

Hold It Light

Gospel dark country · pastoral closer

Jaxson Harlan

Key: E minor (concert) — same house as the first two · Time: 6/8 · ♩ = 68 (or slow 4/4 at 66–70)
Capo: none · Capo 2 for F# minor if the room sits high · Feel: spare, a little more air than the foyer song

Worship Team Direction

This is the third song in The Sin of Greed set. I Called It Mercy is the loud crime. We Don't Call It Greed is the kitchen dictionary. Hold It Light is the way home that still has to go to work in the morning. Do not turn it into a bright closer. Keep the minor. Keep the dirt. Let the mercy live in the space, not in a lifted four-chord smile.

Form

Intro (spoken) – V1 – Chorus – V2 – Chorus – V3 – Bridge – Final Chorus – Tag – Outro hold.

Tight set: cut Verse 2. Keep Verse 1 (daily bread / Paul), Verse 3 (Bock hinge into ordinary obedience), the bridge questions, and the tag. The tag is the teaching in four breaths.

Vocal

- Jaxson: still behind the beat, but less of a prosecutor than in the foyer song. This is a pastor with work boots. Weariness allowed. Scorn is not.
- Spoken intro: almost dry. Do not act it. Let the room finish the sentence.
- Verse 1: prayer-like. Verse 2: grain on “I earned it” and “Sabbath.” Verse 3: drop down; the Bock line is recognition, not a jab, then the four commands come as kindness with a spine.
- Chorus: more air than We Don't Call It Greed. Still do not belt. “It's a gift, it ain't a throne” should feel like a hand opening, not a slogan.
- Bridge: four questions, spoken-sung, a hole after each. These are the pastoral tests from the teaching. Leave them in the room.
- Final chorus last four lines change — “Sees the worker and the wrist / Ask Him how to open this.” Lean, do not climb.
- Tag: four short lines, nearly spoken. Optional low hum under the last line only. No choir stack. Savannah may join the last chorus in a low harmony if she is already in the set; she does not take a verse.

Band map

- Acoustic guitar: same figure and vocabulary as the first two. Thumb on 1 and 4. Verses rolled. Mute the G string.
- Second acoustic or mando: in at Verse 2, out for Verse 3, thin under the last chorus.
- Bass: roots in Verse 1. Fifths at first chorus. Verse 3 held low E or tacet. Walk only into choruses.
- Piano or pump organ: chapel whole notes. Organ under spoken intro and tag. A little more warmth than the foyer song, still not a pad bed.
- Pedal steel: weather. Swell on “hold it light” the second time, and once on “He is not asking you to starve.” No licks in the verses.
- Brushes or cajon: in at first chorus, out for Verse 3, soft pulse on the bridge questions. Snare off the verses.
- Fiddle: optional one long line under the final tag only.

Dynamics and cuts

- Intro / V1: guitar + organ + vocal.
- Chorus 1: add bass and brushes. Lean, with a little more room than song two.
- V2: second guitar in.
- V3: strip to guitar and voice.
- Bridge: pulse, holes between questions.
- Tag: one guitar, held Em. Steel once. Silence. Do not resolve to G major.

Set order

I Called It Mercy — We Don't Call It Greed — Hold It Light. Same key, same pocket, same steel language. If the room will bear it, no applause between one and two. A breath is allowed before this one; it is the open hand, not a fourth accusation. Do not close the night with a fast praise song that undoes the minor.

Theological guardrail for the platform

Do not sing this as contempt for work, land, the patch, or a good year. Provision is commanded. The clenched fist inside the work is the sin. Man's court still cannot help a soul here. The tag must stay as invitation: He is not asking you to starve. Do not announce who has crossed the line. Put the questions in the wrist and sit down.

Guitar Vocabulary

Open chords, concert pitch. Capo 2 keeps these shapes in F# minor. Drop the whole three-song set to D minor only if the steel is warned.

