* **Apostles Creed**
* **Series Slide**
* I was 26 years old when I found my soul.
* I was 29 when I found my soul’s handles.
* I was 31 when I needed them for the first time.
* I was 33 when I decided to let other people grab hold of them.
* …and now at 41, I’m dead-set on helping each one of you go through all those stages.

Let me explain what I mean.

Up until I was 26 years old, my life was sort of on auto-pilot. I just always did the next thing that came my way. Graduate high school- go to college- get married- start a career- buy a house.

My days consisted of going to work, going to church, watching TV and playing video games. My wife and I rarely had conversations about anything super deep, or important. We avoided conflict as much as we could, between each other and the world. My life was pretty well centered around trying not to overturn the apple cart. Though I rarely thought about where my life was going or what I hoped to accomplish with it, implicitly, my life goal was to live comfortably with the least amount of pain and suffering.

Then, in June of 2004, Keva and I got out of the back of taxi and stepped onto the broken asphalt of an apartment complex in Cheboksary, Russia.

At 26 years old, we laid eyes for the very first time on our eldest son, Micah. While the adoption wasn’t yet legally complete, in that moment, I became a father. And in that moment, I found my soul for the first time.

Seeing that little 14 month old baby, covered in sores from the bed bugs, surrounded by the gray and ugly ruins of the fallen Soviet Union…seeing both the injustice of neglect and the beauty of the human person in one glance… I could feel…I knew in a way I didn’t know before… Life is more than me. My life is bigger than me. Life was more than just what I could see. I was smaller than I’d ever been, at the same time I was involved in something larger than I had ever known. And suddenly, my M-O of living the most trouble-free existence I could muster wouldn’t do.

But I quickly buried that under the mundane life of changing diapers, and the exhaustion of being a first-time parent.

3 years later, we loaded a moving van in Murfreesboro, and drove 500 miles to start the next phase of our life in seminary. It was there that I realized I could deeply engage that part of me, on a regular basis. I didn’t have to forget it in the mundane moments. In fact, I discovered that I could actually live the majority of my days deeply thinking about and acting on love, sadness, joy, hope. That part of me I found in Russia, didn’t just have to be a flash in a pan…that sort of shows up in rare moments. I found handles to grab a hold of my soul.

2 years later, I learned what those handles were for. My wife was ready to walk away from our marriage… I was failing at everything I did…and then our son died.

I needed to hold on to my soul. Or I was going to lose it. It was so dark during those times, without something to remind me that the chaos in my life wasn’t all there was to me…without knowing that it mattered that I existed and that I chose to do the next right thing in the midst of that turmoil…Without understanding that in the middle of that brokenness and evil, that the way I faced the darkness mattered on a grand, cosmic scale...I would have given up…I would have receded back into a “how do I make the pain go away” type of lifestyle.

One year later, on the other side of that dark night of the soul, after God healed our marriage, brought all kinds of repentance and faith into our lives, and saw us through our grief, both of us had found our souls…and had a firm grasp on those handles.

So we packed up a moving truck again, and headed 500 miles back again, to Murfreesboro to start a church where we could help people shake off the trap of living of life that ignores the soul…where could help people not only find their souls, but install handles, and, for the love of God, hold on through the darkest times.

18th century philosopher **Immanuel Kant** wrote **“Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe …the more steadily we reflect on them: the starry heavens above and the moral law within.”**

Let me translate. Kant is acknowledging that most things in life- you’ll eventually get bored of. They will become old hat to you. Even the initially most exciting things like money, or sex, or marriage, or having kids, or buying a house, or getting recognized for your achievements, or vacations, or ease…they all will lose their luster. But there are 2 things…he says…that only get better and better…deeper and deeper…more and more mysterious the more you think about them- “the starry heavens”….which represents the vastness of the universe that reminds you how small and insignificant you are…and then, paradoxically, “the moral law within”, that part of you that inherently knows right and wrong…knows what’s beautiful and what’s ugly. Knows how to mourn injustice and celebrate life. That reminds you that though, yes, you are small and insignificant…you are also endowed with something that the rest of creation doesn’t have…a sense of justice and beauty and consciousness unlike a panda or a praying mantis.

