

Well as most of you know we're celebrating recovery these days at Blackhawk. Talking about repentance and the road to recovery the road away from sin's grip the road away from the destructive patterns of sin the road to freedom and the meaningful healthy god honoring life let me say that again. The meaningful healthy god honoring life God designed you and I to live. This the road that we've been on. Step one on this path toward recovery. Step one on this road to repentance realize I'm not God. Step one several weeks ago was the realization that we all have to come to. That we are absolutely in our humanness utterly powerless to control and guide our lives realizing that I'm not God. The "e" in recovery earnestly believe God exists. And not only that God exists but that God cares about you. God knows you. God's intimately acquainted with you and all of your past and all of your struggles and all of your humanness. So I realize that I'm not god and I'm powerless to control my life. I earnestly believe that he is god and he not only knows me, but he cares about me. And wants to move me in a direction of health and recovery and repentance. Commit, step three, this was huge. Commit all of my life. Commit every part of you, every arena every compartment of your life. Commit all of my life to the care and control of Christ. His lordship and his salvation the care and control of Christ. And step four, we come to step this morning. And I hope you'll follow along on the note sheets. Openly examine my life. Honestly examine your life and confess your sin to god. We just talked about examining ourselves as we came to the table of communion. This morning it's appropriate. We come to this fourth step where you and I are to openly. We get this privilege this chance to exam our lives and to confess the sin that we find upon examination. To confess that sin first and foremost to God. And also to someone that you trust. Well let's jump in here to step four. Why is this you might be asking? Why is this part of the repentance process? Why is this open honest examination and the confessing of my sin to God part of this road to recovery? Well, because of this my friends. Un-confessed sin keeps us stuck in the past. Un-confessed sin keeps us from growing and becoming what God wants us to be. And if you and if I am ever going to live in freedom if you're ever going to live in freedom then you've got to stop pretending you and I have to stop over looking. We have to stop trying to hide it. We have to begin to examine our lives and confess our sin to God. We have to be truthful about our sinfulness and our failures. It's a big step. It's a challenging step. But it is a step that we must take. The truth is that none is faultless. We have sins. We all have secrets. We've all made terrible mistakes. So we all have regrets. We all have remorse. We all have things we wish we could turn back the clock on. Nod your head if you wish you could turn back the clock on some things. And if we don't confess the sin, if we don't get real honest and real genuine before God with these things then we embark on this anguishing impossible journey of trying to live with the sin and having to deal then with the guilt that comes with trying to live with the sin and it just gets messy and discouraging and defeating. The guilt can be so confusing. You and I trying to live in that cycle. We do a lot of different things. We, we deny the guilt. We, we try to repress the guilt. We may blame other people for the guilt. We may excuse the guilt. We may rationalize our guilt. But whether we deny it or minimize it or rationalize it, we still feel the the affects of un-confessed sin. And if you're really going to repent if you're really going to recover with god's help with

