

Grace and Knowledge: Light for the Darkness

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[0 : 00] Good evening to all of you. Glad that we can be together. This is the second Sunday that we are celebrating Easter. In the church, in the history of the church and in the Anglican church, Easter is not just a day, it's a season. And it's a season where we ring bells, where we feast. But most importantly, we reflect on the reality of the resurrection, which is the foundation of our faith. Paul says in his letter to the Corinthians in chapter 15, that if the resurrection did not happen, our faith is vain, it's empty. And so because we believe that it happened, we want to deal with the implications of that. And one of the great promises of a faith that's based on a resurrection is the promise of transformation and renewal for all those who belong to the Lord. And so this Easter season, we're talking about transformation and renewal. We're talking about Christian growth. And we're doing that by looking at a book called 2 Peter. It's a second letter that the Apostle Peter wrote to his people not long before his death. And so whether you're somebody who came to faith at some point earlier in your life and you're wondering what does it mean to grow and to mature, what does that look like? It's often misunderstood. It's not often talked about. What does that actually mean? Or if you're here and you're not a believer and you're not quite sure what you believe and you're wondering what is the heart and soul of the Christian faith? What's it all about?

Those are the kinds of things that we're going to be addressing here looking at 2 Peter. And we're in the first chapter in 2 Peter and we come to this section, verses 12 through 21 of chapter 1. And this is really the heart of the book. We see who Peter is. We see his heart laid bare. And we see his mission, why he's writing this letter to begin with, what's his mission, and then we see his actual message. So Peter's mission and his message. And this will really orient us to the book as a whole. Let's pray as we open God's Word together.

Lord, we thank You for Your Word. We thank You that we have it here. We can access it. We can open it and read it together. But if this is mere ink and paper, then this offers little more than any book of human wisdom or rhetoric, what we need is Your Holy Spirit. And what we need is the risen Christ.

And we know that because of Your resurrection and the promises that You've made, You can use this Word as we open it to do Your work in us. And that's what we long for, Lord. And so it's in Your name, in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ, we pray, Lord. Amen.

Amen. So we are looking at 2 Peter chapter 1, verses 12 through 15. We really see Peter's mission laid out. He sort of gives us a window into his heart. And in order to understand what he's talking about in these verses, we need to understand the reference that he makes.

[2 : 54] Because he talks about the fact that his death is coming soon, and he talks about the fact that Jesus had specifically told him that this day would come. Well, what's he talking about? Well, he's making an allusion back to an event, an encounter that happened that we read about in John chapter 21, part of which Amy just read a moment ago. In John 21, Jesus has been crucified, and the disciples are distraught. They are crestfallen. Their hopes have been dashed on the rocks. And so not knowing anything better to do, they have returned to their former professions before they ever met Jesus. And so in Peter's case, he's gone back to fishing in a boat.

And one morning, they haven't caught anything all night. He and his friends look, and on the shore, they see a man. And this man tells them something that they've heard from one other person in their life, throw your net on the other side of the boat. Lo and behold, they catch a multitude of fish, 153 to be exact, and they realize it is the Lord Jesus. And they see him resurrected in the flesh on the shore. And so Peter, we have to understand at this point, is filled with shame. Prior to the crucifixion, he had denied Jesus three times, just as Jesus had predicted. And so at this point, he feels like a failure. He feels like he's let his Lord down. And so they come to the shore, and Peter is very obviously feeling incredibly uncomfortable, doesn't know what's going to happen. And Jesus

invites them to sit and eat breakfast, which they do. They eat some of the fish cooked over the fire. And then once this silent, awe-filled meal has been completed, Jesus turns to Peter. And you can almost imagine Peter bracing himself just at any minute, Jesus is just going to lay into him. You know, how could you do that? How could you betray me? After all I did for you. That's not what Jesus does. Jesus asks very mysterious questions. Simon Peter, do you love me more than these? Talking about the other disciples who are gathered there. Peter says, I do, Lord. I love you more than these. And then Jesus says something even more interesting, then feed my lambs. And three times he does this, do you love me? And then when Peter professes his love, he responds by saying, feed my lambs, tend my sheep, feed my sheep. And we begin to realize that he's asking, do you love me? Once for each time that he was betrayed, each time that Peter denied him. And this is a ritual that we come to realize is not a retribution, but a reinstatement.

