his. And I don't really want to do that. So

I'm just going to go walk in and next guy comes in or maybe I could walk, but no, I don't want to be the guy that's expected." It kind of like when you hold the door open, maybe when you used to go to church and you hold the door open for one guy, but then the line would come out and you'd be standing there for 10 minutes because you can't shut the door because everyone's coming. You know what I'm talking about? I think this is how the disciples felt at the Last Supper because they were like, "No, I don't want to get in that position."

The Test of Humility

I don't want to get in the position where I'm expected to wash everybody's feet. And you can almost see Yeshua. You read the account of this and Yeshua's looking at them and he's like, come on, who's it going to be? This is a test, guys. Come on, who's it going to be? Judas walked up and I could just see it. It would be Judas looking up, pausing for a minute. Oh, Judas, you're going to betray me. It's not going to be you, is it? Nope, not going to be you. And all the disciples come in. Now remember, I want to set the stage for how vulnerable Yeshua is going to make himself right here.

So tens of thousands of people in Jerusalem typically, right? When a feast day happens like Passover, it's the number one priority of all the Jews in Babylon, Egypt, Rome, all throughout Judea, Samaria, to at least come to Jerusalem once in their lifetime to serve at the temple. Passover would happen every year. Next year in Jerusalem, that continues from that point in time. Hundreds of thousands, if not millions of people are now flooding the streets of Jerusalem. And what do they all got with them? Lambs. Come on. And what do lambs do? They do, do, do. So you got all these crowded people in open-toed sandals walking around in each other's dust, right?

I don't know where they throw their junk in their homes, if they throw it out in the street or not, but let's just say there's trash in the street, and then you got the lamb doo-doo everywhere that you're just walking through. Here we go. And then you go up to the room, and Messiah's called you for this last supper, and you walk in, you got dirt in your feet, probably got some spit or something walking through, some junk, mud, whatnot. You got some little bit of poop up under your big toe, and you really want to wash your feet, but you don't want to be stuck washing Peter's feet, right? You don't want to. That's just nasty.

I don't know. Did you know that in Judea, in the Roman Empire, a master could not—if a master asked a slave to wash his feet, the slave could legally refuse because that's how disgusting feet were considered in the Roman Empire? It's a true story. The head was the most

honored spot. That's why they threw crowns and thorns on his head, right? And feet were the most disgusting, right? And so you got all these disciples coming in. I ain't gonna wash your nasty feet. I love you, brother, but you should have power-washed those off at the car wash down the road before you came here.

And so everyone sits down, and Yeshua's sitting there, just shaking his head. He's like, come on, guys. So he gets up and so he gets naked in front of everyone and puts a towel around himself. Men, in front of everyone, just disrobe. The disciples are like, what is he doing? Gets a towel, puts it on, gets the water, flips the rag, gets down and starts scrubbing poop, dirt, mud off his disciples' feet. They're crying out, oh, you can't do this. He needed to lead by example. He needed to show what true leadership was. He needed to show what it meant to be last in the kingdom so that you could be honored as the first in the kingdom.

And that includes showing vulnerability, not being so uptight, not cutting people off. At Men's Bible Study, I've come to highly respect the men at the Bible study because we open up about stuff in our lives, in our jobs, the things that we struggle with, the things that we get mad at, right? Our families, and we support each other in that. Because we're willing to deepen our relationship with each other, because we trust each other, because we understand that we can't do this alone, so we open ourselves up a little bit and say, "Listen guys, here's what I feel vulnerable talking about."

Shame and Empathy

And I'm so thankful that we have a group of guys that are so committed to each other in this fellowship that I'd be like, "Hey, me too." The number one antidote for shame is empathy? True story. Someone can come along and be like, "Oh, here's what I feel ashamed about. Here are the things I feel." Do you know the difference between guilt and shame? Guilt is when you've done something wrong, right? And shame is when you are wrong as a person. You are a wrong person rather than your action.