God's help from the hurts and the habits and the hang-ups of your life then we have to confess our sin and failure. Move away from a life racked by guilt and live with a clear conscience before God. I was messing around on the computer again this week. Which I don't do very often. I'm a little bit illiterate on that front. I googled. I forget what I googled. I think it was living with guilt. I found over a million seriously. I found over a million references to books, periodicals, articles on how to live with guilt. I stood there looking at my computer screen going wow. That's not at all what God designed you and I to do. He never intended you and I to live with guilt. You understand this? So many people in this world trying desperately to figure over a million references on books, periodicals, and articles trying to help people do the one thing they were never designed to do by God. The good news for all of us is that God never designed or desired for us to live with guilt. The good news the gospel truth my friends is that sin can be confessed. Guilt can be removed. And complete freedom can be realized. Step 4, means I openly honestly examine and then confess my sin. I love the first couple verses of Psalms 32. What happiness for those. I think it's there on your note sheet. What happiness for those who's guilt has been forgiven? What relief for those who have confessed their sins and God has cleared their record? Let me give you a couple things, three things specifically here to write down and think about as we make our way through this discussion. The reason for this fourth step and I can just say it to you in a sentence. The reason for this because we want avoid the tragic results that will occur. The tragic results that will play when there is un-confessed sin and guilt in your life and mine. Reason number one: physical pain. Do you understand this? Do you understand that the scriptures speak to the physical pain the physical infirmity the physical struggle that literally shows up in your life and mine when we some how try to make our way through life with un-confessed sin and the guilt that follows. I'm gonna just on this point here I'm gonna just read to you some things. And I hope as I read I just hope you'll listen. You might want to jot some things down. Go back to Psalm 32. I just quoted Psalm 32:1 and 1 and 2. I want you to look at Psalm 32: 3 and 4. Listen to this. Psalm 32: 3 and 4. You want to honestly openly examine yourself and come to this place of getting sin out on the table and confess before God because when we don't when we try and hide it or move away from it there is literally physical consequences. When I kept silent David here when I kept silent about my sin my body wasted away. Through my groaning all day long for day and night your hand was heavy upon me. My vitality my spirit my energy was drained away as with the fever heat of summer. Maybe you've felt this. Maybe you've experience this. Maybe you're feeling this or experiencing this as we speak. Look at 38:1. Again a Psalm of David 38:1. Oh Lord rebuke me not in your wrath and chastened me not in your burning anger. For your arrows have sunk deep into me. These are arrows of conviction. And your hand is pressed down on me. There is now soundness in my flesh because of your indignation. There is no health in my bones because of my what? Say it. For my iniquities are gone over my head. We referenced that last week. As a heavy burden they weigh too much for me. My wounds grow foul and fester because of my folly. I am bent over and greatly bowed down. I go mourning all day long for my loins are filled with burning. And there is no soundness in my flesh. I am be-numbed. And badly crushed. I

groan because of the agitation of my heart. Lord all my desires before you and sighing is not hidden from you. My heart throbs. My strength fails me. And the light of my eyes even that has gone from me. Physically we can feel and sense the affect written for us here communicated in powerful graphic terminology. It really is that way. It's really how it works. Look at Psalm 102. Go back a few chapters. Go to Psalm 10, Psalm 102 verse 1. Psalm 102:1 and then we'll look at verses 3, 4, and 5. Here my prayer Psalm 102:1. Hear my prayer oh lord and let my cry for help come to you. For my days verse three, for my days have consumed and smoke and my bones have been scorched like a hearth. My heart has been smitten like grass and has withered away. Indeed I forget to eat my bread because of the loudness of my groaning. My bones cling to my flesh. The scriptures teach us my friends that there is a physically hurting a physical suffering that comes with sin. Reason number one for this fourth step we want to avoid physical pain. Number two we want to avoid relational pain. Will you write that down? Relational pain, it's not just physical it's spills over into your relational world. And it spills over into mine. Believe me. I've been there. I've experienced this. Go back to Psalm to 38 if you would. Go back to Psalm 38 look at verses 11 and 12. We were just there in 38: 1 to 10. When you keep going past 10 verse 11 says my loved ones you see it there. My loved ones and my friends stand aloof from my plague. What's his plague? It's his what? It's his sin. And my kinsmen stand a far off those who seek my life lay snares for me and those who seek to injure me have threatened destruction. And they devise treachery all day long. Un-confessed sin and guilt damages my relationship with others. When I when I over react in anger and violate a friendship. When I gossip about leader whose decisions I don't like. When I'm critical and insensitive to my spouse who needed my love and compassion. When I commit these and other sins choose not to confess or make them right it destroys in time the underpinnings and the foundations of those very relationships. And they suffer because of un-confessed sin. Guilt can cause you to spoil people, indulge people. I feel guilty in this relationship so I buy her lots of stuff. Parents, parents often feel guilty. Parents often feel guilty and over compensate for the guilt by indulging their kids. Guilt can cause you to avoid commitment in relationship. You get just, you get just so close and then there's that line. You get so just close. Why won't you let people get closer to you? Often times its guilt. One of the reasons a lot of marriages today suffer. One of the reasons a lot marriages today have problems is because of guilt from the past things that happen prior to marriage that a spouse still feels guilty or remorseful about. My friends we want consider this fourth step today. There are tragic results when you and I allow sin to be un-confessed. There is physical pain. There is relational pain. Write this down number three there is spiritual pain. There is spiritual pain. All this hurts. Even the think about it hurts even to read it to you but I will. Listen to heartfelt cry of the psalmist David again. It's always amazing to me. David a man after who, a man after God's own heart. Really, literally I believe he was. David the one lifted up in so many ways on so many occasions as a man of God who you and I would trust and admire and respect and want to immolate when it comes to our relationship with God. And you know what so encouraging to me. I won't speak for you. But when I read through the Psalms and as I read through the psalms realize the stuff he did. The things he confessed. The