He's reinstating Peter. Only now Peter is not a disciple. He has become an apostle, which by definition means he is an eyewitness of the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ. And Jesus is saying, from this point forward, I'm reinstating you. And your mission is going to be this, feed my sheep, tend to my sheep, protect my sheep, care for my sheep. And then he makes a cryptic reference. He says, the day is going to come, Peter, when you're going to be taken where you don't want to go. Your arms are going to be stretched out. And it clarifies, John clarifies, he's talking about the fact that Peter's death is approaching, that Peter will one day be martyred for the name of Jesus. And so Jesus is essentially saying, until that day comes of your martyrdom, I want you to devote your life, devote your life to feeding my sheep. So this is the reference that Peter is making here. And it's incredibly powerful because we see that this is a mission that came directly from Jesus, from the mouth of Jesus, that shapes the rest of Peter's life. And so now as we look at verses 12 to 15 in Peter's letter, he's essentially saying this, if I could paraphrase, he's saying this, he's saying, I'm not long for this world. And I know that. Persecution is getting worse and worse and worse, and any day they're going to come for me. And so even though I've told you these things already, I want to tell you again, I want to tell you one more time so that after I'm gone, you will never forget. And I'm going to make every effort to ensure that even long after I'm gone, you will never forget the things that I'm telling you, my message to you. And that's partly why he's writing this down, so that as we are doing right now, his sheep will always have the opportunity to come back and remember the core of his teaching, which he received from Jesus. I'm making every effort, he says. So this is Peter's mission.

[7 : 34] And I want to stop right there, and I just want to reflect on that idea, that Peter knows his death is coming. He knows his death is imminent. And he's clear on what his mission is between now and the day his death comes. And frankly, the church has been built by thousands and thousands of men and women very much like Peter, who looked at their lives, looked at the inevitability of their death, and devoted themselves to proclaiming God's Word, to spreading the gospel, to building the church with everything that they had. They've done it through all their various vocations and callings and countries all around the world through all kinds of circumstance, many of them very difficult.

I'm reminded of Elizabeth Elliot, a very well-known writer and thinker and missionary. She passed away not too long ago, but she was a writer and an adjunct professor at the seminary I attended called Gordon Conwell. And so she was very well-known there. And her husband, Jim Elliot, was a missionary back in the 1950s. And if you can imagine this, you know, young Jim Elliot, he's 28 years old. He's been married just under three years. He has a 10-month-old baby. And he looks

around at the church in the U.S. at that time, and he says, these sheep are well-fed. And I want to go where the sheep need to be fed. I want to go feed the sheep that don't have anyone to feed them. And so he felt called to overseas missions, as did his wife. And at this point in his life, he's 28, three years of marriage, 10-month-old at home, daughter. He feels called to go to Ecuador and to share the gospel with the indigenous people in the tribes of Ecuador. And so some of you know this story. It's been written down. It's been turned into movies. He goes over there, and initially things seem to be going well. And then through a bizarre series of circumstances, he ends up being one of the first missionaries there who's killed.

He's speared to death. Five men, actually, are killed by the tribesmen there. And it seems as though all is lost. But here's where the story actually gets interesting. Because then the wives of these

missionaries, the wives of these men, continue to go back to Ecuador. They return there. And they begin to develop a relationship with these people, specifically the people who killed their husbands. And in one case, actually, the man who killed the missionary ends up adopting that missionary's son and largely helping to raise him because that son spent so much time in Ecuador over the course of his childhood. And the gospel begins to take root. And these people begin to be transformed.

[10:20] And the society as a whole begins to change. And we hear this and we think, well, is this some form of imperialism or something like that? And it's interesting. James Boster, who's an anthropologist from the University of Connecticut, he's not an evangelical Christian by any stretch, nevertheless has done a lot of research on these people groups. And he says that before their conversion, these people were essentially dying out. They were locked in a kind of endless cycle of revenge killings.

So this society had basically been turned into tribes and factions. And they continued warring and warring and attempts at truce had largely failed, mainly because the concept of peace, the word for peace didn't exist in their language. The only thing they knew at the time culturally was protecting their own and defending the honor of their kin against anyone who might attack or threaten any other kind of way.