And so someone comes along and is willing to open up their heart just a little bit to a brother in Messiah and say, "Hey, this is the shame I'm feeling in my life." And when other brothers say, "Hey, me too. What can we do to support you in this?" That's an incredible thing.

Vulnerability and Leadership

Messiah was not ever good at playing battleship. He was good at sparring with the whole public honor-shame game when debates took place in the streets. And then he turns to his disciples—

after he whipped all the Pharisees and how they tried to engage publicly. It was like a public Facebook battle. He looked at his disciples and was like, "Listen, don't do this. Don't ever engage in this mess, right?"

When Yeshua sat down to play the political and social game of battleship, he'd set all the ships up, turn it around. There you go. Here are my ships. Here's who I am as a person. Are you going to follow me? And I feel like that should be an example to each one of us.

Remember when Yeshua was in the garden? Vulnerable. Vulnerable. We don't like to read the account of when Yeshua was in the garden because the disciples fell asleep and he was praying to the Father, and he was praying, "God, I can't wait to go die for all these people. Father, if there is any way that I don't have to go through this. I mean, I'm serving you, Father. You sent me here for a reason, and I'm ready to do this. But if there's any way—I think Yeshua was a little scared. He wasn't afraid to show that. Pass this cup from me, Father. Pass this cup from me. A little scared. Wasn't even afraid to admit that to his Father. God, you sent me here for a reason. I'm gonna do this. But if there's a way that I don't have to do this, please make it happen."

See, we don't like to think about that. We don't like to revisit that story. It's a true story. What did God say? "You're gonna go do this, son." Why? Because what's the verse say? "God so loved the world that he sent his son." Yeshua understood that being vulnerable was powerful. It establishes relationships. It shows your heart on matters. It shows that you're not trying to hide something from other people. It shows that you're a real person. And I really appreciate that because I'd never looked at Yeshua like that before. Willing to be humble in the face of others. And he talks about retaliation in the Sermon on the Mount.

The Six Antitheses

It's incredible because Yeshua's taken all of the stuff in the Sermon on the Mount in [Matthew 5](#). Everything that the Pharisees and the Sadducees have been teaching about the Torah and about their version of the Torah and how they're supposed to apply Torah to their lives, right? And he says this phrase that's known as the six antitheses. "You have heard it said, but I say." He says that about five or six times in [Matthew 5](#). And one of the things he says is in [Matthew 5](#), verse 38: Eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth. Because that's what social justice was in the Torah, and it was meant for the legal systems and the judges when they got together. This is what's supposed to influence your final decision. Judges of Israel, not the individuals in Israel, right?

If you got a problem with it, if the brother pokes your eye out, you need to take him to court, and then the judges will say, yep, poked your eye out, poke his out, right? It's not for you to take

upon yourself. You've heard it said, eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth. But I say to you, do not resist the one who is evil. But if someone slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him also the other. And if someone wants to sue you for your tunic, just let them have your cloak as well. And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go two with them. Give to the one who begs from you and do not refuse to the one who would borrow from you. In other words, you need to have a forgiving heart. And you need to facilitate anyone who either needs something from you or is trying to be mean to you.

The Shame of the Cheek

So anyone ever had their cheek struck before? Mama. It wasn't a violent action. I think we go over this in one of the previous messages. It was about shame. The Talmud mentions that if someone punches you, it's like you got to give them a few shekels. But if someone slaps your cheek, you got to give them like hundreds of shekels because slapping your cheek was a sign of disgrace and shame. And if someone publicly slapped your cheek, then it meant that you were being shamed in society. And it was a bigger deal than if someone just knocked your tooth out. Yeah, I got a fight. No, someone slapped you.

Remember when we used to duel with pistols? That would be awesome. That would be the new showtime. Incredible, the things we come up with. So the whole idea of dueling with a single pistol revolver—what do they do? I challenge you to a duel. They shake hands, you take your glove off, and slap you across the face. A shameful thing. I challenge you to a duel, right? It was an act of shame. And then what would happen is you get these two pistols and we always think that, oh, someone's going to kill the other, right?