heartache that he experienced. Man I'm not saying I'm thankful that he did. I'm saying it's an encouragement to me. And I hope it is to you. To hear what comes out of this guy's heart as he shares truth with us. Look at Psalm 51. The spiritual pain that comes with un-confessed sins. Psalm 51:1. It says: be gracious to me oh God according to your loving kindness according to the greatness of your compassion blot out my transgressions. Verse three and four for I know my transgressions. My sin ever before me against you and you only I have sinned and done what is evil in your sight so that you God are justified when you speak and blameless when you judge. And then look at this verse 10. Create in me a clean heart. His heart wasn't clean was it? His was what? His heart was dirty. His heart was sinful. Create in me a clean heart oh God and renew a steadfast spirit within me. His spirit wasn't steadfast. His spirit was broken. His spirit was wandering. His spirit was distant. Create in me a clean heart oh God and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence. What greater tragedy is there on the spiritual front here as we talk about the spiritual pain that comes with un-confessed sin? What great tragedy is there than when you and I sense as David sensed here this being absent from the presence of God this distance that comes between he and us. Do not cast me away from your presence. And do not take your holy spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation. Obviously that had been lost. Obviously that was gone. And sustain me with a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors your ways. And sinners will be converted to you. Deliver me from blood guiltiness oh God the God of my salvation. Then my tongue will joyfully sing of your righteousness. Wow. This fourth step it's a very important step my friends. And it's a very scary step. Some might say this is the step that separates the boys from the men. This is the one that separates those who want to talk about recovery and repentance and those who really want to pursue it. It's you and I coming to this place where we say I want to be physically and relationally and spiritually well. I want to grow. I want to move beyond the past. I read this week somebody said I want to bury the past but I can't bury it as long as it's alive. And the great truth remember my friends is back to step three. When you submit all of you to the caring control of Christ, Christ covered all your sin. Christ provides the forgiveness for everything that's been done. Every choice that's been made every road you've walked down. How to take this fourth step how to take, there are some things practically I wanna just give you to think about here this morning. How do you take this fourth step? It's a simple procedure. But you know what it requires an enormous amount of courage. Number one, examine yourself. Would you write this down? Examine yourself. Take a personal it's a phrase I saw this week as I studied this. Take a personal moral inventory. Examine yourself. What this means is you get alone by yourself maybe you're not use to doing that. So we're learning all kinds of things here. Get alone with yourself. You get a pen and a notepad and you sit down and you ask yourself so very probing very honest very important questions. What have I done? Let's just be honest about it. You and the pad and the pen what have I done? You write it down. What specifically do I feel guilty about? What are my regrets? What do I feel remorseful about? What relationships have I damaged? What sinful pattern needs changing in my life? What sinful attitude or actions have I been holding on to? What have I done? What specifically