He is describing the soul. The ability to look to the heavens and not just see the stars but ask, “Why are they there? Who put them there?”. The part of you that gets angry at mass shootings and also loves those videos of the special needs kid hitting a three pointer in his middle school basketball game.

You know who else summed up the experience of finding and putting handles on his Soul? Besides Immanuel Kant?

Steve Winwood. (You thought I was gonna say Jesus didn't you?)

* **Title Slide- “I Kant Think About It- Winwood I Have Time, Anyway?: How Your Soul is Made for Higher Love” Psalm 130-131**

Steve Winwood or maybe I should say Will Jennings?

Winwood and Jennings wrote the song “Higher Love”. You’ve probably heard it, if not in 80s…you may have heard KYGO’s recently released Whitney Houston cover of it…both of which are totally and completely compatible with rolling down your windows and turning up the volume while you drive.

* In fact, Will Jennings who co-wrote the song, called “Higher Love” a ‘modern hymn’ and connected it to his childhood years of singing hymns in churches.
* His point? He was missing his soul. And he wrote “Higher love” to search for it again, and to give himself some handles to hold onto it once he found it.
* When asked about the June 2019 release of the new version of Higher Love, Whitney Houston’s sister-in-law, Pat Houston said this to Rolling Stone magazine..

**“The current cultural environment has been thirsty for something uplifting and inspiring.”**

* Thirsty for something uplifting…to the starry heavens…and thirsty for something inspiring…like a video of a special needs kid making a basket.
* That’s soul talk.
* And this song delivers.
* **“Think about it, there must be higher love**
* **Down in the heart or hidden the stars above**
* **Without it, life is wasted time.**
* **Look inside your heart, I’ll look inside mine”**
	+ I love how this song starts out with that command. “Think about it.” Because that’s exactly what so few of us do.
	+ We are too busy, too distracted, too comfortable to stop and think about the deep yearnings of the soul.
	+ Then, like Kant says-
	+ If we don’t somehow find this Higher Love we all yearn for when we stop to think about how big the world is…and how deep each of us is, then life sort of becomes this gray, meaningless chore.
* **Things look so bad everywhere
In this whole world, what is fair?
We walk blind and we try to see
Falling behind in what could be**
	+ There is the sadness, the sense of justice.
	+ Knowing that the world is broken, not the way Higher Love would have it be.
	+ And even though we want things to be made right…we can’t see how to fix it. So we keep falling further and further behind the way we all know the world should be…full of love and hope and beauty.
* So then we get the primal cry in the Chorus. The soul cry.

 **Bring me a higher love
Where's that higher love I keep thinking of?**

Lets just go ahead and make this the unofficial anthem of this Series. Actually this week on our social media accounts, we’ll send out a link to 3 different versions of this song- so you can keep thinking about higher love all through this series.

There’s the original, which is great for an adult contemporary sort of Tuesday morning commute.

Then there’s Whitney Houston’s version, which is a Tropical House mix great for a Saturday night party.

Then there’s James Vincent McMorrow’s 2012 version, which is perfect for a Sunday afternoon, contemplative Bon Iver- emo vibe.

But now, lets move from that modern hymn…to a couple of ancient versions of Higher Love.