And so this anthropologist says that when these women who were the kin of the men who had been killed, when they arrive, and yet they arrive without the intention to seek revenge, but rather they arrive with a message of peace and reconciliation and forgiveness and love and service, that that began to show these people a new way, a different way. And it began to transform their society. And it gave credibility to the gospel message. And that this anthropologist says that at this time they were on the verge of self-extinction, but at this point in time today, you know, they used to number in the hundreds, just a few hundred, and now they number in the thousands. Their society has begun to regrow because they have, generations of killing have ceased. So it's an amazing story. And what we see in this, what we see in people like Jim Elliot, Elizabeth Elliot, their allies and friends, is a single-minded devotion to feeding the sheep and building the church, building the kingdom. And the reason that

I want to reflect on that is because, like it or not, we're all going to die one day. Hopefully nobody in this room will be martyred. You know, church history actually says that Peter was martyred. He was, not long after, wrote this letter under Emperor Nero. He was captured and taken, and he was crucified, much like Jesus was. But hopefully that won't happen to us. But nevertheless, we are going to die.

Right? Even the people that Jesus raised in Scripture, people like Lazarus, Lazarus then eventually died again. And so the question then becomes, if we know we're going to die, and it could be sooner, it could be later, to what do we devote our lives between this day and that? What do we devote ourselves to? What do we give ourselves to? Do we have a single clear-minded vision for what God has called us to do? Because God has called all of His people in one way or another, through all of the amazing vocations that are represented in this room, that a part of that vocation is building and serving and seeking the growth of the church, of God's people in the world, of seeing the gospel message spread to the four corners of the earth. As Jim Elliott once said, he is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose. So this is Peter's mission. What's your mission?

[13:59] All right, that's the first thing that we want to reflect on. But now as we continue to read in verses 16 down through verse 21, we begin to get into the meat of what Peter's actual message is.

All right, so if Jesus has said, feed my sheep, then how does Peter go about doing that? What's the means of feeding and nourishing God's people? And his message in the remainder of our passage is essentially twofold. He says this, in order to feed the sheep, in order to feed the sheep, the sheep need to know two things. You can trust the Scriptures and you should use the Scriptures.

So the Scriptures are the means of nourishment. You should trust them and you should use them. And so I want to look at each of those pieces in turn. Because when he says you can trust Scripture, the way he says that is to make another specific reference. He essentially says, I and the other apostles, we're not bringing you myths. We're not spreading rumors that we've heard. We're actually talking about things that we have seen and things that we have heard. We're eyewitnesses. We are, if you will, ear witnesses of the things that we're telling you about. This is not secondhand.

It's from our own eyes and ears. And he makes a reference back to what we call the transfiguration. This is a place where not all of the disciples were privy to this. It was Peter and James and John. [15:23] And they go up on a mountain with Jesus. And for just the briefest moment, they see the veil pulled back. And they see this moment of Jesus in his majesty and in his glory.

And the beauty is devastating and terrifying to them. It's overwhelming. They don't know what to do. Peter goes out of his mind at this moment. He doesn't know what to do.

He's like, maybe should we build tents? I don't even know what I'm doing. And the author says he wasn't in his right mind. Right? This is an awesome moment. And so Peter's looking back to that and he says, I saw this. I heard the voice come from heaven.

And the voice pronounces over Jesus, this man that we've been following. This voice says, this is my son with whom I'm well pleased. Peter's saying, I heard that voice. So I'm not telling you myths and rumors. I'm telling you what I saw.

And then he goes on to talk about the prophetic writing. And he says, this confirms everything that we've seen and read in the Old Testament, in the prophecies. Right? So the point that he's trying to make is, we're reporting, we are eyewitnesses.

[16:32] So you can trust what we say. You can trust what we've written down. And he includes Paul in this later in his book. We'll look at this in a few weeks. But in chapter 3, verse 16, he's talking about how some of the scriptures are hard to understand.

And some people twist and misuse scripture for their own ends. But he's not talking about the Old Testament. He's talking about Paul's writing. And he says, some of the things that Paul says are hard to understand.