do I feel guilty about? What are my regrets? What do I feel remorseful about? What relationships have I damaged? What sinful pattern needs changing? What sinful attitude or actions have I been holding on to? Jeremiah said in laments 3:40 let's us examine our ways and test them. God says we need to examine our lives. Pray and then ask God for help. It's really basic. It's really simple. But wow what a courageous effort it requires to examine our lives pray and ask God genuinely and sincerely for the help that only he can provide. Look at Psalm 139, Psalm 139: 23 to 24. Search me oh God. Can you pray this this morning? Would you be willing in that quiet moment with him and that pad and that pen and those kind of questions running through your mind. Would you say what the psalmist said when he proclaimed search me oh God and know my heart. Try me and know my anxious thoughts. And see if there be any hurtful way. See if there's any sinfulness in me and lead me then in the everlasting way. You outta just write that out. You outta just have that on a card. You outta put that right front and center not only in this time of doing business with God but it outta be something you have front and center in the every day of life. Now when you take this personal inventory you need to take your time. Don't rush it. I want you to know I've done this many times in my life. I'm trying more and more so to make a regular habit a discipline. I believe God will use it to keep me in tune with him to keep me growing to keep me healthy to keep me away from physical pain and relational pain and spiritual distance. And it doesn't work. I'm going say this to you. It does not work unless you're ruthlessly honest with yourself. And you say I am going to quit pretending. I'm going to lay out before God what's wrong with my life. The sinfulness that's still there the stuff I haven't made right. And you sit down you start writing these things out. Why in writing somebody might ask? Actually somebody did ask me this week. Why in writing? And I just found this I thought it was great. Because it forces you to be specific you might say why can't I just think about these things? Pray about them? Do it that way. And I love this because thoughts listen to this. Because thoughts disentangle themselves when they pass through the lips and on to a piece of paper. Thoughts disentangle themselves when they move from my mind to me writing them out. It means I've thought about it. I can say it. I can write it down on to a piece of paper. It's gotten clearer. If I can say and put it down in writing it no longer remains vague. You can't just say God I've blown it. Well we all know that. I know you have. And you know that I have. Specifically we need to write it down. This helps us face reality. It helps us stop denying sin's presence in our life. Number two, accept responsibility for my sin. Number one we do a self examination. Number two we accept, this is big. Accept responsibility for my sin Psalm 32:5. Go back there if you would. Psalm 32:5. It says I acknowledge. I love this. I love the honesty. I love the clarity. I love the fact that he's not looking for anybody else to dump this on. I acknowledge my sin to you and my iniquity I did not hide. I said I will confess my transgressions to the lord. And you forgave the guilt of my sin. Often times most of you in the room know this. Often times the greatest hold up to the healing of your sins is you. That's right, you. Its start with being radically honest and saying I am the problem here. My sin you can't keep saying if I just change relationships I'll get through this. I'll just make new friends. I'll change jobs. I'll switch churches. I'll move. I'll change towns then everything will be