**Psalm 130 (ESV)**

* **A Song of Ascents.**
* **Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD!**
* **O Lord, hear my voice!**
* **Let your ears be attentive**
* **to the voice of my pleas for mercy!**
*
* **If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities,**
* **O Lord, who could stand?**
* **But with you there is forgiveness,**
* **that you may be feared.**
*
* **I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,**
* **and in his word I hope;**
* **my soul waits for the Lord**
* **more than watchmen for the morning,**
* **more than watchmen for the morning.**
*
* **O Israel, hope in the LORD!**
* **For with the LORD there is steadfast love,**
* **and with him is plentiful redemption.**
* **And he will redeem Israel**
* **from all his iniquities.**
* **Psalm 131**
* **A Song of Ascents. Of David.**
* **O LORD, my heart is not lifted up;**
* **my eyes are not raised too high;**
* **I do not occupy myself with things**
* **too great and too marvelous for me.**
* **But I have calmed and quieted my soul,**
* **like a weaned child with its mother;**
* **like a weaned child is my soul within me.**
*
* **O Israel, hope in the LORD**

 **from this time forth and forevermore.**

**Transition**: Before we do anything else, lets talk about this word, “Soul”. Because that word carries a lot of baggage with it. So let me give you a loose definition up front.

**1) The soul is the whole you- heart, mind, body, - that wants transcendent and immanent connection to God.**

* + If most of us were asked the question, “What is a soul?” we’d likely say something like, “Its this spirit inside of me. Like, when I die, my soul will keep going but my body will decompose. So I have a body. And then there’s my soul…that’s sort of like the core of who I am.”
	+ Now, we’re not gonna spend a lot of time splitting hairs about the definition of “soul”, but I do want you to remember this.
	+ The SOUL is the INTEGRATED you. Its your heart (or your will or desires)…, working together with your mind (your thoughts, your reason)…working together with your body (your physical…the faces you make, the actions you take). But its not just sort of the raw scientific or philosophical fact of those 3 things working together.
	+ There is this intangible to your soul. That Immanuel Kant and Steve Winwood expressed so well.
	+ **“Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe …the more steadily we reflect on them: the starry heavens above and the moral law within.” – Immanuel Kant**
	+ **“Think about it, there must be higher love**
	+ **Down in the heart or hidden the stars above”- Steve Winwood**
	+ The soul…the completely integrated, mind, heart, and body…has always…and will always long for transcendence…to be connected to something bigger…and will also long for immanence…we want the starry heavens to explode in our heart.
	+ Steve Winwood called it HIGHER (transcendent) LOVE (Immanence or intimacy).
	+ Basically, the soul is incomplete if it either denies the God who created the stars…or denies that creator loves you intimately and personally.
	+ So the broken soul, the incomplete soul, cries out. Bring me a higher love!
	+ That’s why I chose to open this series with these 2 Psalms.
	+ Psalm 130 represents the anguish of the incomplete, broken soul…and Psalm 131 is a picture of the soul made whole.
	+ They are the question, and the answer.
	+ The cry for help, and the rescue.
	+ **130:5 & 131:2**
	+ Notice, both these Psalms use the word “soul”.
	+ This Hebrew word is “nephesh”.
	+ It literally means throat. Which is a great metaphor for the soul.
	+ Because your THROAT connects your MIND to YOUR HEART so that you remain ONE INTEGRATED BODY.
	+ And when you get thirsty…you feel it in your throat. Likewise, when you feel alienated from HIGHER LOVE…your soul is thirsty.
	+ **Psalm 42:1-2**
	+ Jeremy preached this Psalm a few weeks ago. And it carries this crossover idea of THROAT and SOUL.
	+ Like a deer is thirsty for water, my throat…my soul..the deepest part of me wants GOD...the transcendent creator….and wants GOD to be close…intimate…inside me.
	+ **130:1 & 131:1**
	+ Notice, too, that both of these Psalms are Psalms of Ascent
	+ That simply means that these are songs that the Hebrew people sang together on one of their seasonal pilgrimages together up to Jerusalem, which was on the top of a mountain.