And some people twist and misuse Paul's words as they do other parts of scripture. And he uses that specific word for scripture that we know means Peter considers Paul's writing to be right alongside the Old Testament scriptures.

As having the same authority, the same inspiration, the same trustworthiness. Right? So the implication is that we can trust the New Testament scriptures. And then he says, and we have the prophetic writings all the more confirmed by this.

All of the things that the prophets talked about in the Old Testament, they're all being fulfilled in Jesus Christ. They're all... And that's why, by the way, when you read the gospel accounts, they are so careful to say, this happened to fulfill scripture.

[17:40] He said this to fulfill what was said. And on almost every page you see that because they're painstakingly trying to show that all of the prophecies in the Old Testament are being fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

And he says, because that happens, because we see that fulfillment, we know we can trust the Old Testament. Just like the New. Right? So scripture is trustworthy. We can rely on it.

The second point goes right along with the first. We're not just meant to trust it. We're actually meant to use it. And so in verse 20 he says, no prophecy of scripture comes from someone's own interpretation.

For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man. But men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. Part of using scripture means understanding that scripture is God's means of working in us.

You know, that old saying that says the word of God does the work of God. Right? And part of understanding that means understanding that the scriptures are inspired by God.

[18:41] That when they were written down, they were written by people who were carried along by the Holy Spirit. And that's a fantastic image. Being carried along by the Holy Spirit. That shows up also in Acts chapter 27.

You've got Paul and his companions. They're in a boat. They're trying to sail somewhere. They have an idea of where they want to go. They put their sails up. A storm hits and the wind from the storm drives them down the shore to a different destination.

And it's the same word. We were carried along by the wind. Right? And so this is giving this image of how the scriptures were written. You have all of these authors.

Right? As many as 40 different authors writing over a thousand year period. from all different cultures and time periods and circumstances in different languages.

Mainly Greek and Hebrew but also languages like Ugaritic and Aramaic. And you have all of these different authors. And at each time they're writing in their own particular circumstances, their own

particular culture, in their own particular language.

[19 : 42] But as they begin to write, it is as though they're putting the sail up. And whatever intention they may have, at the same time God has a superintending intention. Right?

And so God's wind, God's Holy Spirit fills that sail and drives them in the direction that God wants them to go. Another way of understanding it is to say that the scriptures are at the same time fully human and fully divine.

Just like Jesus Christ. And that's what makes the Bible such a fascinating book. And if you understand what the Bible really is, it's more a library than it is a book. So these people are writing in their own free will, but they're carried along by God's will, by the Holy Spirit.

So again, we have to understand that to know that we not only trust the scriptures, but if we want God to work in our lives, the reason that God does this is so that his word will be the means of his work in our lives.

So we can trust scripture. We should use scripture. And the goal should be to use it and to understand that it's meant to be a guide for us. He says in verse 19, pay attention to the word as to a lamp shining in a dark place.

[20 : 53] This is how you should think about God's word in your life. It's like a lamp shining in a dark place. And if you were paying attention during the readings when Wes read the psalm a moment ago, Psalm 119, this is a reference back to that psalm.

You know, your word is a light unto my path and a lamp unto my feet. That's how we're meant to understand scripture. It's a light in the darkness. It's meant to illuminate and guide our lives and to help us see things more clearly.

We've all, I think, lived long enough to read accounts of GPS disaster stories. You know, where somebody's following their GPS and they're not really paying attention to what's around them. And then they're following their map and they're looking at their map and they're trusting their map. And it leads them to disaster. Right? This thing that is supposed to be reliable. So, you know, people literally, if you read the news on this, they end up driving into lakes.

You know, they drive off cliffs. They drive into sand pits. Sometimes they, you know, there have been accounts of people driving directly into buildings. You know, they just drive into a house.

[21 : 55] Well, the GPS told me to do it. You know, well, you drove into a house. Well, I was just following the GPS. Right? And, you know, and there was one woman who said, you know, she was going to pick her friend up at the airport.

And she said, well, I thought it was odd. I thought the airport was north, but it told me to go south. And she starts driving and begins to cross international lines. She's in Europe and just starts to drive into different countries and has to take a break at one point because she's been on the road for hours.