fine. Because everything won't be fine because the problem is where ever you go you're there. And you're the problem. Does that make sense? I'm the problem. It's my sin. And it's affecting me. And it cause physical and relational and spiritual pain. And you and I have to be ruthlessly genuine about this. So we accept responsibility for our sin. Don't rationalize it. Don't say it happened a long time or it's just a stage or everybody does it. Don't minimize it. Don't say it's no big deal. If it's no big how come you still remember it twenty years later? I remember mine. I know you remember yours. Don't minimize it. Don't blame others. I hear people say well you know what Kelly it's mostly their fault. It's mostly their fault. Well you know what it may be mostly their fault but God holds you responsible for the 10 percent that's your fault. And left un-confessed that 10 percent can be deadly treacherous stuff. And the 10 percent was me just being kind. It's usually more like 50. Romans 12:18 I think. So far as it depends on you if at all possible be at peace with all men. What ever you can make what ever you can confess you do it. The point is that I really want to stop defeating myself I've got to stop deceiving myself and pretending that it's everybody else's fault when the issue is me. Let me ask you this morning. What are you pretending to not feel guilty about but in your you still do? Don't you think that maybe it's finally time for you to confess that and get that out on this divine table of forgiveness and cleansing to finally be made whole? To finally be forgiven to renew your spirit to restore unto you the joy of your salvation? Make a moral inventory. Look at the list and say you know what that's me. I accept responsibility for my sin. Number three ask God for forgiveness. First John 1:9. First John 1:9. If we confess our sins he is faithful and righteous. You're translation may say just. He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Ask God to forgive you for it for all of it. What ever it is what ever is still hanging what ever needs to be put upon that table you ask God who knows you and loves and wants to make you whole. You ask to forgive you. And he will. Couple things to keep in mind as you ask for forgiveness. Kind of a how not to ask two things just real quick and this comes from personal experience and it comes from listening to people think this through for years. Number one don't bargain. Just write that done. Don't bargain. Don't say if you'll just forgive me I'll never do this again. Because guess what? You what? You probably will. Don't do that. Don't create more baggage in your mind and heart. I'll never do this again. If that specific sin is your area weakness you'll probably be confessing it along with me again, and again, and again, and again. You don't have to bargain with God to get his forgiveness again, and again, and again. Ask him humbly. And don't bribe him. Don't say God if you'll forgive me I'll do this. If you forgive me I'll do that. I promise to do a lot of good things. I'll go to church more often. I'll tithe more. God's not bribable. And besides there are never any conditions with him. You understand that? He's not a conditional God. He's not offering his forgiveness to you at a price. That price was paid by his son who hung on a cross so you and I could have these sins forgiven. You just believe. You believe that he will forgive you. When we freely admit that we have sinned we find God utterly reliable. He forgives our sins and makes us as it says there in first John 1:9 thoroughly clean from all that is evil. I want you to write this down. To admit or to confess means to speak the same thing about the sin. I

don't think there's a blank on your sheet. Just write this down the side. To confess means to speak the same thing about the sin on your list that God says about it. You agree with God about the sin. You say God you're right. It is sin. It's wrong. You don't sort of believe it. You don't kind of believe it. You fully and absolutely agree with God about the sin. You confess the sin and begin to move in a different direction. My friend confession is so healthy. Number four, number four share with share with someone. Share my failure with someone else. Number four write that one down. Share my failure with someone else. God says it's absolutely essential for your recovery. James 5:16. Admit your faults to one another. Pray for each other so that you may be healed. How are we healed? Well ultimately by the sacrifice of Christ. But that healing gets furthered. It gets deepened when we admit our faults to each other. Its gets flushed out. It comes into the every day world of our relationships. Some might ask why I need to drag another person into this. Why can't just admit it to God? Why don't I just pray about it make a list talk to God about and be done with it? Why do I need to tell someone else? Let me just say this to you. I've wrestled with this myself for years. I believe this is what I would say to you today. Because the root of our problem my friend is relational. See we lie to each other. I lie to you. And you lie to me. When we're not honest and forthright about what really goes on we deceive each other. We're dishonest with each other. We wear masks. We pretend we have it together but we don't. We deny our true feelings. We play games. And it isolates us from the community from each other and it prevents the intimacy that God designed us to live in. we end up living in shame and insecurity and loneliness. If they really we talked about this week one. If we they really knew the truth about me they wouldn't love me. They'd reject me. And with that kind of thinking the Christian community takes a devastating hit. Makes it makes it sick makes it unhealthy. The more you hide it the bigger it gets. So we risk honesty with a person and all of a sudden this feeling of freedom comes into our life and you realize that the healing that the healing can be experienced and even experience at an even deeper level when we're willing to not only confess things to him and secure and make right this vertical relationship but the healing just kind of spreads out goes even deeper into us when we're willing with each other horizontally to tell people what's transpired to tell people what I struggle to tell people the sins and the failure. Now do I want you to just go out and hop on a box in the foyer and start screaming it out? No. Telling the wrong person can be disastrous. You don't just go out and indiscriminately tell your problems to just anyone. You can write this down. Who do you tell? Somebody you trust number one. Somebody who can keep a confidence someone who is not a gossip someone who has a reputation for being trustworthy. You tell someone you trust. This could be a Christian counselor. This could be a very dear friend. But I think it's important that you and find people in our lives who we can thoroughly and absolutely trust. Number two somebody who understands the value of what you're doing. They don't think it's weird. They don't think it's over the top. They understand it and appreciate it. They're grateful for your vulnerability and your honesty. Somebody who understand the great value of what you're doing. Thirdly somebody who is mature enough not to be shocked. There's not greater nightmare than finally coming clean with somebody. And that person fainting you know what I mean.