	+ SO, these are literally songs that are about HIGHER Love. They are songs to sing, to guide the soul, on the way UP to meeting God.
* **Back to 1)**
	+ Here’s the bottom line about the SOUL.
	+ If you aren’t aware of it…if you don’t pay attention to it… if you don’t know how to handle it when it starts to beg for closeness to God….
	+ You’ll just try to avoid it. To gag it. To mute it.
	+ …and the most tragic human you’ll ever meet, is the one with a muted soul.
	+ charity
* **Transition:** These Psalms are gonna help you avoid that tragedy.
* **2) The soul awakens in 4 phases: Desperation, Dependency, Contentment, & Charity.**
	+ Alright, a word to Type-A personalities.
	+ When you see the “4 phases”, you are going to immediately think 4 grades of college or something. Like you are freshman soul, then you get promoted to Sophomore and eventually you graduate with generosity.
	+ But these “phases” aren’t grades you leave behind. They build on each other. So the idea is the more you are able get a handle on your soul, the more each of these things come out.
	+ …and it all starts with desperation.
	+ Let’s let Steve Winwood and King David show us.
	+ **Worlds are turning and we're just hanging on
	Facing our fear and standing out there alone
	A yearning, and it's real to me
	There must be someone who's feeling for me**
	+ Winwood sings that when the world feels out of control, because of the injustice, the pain the death, the chaos…its all we can do to just wake up in the morning and keep going. Its like we’re barely hanging on.
	+ And it feels like Higher Love isn’t there. Like we’ve been left to face the chaos alone.
	+ Still, there is a yearning…inside…a restlessness that NEEDS to know SOMEBODY is up there in the stars that’s feeling for US. That loves us.
	+ That’s desperation.
	+ And it's the same thing that the Psalmist writes in these songs of ascent.
	+ **130:1-2**
	+ When he says “out of the depths I call to you”…this is desperation.
	+ Depths here refers to the depths of the sea. It's a metaphor for the dark chaos…cuz…that’s what the ocean is. Dark Chaos.
	+ He begs God, “Listen to my plea for mercy!”
	+ I’m drowning in injustice. I’m drowning in mass shootings. I’m drowning in abortions. I’m drowning in kids separated from their parents at the border. I’m drowning from the re-definition of marriage and sex. I’m drowning in political tribalism. I’m drowning in racism. I’m drowning in poverty. I’m drowning in hate…GOD HAVE MERCY! HELP!
	+ I’m drowning in my marriage. I’m drowning in anxiety. I’m drowning in depression. I’m drowning in meaninglessness. I’m drowning as a parent. I’m drowning as a friend. I’m drowning in school. I’m drowning at work. I can’t keep my head above water. Lord listen to my voice! Open your ears. BRING ME A HIGHER LOVE! MAKE THIS ALL MEAN SOMETHING.
	+ **130:3**
	+ More desperation, but now the acknowledgment is not just “we’re in trouble!” Its not just “Everything’s broken”…but “WE BROKE THIS!”
	+ We may not have started the fire, but we poured gas on it.
	+ Its saying, “God we don’t deserve to be rescued form the injustice that we perpetuate!”
	+ That’s desperate!
	+ HELP ME! Even though I don’t deserve to be helped!
	+ That’s why he asks for mercy.
	+ If the Psalmist thought he was OWED the help, he would take a different tone. It wouldn’t be desperate, his tone would be demanding.
	+ But he speaks with humility. Smallness.
	+ I think it bears pointing out…that God’s people…on their ascent to Higher Love…do not BLAME others. Instead, they desperately Beg God for mercy.
	+ And anyone who wants to find their soul…anyone who wants to live in the reality that you ARE a soul…MUST start with humble desperation.
	+ The next phase is dependence.
	+ **130:4-6**
	+ The Psalmist confesses that the way out of his hopelessness does not come from himself, but from the Lord.
	+ He says God is the one who deserves to be feared and respected. He recognizes that his rescue starts with a dependence on God’s willingness to forgive. He doesn’t start with a change in circumstance…he starts with forgiveness.
	+ Now listen to him. He’s dependent, but he’s not demanding.
	+ I’ll wait for you, Lord. I’ll put my hope
	+ In fact, he says his “Nephesh”…his Soul waits for the Lord.
	+ …and how, pray tell, does he wait?
	+ He puts his hope in the WORD of the LORD.