Em 022000 C x32010 G 320003 D xx0232 Am x02210 B7 x21202

Nashville numbers in E minor: i = Em bVI = C bIII = G bVII = D iv = Am V7 = B7

Verse loop: *i – bVI – bIII – bVII* Chorus: *bVI – bIII – bVII – i* Bridge: *iv – i – bVI – bVII*

Strum / roll

6/8 feel, counted 1-a 2-a 3-a | 2-a 2-a 3-a. Thumb on 1 and 4. Light brush on 3 and 6 in the choruses. Verses: bass – inner – high – inner.

Same intro figure as the first two songs:

e		-	-	-	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	3	-	-	2	-
B		-	-	-	0	-	-	1	-	-	-	0	-	-	3	-
G		-	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	2	-
D		-	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	0	-	-	0	-
A		-	-	-	2	-	-	3	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
E		-	0	-	-	-	3	-	0	-	-	3	-	3	-	-

Em to C with a passing G bass, then G to D. Twice under the spoken intro.

Chord Chart

INTRO — Jaxson, almost spoken | Em | C | G | D | x2

Em I still gotta work in the morning

G **D**
That ain't the sin

Em The sin is making a living

G Into a god I can hold **D**

VERSE 1

Em C
Give us this day our daily bread

G **D**
That's a working man's prayer

Em C
Not a barn that ends the asking

G Not a promise I ain't there **D**

Em Paul said provide for your household C

G **D**
He never said worship the wage
Em **C**
He said work so your hands can open
G **D**
Not so your heart can cage

CHORUS

C **G**
Hold it light, brother, hold it light
D **Em**
It's a gift, it ain't a throne
C **G**
Hold it light, sister, hold it light
D **Em**
You can earn and not kneel down
Am **Em**
The line ain't a number in a ledger
C **G**
It's the reason in the wrist
D **B7**
If it cannot leave your fingers
C **D** **Em**
It was never yours to begin with
Turnaround into verses: | C | D | Em | Em |

VERSE 2

Em **C**
I know the fear that comes at sundown
G **D**
When the patch goes quiet and thin
Em **C**
I know the sentence I earned it
G **D**
And the truck you can't keep in
Em **C**
Sabbath is a stubborn mercy
G **D**
It tells the money it can wait
Em **C**
If you cannot lay the work down
G **D**
You already crossed the gate

CHORUS — same changes; add brushes and bass

VERSE 3 — guitar and voice

Em **C**
A woman called it mercy once
G **D**
We called it smart and blessed

Em **C**
Then we learned the same old hunger
G **D**
In a kitchen looking respectable
Em **C**
So take the cheque and feed your people
G **D**
Pay the man you said you'd pay
Em **C**
Leave a little where the Lord can find it
G **D**
Give an hour of yourself away

BRIDGE — four questions; leave a hole after each

Am **Em**
Why do I want the next thing
C **G**
Who is paying for my more
Am **Em**
Can I open what I'm holding
C **D** **Em**
Do I still know what it's for

FINAL CHORUS — last four lines change

C **G**
Hold it light, brother, hold it light
D **Em**
It's a gift, it ain't a throne
C **G**
Hold it light, sister, hold it light
D **Em**
You can earn and not kneel down
Am **Em**
The God who sees the roster
C **G**
Sees the worker and the wrist
D **B7**
If it cannot leave your fingers
C **D** **Em**
Ask Him how to open this

TAG — nearly spoken hold the final Em

Em
Work.
C
Provide.
G **D**
Hold it light.
Em
He is not asking you to starve.

OUTRO

| C | D | Em (hold, steel answers once, then cut to silence)

Cue Sheet for the Board

- Spoken intro: vocal up, guitar figure under, no verb.
- Verse 1: dry-ish, short delay.
- Chorus 1: short plate, a little more air than song two.
- Verse 3: pull 3 dB. Leave the room in.
- Bridge: do not fill the holes between questions.
- Tag: pull the band. Do not swell “starve.” Hard cut or fade on the Em ring.

Jaxson Harlan · Hold It Light · for ministry use with Part Three of The Sin of Greed