Somebody who number four knows the lord well enough at a deep enough level that they. I love this. That they can reflect his forgiveness. We talk about priests. We reflect God to others. You need to find a you know a priest in the body of Christ. A mature believer who can having not been shocked then begin to reflect God's grace and forgiveness to you. When you find a safe place and you take your moral inventory list and you say to that person I need you to listen me and help me take this fourth step. Here's some things I know are wrong in my life. This is what I've done. Here's the sin that I have committed that I have not yet confessed. And I was thinking about this the other day. When someone tells me when some one says to me what I'm about to tell you I've never told anybody there's this feeling that comes over me and it's not a feeling of oh cool I get to know. It's this feeling of wow like in about 5 minutes this person's heart and soul is going to be completely different when they are willing to come before God and they graciously include me in the process and they get to get all that stuff forgiven and forgotten and moved aside. It's an amazing thing. You don't have to tell everybody just somebody. And all of sudden the secret that's been making you sick stops making you sick. Remember be specific. The secret you want to conceal the most is the one you need to reveal the most because that's the one that will most likely bring the greatest level of healing so you can experience God's grace. When do you do it? As soon as possible, I'd do it quickly. Number five, accept God's forgiveness. Steve would you come on up? Accept God's forgiveness. Romans 3:23 and 24. Romans 3:23 and 24. For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God it says in Romans 3:23. Being justified as a gift by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. We're all in the same boat my friends. Every week somebody comes to me and says Kelly all these messages the stuff that you're talking it's like you've been reading my mail. It's like you've been following me around all week. And I say no. I've just been following me around all week. I've just been reading my own, my own mail. We've all got problems. We've all got things that god continues to work us through. God forgives instantly. Don't forget this. God forgives instantly. God forgives freely. He forgives completely. And I want you to just listen as Steve shares his story. I know we're running a little late. But this was just one of those Sundays where I kind of just said to myself hope you'll give me some grace we're gonna run a little bit late. And want Steve to just share with you. I'm gonna grab this microphone off the piano here Chris. If that's alright. Steve's a good friend. Everybody say hi Steve. There you go man. Steve is a good friend who has been a huge influence in my life on my own road to recovery. And Steve and Lloyd and others on the celebrate recovery team have just been an enormous encouragement to me and many others. I want you to just see a real person who's just really honestly doing his very best as part of our family to follow the Lord down this path. Let him just read this to you if you can. Listen and be encourage and we'll go.

Steve: Like to share a little bit of my life with you. I've been a Christian 29 years. I've been recovering for 29 years. And I want to start with what brought me to Christ. And hopefully when I finish you can see the joy and hope that I have in my life yet that God's not done with me. Hi my name is Steve. I'm a believer of Jesus Christ an alcoholic that's