	+ Alright, hold up right here for a minute.
	+ We’ve just hit our first Soul Handle.
	+ In fact, we’ve just hit the biggest most important Soul Handle.
	+ Look what he’s saying.
	+ I was drowning in an ocean of meaninglessness and despair…I called out in desperation…I know you are my only hope of salvation… so I’m completely dependent on you.
	+ BUT I HAVE TO WAIT.
	+ The rescue is not immediate.
	+ There is a waiting period.
	+ And if I’m going to hold on to the deep meaning I know you’re bringing…If I’m going to hold onto the hope that you’ll rescue me, and infuse meaning into my soul, and show me the way, and forgive me for the 1,000 ways I’ve screwed this world up with my own sin…
	+ Then I’ve Got to grab a hold of your Word…the revelation of who you are…and what you care about…and how you act in the world.
	+ Because if I don't…If I don’t…the darkness keeps creeping back in.
	+ The darkness takes over.
	+ Look at his metaphor.
	+ My soul…my whole being that longs for transcendence and immanence…that longs for connection to God…and meaning and salvation….every bit of me…mind, heart, and body…
	+ Is a night watchmen. Standing on the wall of a city. Looking out for trouble…for some army to come against my city and take us down.
	+ But we’ll be saved…if the Sun would rise. And I know it will. I know I’ll see it over the horizon. And then I can breathe again.
	+ See, the Word of the Lord is a handle that helps you hold onto your soul…and helps your soul hold onto God…in the darkness…in the mundane, or confusing, or painful, or evil times in life.
	+ Lets talk about this for a second.
	+ I told you earlier about God’s work in my life that progressed me through all of these stages.
	+ You know, the moment when I became desperate…becoming a Father for the first time.
	+ And then, I learned dependence…
	+ I decided that if I was serious about getting help FROM God…I should probably know as much about this helper that I possibly could…so, I read the Bible. I read it a lot. I kept reading it even when it got mundane and boring. Some days, it would prompt me to think, some days it wouldn’t. Some days I was encouraged by it, some days… it was just sort of a chore me.
	+ But I kept reading it. And then…desperation hit again. My wife said she wanted to leave me. That was darkness. It was night. But over the months of reading God’s word, even the boring bits…informed the way I responded.
	+ I was living in the middle of the suffering that the Scripture was honest about.
	+ God’s word also told me my marriage was so much bigger than my personal happiness. The LORD told me that I was an actor in a drama…and the way I loved my wife was not dependent on her love for me…Rather, I was to love her with HIGHER LOVE. The way Jesus loved a sinner like me.
	+ God told me through his word that commitment and covenant were deeper and more meaningful than temporary solutions to soften my pain.
	+ I was a watchmen, on a wall, desperate, dependent…hoping…waiting for the sun to rise.
	+ But if I hadn’t been reading his word, meditating on it for the previous 2 years…forget it. My marriage would have been over.
	+ And you know what else happened. My wife, eventually, when the Lord restored us…she started to deeply value the Word of God. Because she received that Higher Love that God channeled through me…when she refused to be desperate and confess her sin…and it changed her.
	+ …and then, when our son died 6 months later…we were both watchmen on the wall…looking for the son to rise…because God had so saturated our hearts, minds, and bodies…our SOULs…with his Higher Love and the story of his redemption and resurrection…that we didn’t give up. We hurt. But we didn’t give up. Because we lived in a story where death doesn’t STOP hope. We knew we were living in the story of a God who STOPS death….and makes all things new.
	+ God was close..he was immanent.
	+ And God was transcendent…he had conquered death and we knew…WE KNOW…that there is a resurrection we’re waiting for…not just for our son…but for all the desperate dependent children of God.
	+ But without the Word…we can’t wait…and we would have quit.
	+ WAITING by grabbing hold of the Soul with the HANDLE of the WORD of the LORD…is the bridge between Desperation & Dependency…and Contentment.
	+ That’s why I love the Bridge of “HIGHER LOVE” so much.
	+ **I will wait for it
