

# VULNERABILITY

## THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

ROY HOWARD & SHELBY ETHERIDGE HARASTY

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I want to start a global conversation  
about vulnerability, shame and  
courage.

Brené Brown

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# VULNERABILITY

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- Comes from the Latin word “to wound”
  - To be vulnerable is to be open to being wounded
  - Risking failure
  - Speaking truthfully
  - Staying in (rather than remaining on the sidelines)
  - Allowing for discomfort
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# WHAT DOES SCRIPTURE SAY?

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Scripture tells us in numerous stories that the living God became *vulnerable* for us. Our contention is that our pastoral/personal practice of vulnerability flows from a theology of God's vulnerability.

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# THE VULNERABLE GOD

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- Incarnation - “*God With Us*” + “The Word Became Flesh”- Matthew 1:23; John 1:1-5

(To be vulnerable is to be all in)

- Crucifixion - “*My God, my God ... why?*” Matthew 27:46

(To be vulnerable is to be open to being wounded and risking failure)

- Engagement - “*Jesus wept*” - John 11:35

(To be vulnerable is to allow for emotional discomfort)

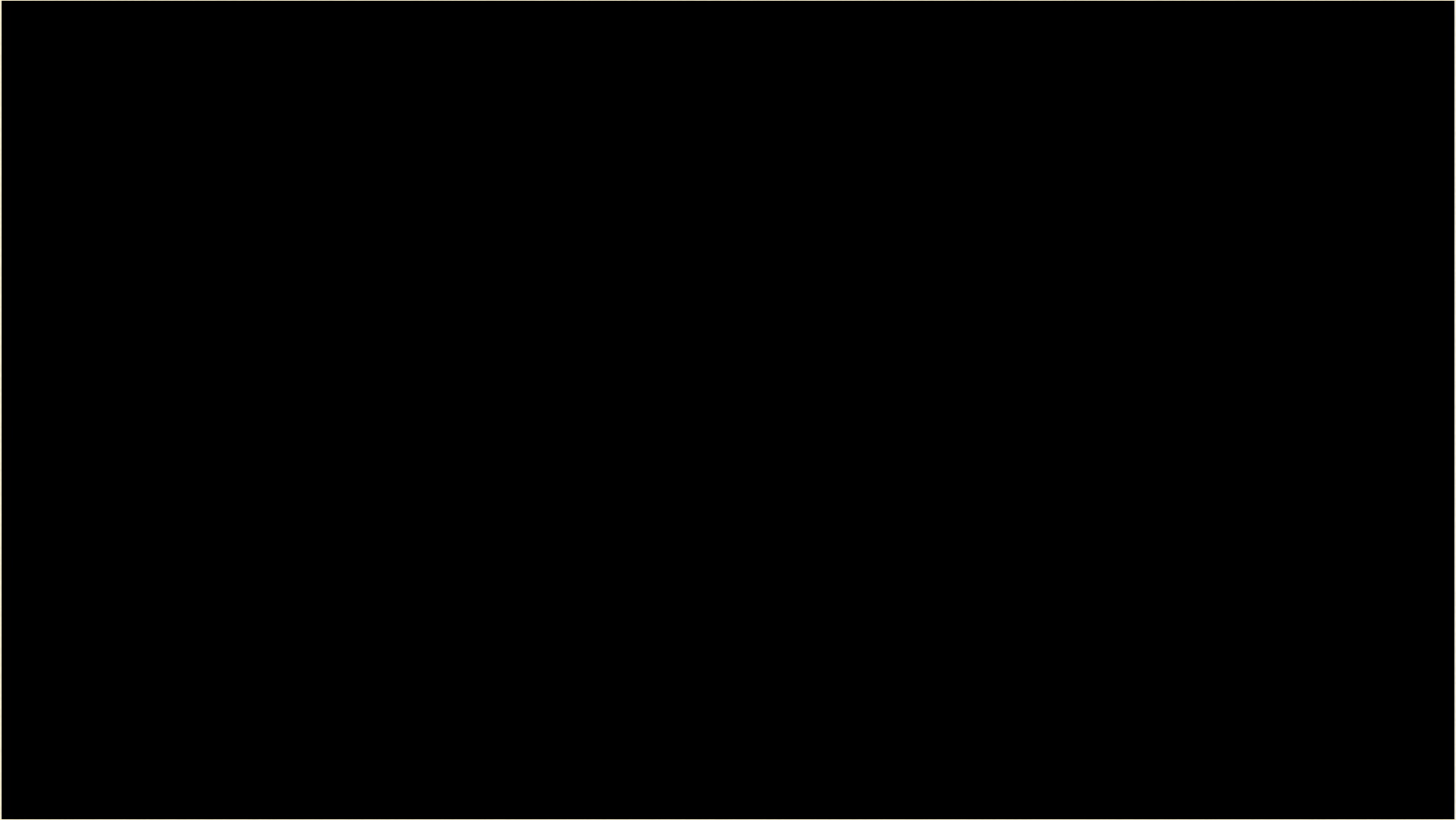
Are there other scriptures that come to mind?

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# Being Vulnerable

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# VULNERABILITY & YOU

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What does vulnerability mean to you?

How do you experience vulnerability?

When have you experienced someone else being vulnerable with you?

How might this inform your leadership practice?

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# WHAT UNDERMINES VULNERABILITY?

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# SHAME

Shame is what keeps us from being vulnerable. It is the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing that you are flawed and therefore unworthy of love and belonging. It is universal.

- We all have the gremlins
  - Shame is: "I have failed" vs. "I am a failure."
  - What price do we pay, emotionally and spiritually, when we disengage and do not enter the arena?
  - Shame undermines every path to joy, freedom and peace. It keeps us from daring greatly.
  - The more we talk about shame the less power it has over our lives.
  - Cultivating a shame resilient culture in our congregations.
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Courage is the answer to shame

Courage = Daring greatly

Courage = Being all in

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# VULNERABILITY + LEADERSHIP

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How might you go about your ministry from a place of vulnerability and courage?

“Vulnerability is uncertainty, risk, and emotional exposure.”

- truth-telling with congregation and leaders
  - engagement with conflict and emotional discomfort
  - caring for others
  - risking failure
  - prayer
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# VULNERABILITY + RISK TAKING

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The thing I would say is that if you feel safe in the area you are working in, you are not working in the right area. Always go a little further in the water than you think are capable of being in. Go a little bit out of your depth, and when you don't feel that your feet are quite touching the bottom, you are just about in the right place to do something really exciting.

David Bowie 2016

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BREAK

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