That was never the intention of a duel. The intention of the duel is to establish who is more honorable and who is in a position of shame, right? And so the intention—you could kill someone, but the intention was not to kill someone, right? Because what's the intention? Your intention is to bring shame upon the guy that you're dueling with, right? If you kill them, they can't live with the shame anymore, right? And so the purpose, most times you would aim for an appendage. Hit him in the leg or arm before I got to chop it off, big old bullet, right? And now they get to live the rest of their lives with everybody looking at them, knowing that's the guy who lost the duel. And who won it? Yeah, Matthew did. All right, all right, all right.

Turning the Other Cheek

If someone strikes your cheek, turn the other also. Someone wants to shame you so badly, in the worst way. Someone just—I want to hurt you. Why do you want to hurt me? I'm here. You know my vulnerabilities, right? I'm here. Why do you want to hurt me?

I think Yeshua was saying, forgive them. See, one thing that I've learned is aggression is actually a form of depression. People react when they're already hurt. People react when they're keeping things inside of themselves. People react. I appreciate people like my friend Jason, a counselor, right? He's been doing this stuff for years and he's been able to show me some stuff on how I engage certain people. When certain people attack me or attack a message or attack Hebrew Roots or attack the fellowship or something, and that's all they can focus on—typically that has nothing to do with why they're angry. And I've learned to look at times of conflict when someone wants to try to slap the cheek or whatnot and just kind of go back and be like, what is bothering you? What is the issue with you?

Unforgiveness and Its Roots

If you're having that one person at work that cannot stop picking on you for whatever reason, I would examine why you. Did you actually do something? I knew a man who was actually in Hebrew Roots a long time ago. He was in Hebrew Roots, but he despised the Jewish culture and the Jewish people. Which is like, how do you do that? And it turns out, he had a bad encounter when he went to New York and a bunch of Jews ganged up on him and started bullying him for being Messianic. And so now he has this unforgiveness in his heart against these few Jews up in New York that he's labeled the entire, everything Jewish is bad, you see how aggression turns into or results from depression and unforgiveness?

The Role of Vulnerability

We cannot facilitate forgiveness and facilitate healing if we are also closing ourselves off and not being humble and not showing vulnerability like Yeshua did. Please understand me when I say vulnerability. I'm saying that you need to be able to engage with people and show people that you are legit and that you are honest, and when someone tells you, "Hey, heard your friend passed away. You doing okay?"—"Nah, I'm not."—"Hey, do you need prayer?" Our first instinct, nah, I don't need any prayer. Don't touch me. Yeah, I guess I could use some prayer.

Maybe it's you doing praise and worship, or maybe it's you that knows that you should probably be praying for someone, but you don't want to approach them because you might think that's kind of weird and maybe they'll think badly of you for going and trying to engage with them

about prayer. Don't care. It's not about you. "Hey, do you need me to pray for you? I know it's kind of weird. I know we hadn't talked that much. I'd love to pray for you. I'm not a good prayer out loud, but I'll try. Can I pray for you?" It's okay. We can't keep this stuff inside.

The Call to Spread the Gospel

Hey guys, I'm Matthew Vandrells, pastor of Founders in Truth Fellowship and I hope you enjoyed this message. If you'd like to see more messages and teachings like this one, consider subscribing to our YouTube channel by clicking this link right here. You can also leave some comments below. I know the staff at Founders in Truth loves to see positive feedback for the messages and teachings that we put out, so thank you for that ahead of time.

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Guys, our mission at Founded in Truth is simple. Our mission is to spread the Gospel of Yeshua through the historical, cultural, and biblical evidence of the God of Israel by taking the forgotten truths of God's Word to the nations. This is to be laid as the foundation of all truth. Found in the Truth yearns to facilitate a gathering of believers who seek one thing, and that is the ancient paths referred to in [Jeremiah 6:16](#). Will you join us on this mission? I hope so. I pray that you will continue seeking truth so that the light of God will shine through you and for the sake of the kingdom of our Savior, Yeshua. Shalom.

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