	I'm not too late for it
	Until then, I'll sing my song
	To cheer the night along**
	+ I mean look at that. That is Psalm 130
	+ I’m going to wait for Higher Love to show up.
	+ I know I’m not too late.
	+ In the waiting…I’ll sing this song of ascent. I’ll sing the truth. I’ll sing the word.
	+ Because I’m a watchmen in the night…and if I don’t cheer the night along with the hope of the TRUTH…I’ll give in to the darkness.
	+ And that cheer…is called “contentment”
	+ **131:1-2**
	+ David writes here that that his heart isn’t lifted up (or proud) and that his eyes aren’t raised too high.
	+ That means he hasn’t become overconfident in his own abilities. Again…God didn’t simply give him a confidence boost so he could go tackle his problems.
	+ He admits…”There are things that are too great and marvelous for me.”
	+ What he means here is that he can’t always make sense of what God is doing…in the darkness…in the pain…in the boring…in the non-exciting…in the gray-meaninglessness of his life…
	+ BUT, he knows that its not his place to KNOW that. He isn’t God…and in order to trust God…he doesn’t have to understand EVERYTHING God does or allows. In fact, if he did, there would be no trust necessary.
	+ He says, “Instead, I’ve calmed and quieted my soul”
	+ Like a child that is no longer nursing from his mother so my soul is with God.
	+ You know what the difference is in a nursing child and a weaned child?
	+ When a child is nursing, it sees its mother primarily as a source of meeting a particular need. I’m hungry, and you feed me.
	+ It's a basic need. Its good, its natural.
	+ But we’d think it pretty odd if a 30 year old was still looking to his mother for milk.
	+ It's a start to come to God in a desperate or overwhelming time…but he doesn’t just want your lowest moments.
	+ He’s a person. And he wants you to want him personally….not just as a fix-it up handy man.
	+ See, a weaned child, calming sitting in his mother’s lap, not looking to her for milk…but quietly sitting, head resting on her breast…instead of frantically crying for it…
	+ …that child has become content in a relationship with his mother…instead of the immature sort of looking to his mother just to meet a felt need.
	+ That child has learned to enjoy sitting in his mother’s lap…he’s learned contentment.
* **Back to 2)**
	+ This is UNDOUBTEDLY the phase that so many people just can’t seem to get to.
	+ I see desperation happen OFTEN.
	+ I see the seeds of dependency start.
	+ But so often, a person never installs Soul Handles…to hold on for the ride across the bridge to contentment.
	+ So instead of holding on to God’s character and his promises…the crisis gets solved…and then back to life as usual. Unitl desperaration and panic hit again.
	+ There is no Watchmen on the wall. There is no singing the Bridge “I WILL WAIT”…because God has never become a parent to you…he’s only a quick source of help in your worst moments.
	+ Listen, if you want your soul to cross the bridge to contentment…you’ve got have handles on the soul. And there is none more important than Reading and meditating on the word of God.
	+ Contentment starts there.
	+ The problem is not that bad stuff keeps happening to you.
	+ Or people don’t do enough for you.
	+ The problem is that in your immaturity, you have never really practiced the presence of God in every moment of your life.
	+ Because a mother is super-forgettable to an infant with a full stomach.
	+ Finally, Charity.
	+ Contentment and Charity…this is where the Soul that Rests, that abides in God…this is where that soul camps out.
	+ **130:7-8 & 131:3**
	+ Look what the Psalmist does.
	+ He points out…as Israel is doing with each other on their climb to Jerusalem to worship God….the Psalmist is pointing out hope to others.
	+ Put your hope in the Lord, now and forever.
	+ Charity means help…it means **impartial love that helps**.
	+ David here is not simply content with a “Me-and-God” faith. This faith, this trust, this contement…this HIGHER LOVE…isn’t made full, until its shared.
	+ And so, in both of these Psalms, the Psalmist finishes by offering the mercy and the hope he’s received to others.
	+ So, lets look at the way Jesus put this.
	+ The way he describes charity…impartial love that helps.
	+ **Luke 6:27-36 CSB**