also dealing relationship issues. I was raised in a family where alcohol was a big influence in how we lived. See my drank a lot. And because of that influence I decided at a young age to drink. At first alcohol was fun and exciting. It made me feel like I never felt before. All the hurts and low self-esteem just disappeared for a time. But the more I drank the less able I was to deal with life. I was always trying to find the next thing to give me the happiness and the self worth I was looking for. I could never remember just having one or two drinks. If I picked up that first drink, I drank it until I was drunk. You see I drank just like my dad. I became the very person I did not say I would want to be. As a consequences and the pain of my drinking increased the more I knew I needed to do something about the alcohol use. I tried to do some controlled found out I could not. So decided to stop and found out I could not. The cycle of trying to stop and failing went on for some time. My life had become a mess. I didn't know what to do or where to turn. During this time because of family obligations I started to attend a prayer meeting on Sunday. You see I was living one way outside of that prayer meeting but at the same time I wanted that life the prayer meeting was talking about. I came to a point in my life that I knew if I wanted God in my life I needed to stop drinking. Here I was a 28 year old male married for 7 years with the maturity of an 18 year old. I was a mess. You see through alcohol, you see I thought alcohol was the problem. If I just stopped drinking everything will be okay. I would. It was through this prayer meeting my recovery started. Some how I was able not to use alcohol and life did get better because I was not doing all the crazy things I did when I drank. But I did not have the peace and contentment I thought I would have. I still had this obsession to drink. I was always being on guard. Where I went, what I did and who I saw because I was afraid I would pick up and start using. Then I got involved in a secular 12 step program. And through the 12 steps I was able to deal with a lot of issues that kept me tied to alcohol. I never seen the resentments the forgiveness, the fear, and the anger I had in my heart towards or hurts that I had caused others because of the things I did when I drank. The 12 steps gave me the structure and the discipline to really look at myself. The obsession of drink was gone. Peace and contentment started to be present in my life. The best way to describe my life at this time was I was a Christian active in my church involved in Bible studies and working the 12 steps. I was right where God wanted me to be. About 5 years ago I started a secular 12 meeting here at black so as a Christian I could be open to share my higher power who was Jesus Christ through the 12 step meeting and to other people. And I saw people come to Christ. So the first time when I was ... help me start celebrate recovery here at Blackhawk. I said no thanks. I was comfortable with what I was doing. Given a short time later I was asked again to get involved with celebrate recovery. This time I replied I'll read the material and see what happens. I told my wife about it. I told her I was too busy. Don't worry I'm not going to be part of this. But as I read the material got all organized in my mind this is exactly what I needed. And in many ways was already doing. For to me celebrate recovery's a place where I can bring any struggle in my life out in the open with other Christian men so I can deal with them. And there is no better place to be. I have a sponsor in CR. I call him every day. He has helped me and encouraged me in areas that have difficulty with. I call those areas relationship issues. I

let people in my life only so far and then I shut down. My sponsor has helped me focus in and make some changes in my life based upon God's word and own experience how God has worked in his life. The more time I spend learning the lessons hearing the testimonies going to meetings where Christian men and women are open about their struggles the easier it is for me to deal with the hurts habits and hang-ups that I have. My relationship with my savior has grown to a much deeper and consistent level. My love for my wife is more today than it has ever been. And I have a much clearer boundaries in areas that I'm applying the 8 principles. CR has become a very important part of my life. Recovery for me is an ongoing process because I know God has other areas in my life that he wants to change so that I may become the person he wants me to be. Thank you.

Kelly: Amen. (clapping) Amen. That's awesome. Stay right here with me. Hey would you guys just stand. And stand with Steve and I and let me just pray.

With your heads bowed and your eyes closed. Let me just encouraged you. You know Steve talked about his sponsor. And when you listen to what the sponsor is doing with Steve you know what that sponsor is doing, is he's discipling Steve. He's reminding him of what's true. He's calling him to obedience. He's lovingly there for Steve when he struggles. And I'm so grateful. If anybody in this room or anybody listening on line wants to come and gather with a group of people to this kind of process. I want to tell you again Friday night 7:00 upstairs room 257. They'd love to have you, anybody. It doesn't matter who you are.

Father God thank you for the morning. And thank you for my friend Steve. Thank you for the team that's giving themselves to this celebrate recovery ministry. Thank you for this family God and the growing levels of honesty and authenticity that we're experiencing because of your word and what it calls us to. God give us strength and courage to face these challenges. God give us strength and courage to face this week. Bring us back together again if that be your will. And we'll thank you for it. And all the people in the room agreed and said? Amen.