

Walking On

August 3, 2008

This morning our service is built around the music of one band...Army of Me. That's where the idea for today's service started. But, somewhere along the way, it became its own, living, breathing organism that we lost control of...it took on a life of its own. We started with 11 songs by this band...Army of Me and found a common theme...a theme about relationships...change and transition. We then trimmed the songs to four. Then we been exploring how to support the music...should we use movie clips like we usually do, or maybe we could use some original Garden stories...

That's the direction we took...original. And, we found what we thought would be the perfect story to share. And we tried, and tried and tried to get it...but it just didn't happen. So at the 11th hour...guess what...*WE* had to change. And change meant letting go of what we were sure would be perfect. However, when we let go of it...because really we had no choice...I really believe something organic and beautiful emerged...at least I hope you think so. What emerged was four vignettes...four stories about relationships of one kind or another...about change...about transition.

And I would be remiss if I didn't say something about a story of transition I heard here on Friday. Many of you are aware that one of the founding creators of The Garden, Sherry Fortner, passed away last week. In a funeral held here at Beef and Boards on Friday, Linda talked about Sherry transition...a transition from this life to life with the mystery of God. Change and transition find us...sometimes it's change we seek, sometimes it's change we'd rather not face...

And...this is the very heart of our service today. Through the music of Army of Me and our own original Garden stories...where do you connect...Where do you feel God might be trying to speak to you?

SONG: 2 Into 1

I know it sounds foolish, but I live in hope
that one day all of my friends can be home.
For now, you are broken, you feel so unsure.
Wherever we are, we can't go back where we were.

And I wanna fly
straight into the sun.
I wanna burn
Two into one.

I know it sounds foolish, but I'm still in love.
Although I surrendered, I'm not giving up.
So if there is something that's making you stay.
I'm standing right here, I won't walk away.

And I wanna fly
straight into the sun.
I wanna burn
Two into one.

And I've forgiven you.
It's all that I can do.
It seems you have no choice
when you love someone.

I want you to know
I want you to see
to forgive is to breathe,
and it's something,
it's something you need.
Oh, I forgive what you've done.
Oh, I wanna burn two into one.

two into, two into one.
two into, two into one, yes.
two into, two into one, yes.
two into, two into one, yes.
(repeat in background until end)

I know it sounds foolish, but I'm still in love.
I know it sounds foolish, I'm not giving up.

I know it sounds foolish, but I live in hope...How many of us live in hope? Really live in hope...So often we get stuck in a situation...I believe forgiveness is the key to getting unstuck.

To forgive is to breathe... How many of us hold on to anger? How many of us hold on to places and situations in our lives where we've been wronged? Without breath there is no life. Thus, metaphorically speaking if we can't let go, if we can't forgive...we can't live...at least not fully...not as God has intended us to live.

If we don't find a way to forgive, we've surrendered our lives to the control of someone else, or some situation. Here's the thing though, in choosing to forgive, many of us do feel like it is surrendering. AND...surrendering sounds so weak...like we are giving up. I don't think so...not in this context. Surrendering is not giving up...surrendering is letting go. It is saying I'm letting go of this part of my life so I can make room for what's next...

SONG: Perfect

It's time that I got myself a nice suit
So that I could look respectable for you
And it's time that I built myself a refuge
So that I could hide away if I so choose

These days it feels that everything is changing
Used to be that every stride, you were standing by my side
But now it feels I'm walking on a tightrope
As I try to balance out how to make you proud

One day I'll be perfect, I'll be so extraordinary

I will shine, I will radiate

One day I'll be perfect, I'll be so extraordinary

I will take your breath away

And you almost don't even recognize me

Saying, "How did you erase all but gorgeous from your face?"

But don't be scared 'cause I'll live here forever

Won't you take a venture out, won't you take a venture out of there.

One day I'll be perfect....

The stars will fall from skies above

But I am no prophet of doom

I just thought I'd warn you

It's a service I provide for free to you

They call it love, babe.

One day I'll be perfect....

What is Perfect? How will we know when we've arrived? How will we know when we're good enough? What will that look like? So many of us spend so much of our time trying to be someone we're not...and the funny thing is...we're usually trying to be someone else...FOR someone ELSE. Here's the thing...guess what...we'll probably never measure up to someone else's expectations for us. We'll never be pretty enough, skinny enough, smart enough, make enough money, have the right job.

At some point...we have to live into who God has created us to be...not who someone else wants us to be...Sometimes being claiming our own lives as our own is one of the most difficult things we'll do....

SONG: Better Run

If you find that your life would be better off without me,

If you run at full speed

And it feels good to be free,

If you know it in your soul

though it's hard to let it go,

you better run,

you better run.

If you lift it from the ground,

know you're never coming down,

Babe, if you're a boxer

and you can't stand another round,

If you're free to make a sound

and your heart began to pound.

you better run,

you better run.

But the one thing that I ask,

that you live without reserve,
that you find out what you need,
show what you deserve.

All the time that we had,
do you think it was a waste?

For what good's a memory
without some sort of taste?

and does the value rise

if it cannot be replaced?

you better run,

you better run.

But the one thing that I ask,
that you live without reserve,
that you find out what you need,
show what you deserve.

You better run,

you better run.

But the one thing that I ask,
that you live without reserve,
and I know it hurts for now,
but there's always something learned.

So don't turn around,

don't lose your footing now

and don't lose your nerve.

Gonna find out what you need,

gonna show what you deserve.

You know, running at full speed in life...living life without reserve is not without cost...letting go of the past is often painful...even if what you are running to is better than what has been.

SONG: Walking On

Your skin is thin, you take it in

Until you fell over the ground

You built a wall, a hundred stories tall

You hide inside, you shiverin'

An I will reach out to you and I will carry your fill

For tonight the road so long you walking on

But keep walking on

For tonight all in what you need is what you'll find

To keep walking on

You want to believe

You still have your doubts

Maybe you'll figure it out

And to morning will come

We will walk in the sun

For tonight the road so long you walking on

But keep walking on

For tonight all in what you need is what you'll find

To keep walking on

There is no sound, it's quite loud

Is when your eyes are pointed down
There is no voice, makes it clear what you think we're
doing
To walk inn the light a hundred candles bright
After the valley your mountain will come

For tonight the road so long you walking on
But keep walking on
For tonight all in what you need is what you'll find
To keep walking on

Keep walking on
Keep walking on
Keep walking on
And don't look back, keep walking on

CLOSING/PRAAYER:

Our Bible passage today talks about radical life change...it talks about real, life-giving change is more than skin deep. It says, *It's your life that must change, not your skin! What counts is your life. Is it green and blossoming? Because if it's deadwood, it goes on the fire.*

Pray with me...God, many of us do experience brokenness in our lives. Many of us are stuck in relationships, jobs...situations for which we either don't feel like we can change...don't have the power to change. God whatever that part of our life that is stuck, wherever we are feeling like we aren't green and blossoming, my prayer God is that you let your presence in our lives be felt as real as the chords of a guitar, as real as the images on screen...we feel your breath passing through us saying...I am with you...I am with you—let's walk together on this one—let's keep walking on. AMEN