	+ **But I say to you who listen: Love your enemies, do what is good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. 29 If anyone hits you on the cheek, offer the other also. And if anyone takes away your coat, don’t hold back your shirt either. 30 Give to everyone who asks you, and from someone who takes your things, don’t ask for them back. 31 Just as you want others to do for you, do the same for them. 32 If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. 33 If you do what is good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. 34 And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners to be repaid in full. 35 But love your enemies, do what is good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High. For he is gracious to the ungrateful and evil. 36 Be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful**.
	+ Does that sound exhausting? Being merciful to people who don’t deserve it? Well, remember, you’re desperate pleas…your sin against God…was pretty exhausting to him too. But he showed you mercy. And now, he calls you to charity.
	+ **2 Corinthians 4:1 (CSB)**
	+ **Therefore, since we have this ministry because we were shown mercy, we do not give up**.
	+ Paul says, “Yep, ministering undeserved, impartial love and mercy is exhausting…you’ll want to quit. But you have to remember that you have this ministry because YOU WERE shown mercy by God…therefore…we don’t give up.
	+ And that takes us all the way back to the beginning. Remember how Psalm 130 started?
	+ **130:2 (ESV)**
	+ Let your ears be attentive to MY PLEAS for mercy.
	+ And Jesus says…as YOUR FATHER is merciful with you…now that you have been desperate…and dependent…and then weaned and content…don’t just sit there…BE MERCIFUL.
	+ Love others that don’t deserve it, because you didn’t deserve God’s love…you didn’t earn it…but he still loved you first. See…
* **3) Jesus is the Higher Love your soul wants.**
	+ Remember what Immanuel Kant wrote?
	+ **“Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe …the more steadily we reflect on them: the starry heavens above and the moral law within.”**
	+ He was saying, “I have this deep thirst and longing for transcendence to come down…and meet me…to be so close its inside me.”
	+ Steve Winwood said, “There must be Higher Love, but everything is so broken and unjust and ugly…I'm having trouble finding it. I need to know that Higher Love loves me.”
	+ Well, in Jesus, The starry Heavens above descended into human flesh.
	+ God himself became human.
	+ And lived a life of Higher Love. Loving even his enemies. Washing the feet of the one who betrayed him.
	+ He blessed those who cursed him…when he died on a cross..and at the hands of his accusers…he showed charity, “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.”
	+ Jesus experienced our desperation. From the cross he cried the words of the Psalmist “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?”
	+ He was utterly dependent on the Father. He said all through his life, “I only do what the Father tells me.”
	+ And he had deep contentment…a unique and beautiful connection to his Father. He said “I am ONE with the Father.”
	+ And on the cross, his charity overflowed to others. He became the way God showed his mercy to us.
	+ He who was without sin, became sin, so that in Him, we could become the righteousness of God.
	+ **130:7-8 & 131:3**
	+ Jesus fulfilled the Psalmists hope of higher love.
	+ In his death, God was forgiving our sin.
	+ He was redeeming us from the curse of death.
	+ And in his resurrection…he was making a way for us to sit like a weaned child in our Father’s lap, NOW…in contentment even as things are still broken around us…
	+ …and FOREVER.
	+ When Jesus comes back and makes all things new. Completely answering our need for justice and righteousness in the world.
	+ The last lines of the bridge of Higher Love say this.
	+ **Let me feel that love come over me
	Let me feel how strong it could be**
	+ That is the longing of everyone’s soul.
	+ And that is what you find in Jesus. A strong, faithful, never-stopping HIGHER LOVE.
	+ Is your soul desperate enough…to let that Higher Love come over you?
	+ Will you join this crow of people…singing this song together…day after day in our families….week after week as we gather together in our homes and in here. Reminding one another on the Ascent up the mountain…to Think About it! There must be higher love!
* Lets pray.