Well, the GPS told me to do it. Well, she had entered the wrong city. Right? It was in another country. And she was driving to that other country. Well, I trusted the map. Right? And so you have all of these bizarre stories of people who are trusting their GPS.

And it leads them to disaster. And the reason is because the map that they're following, even though it seems accurate and it seems trustworthy, it's off. And it doesn't align with reality.

Well, it says there's a road here. Well, there actually is a house here. Right? That's not a road.

Right? And it leads to disaster. So the point is, everybody in life, all of us in this room, we all have a map that we're following.

[22 : 56] We all have a way of thinking about what it means to be human, what life is all about, where all of this came from and where it's all going. We have a map that we use to orient us.

Right? To prioritize our lives. To figure out what life is about. You can think of that as a map. A road map. And we get our map from all different kinds of places. But the point is, we all have one.

And the question then becomes, is the map that we're following accurate? Does it represent the world that we actually live in? Is that a road? Or are we headed toward disaster? Right?

And so, you know, to go back for a second to the example of the people in Ecuador, these are people who are living in a society and they're following a map. And their map, their way of understanding life was to say, well, the highest priority is to make sure that my kin, that my blood relations are safe and protected and that we put out a strong front and don't let anybody take advantage of us or mess with us.

And if anybody does that, then we have to return that in kind. And that was their map. And the gospel then comes and it becomes a lamp. It becomes a light. It begins to illuminate a different path, not a path of revenge and murder, but a path of reconciliation and forgiveness.

[24 : 14] So two of the most important questions we can ask in life, what map am I following? And then, is it accurate? You know, a lot of people, a lot of people, and they don't really, we don't know where these assumptions come from, but a lot of people begin to look around and they see everybody around me is working hard.

And everybody around me is very accomplished. And you live in a place like D.C. and everybody has these impressive degrees and credentials and everybody's aiming really high. And people want to be successful.

And even more than that, people don't necessarily want to make a lot of money here, but they want to make a difference. And that can seem like a very noble goal. That map looks like a good map to live by. But what happens is you can start pursuing that and pursuing it and pursuing it.

And people in a culture like ours can become so devoted to that that you begin to neglect friendships. You begin to neglect family. You begin to neglect your own health.

You neglect your relationship with the Lord, if there is one. You begin to neglect all of these things because you're following that map. And then you follow it and you follow it and you follow it and you follow it. And no matter what it does to you and what it costs you, you follow that map.

[25 : 19] And then you get to the end of your life and you begin to look back and you're in retirement age and you begin to reevaluate those decisions. And guess what? In the research that they do on people who are in the late stages of their life and they ask, what are your biggest regrets?

Not once has a survey produced people who said, I really wish I had worked more. I really wish I had taken more work trips. You know, I wish I had put in more hours at the office.

Nobody says that. You know what people say? Why didn't I spend more time with my family? Why didn't I spend more time making friends? Why did I let those friendships lapse?

Why didn't I invest? Why didn't I pick up the phone and call before 30 years had passed and we had grown so distant? Why did I let those relationships slide? And you get to the end of your life and you begin to realize this map looked good at the time, but I don't think this is the right map.

I don't think it was leading me in a good direction. And where I've ended up by following this map, I don't like where I am. I think I'm lost. Right? People get married. Just one more example.

[26 : 25] People get married and they think, you know, I'm lonely and now I'm finally going to get married. And once I get married, I won't be lonely anymore and I'll be more emotionally fulfilled. And that's when life is really going to begin, you know.

And then you get married and you marry an actual human being and you realize that you're still kind of lonely. And you realize that you're not actually emotionally fulfilled.

But you're following that map and you say, well, this is what marriage is and this is where marriage should take me. So I'm just going to follow this and I'm just going to hope it. And then you begin to realize that the longer you're on the road and the further down you get, down that path, you begin to realize over the years that that's not in fact the reality that I'm experiencing.

I'm not actually fulfilled. I'm still lonely. And sometimes I actually feel more lonely. And that's weird and I don't know how to make sense. That's not on the map, you know. That's nowhere on the map. And then you have really bad fights and you get more angry than you ever thought possible. You get more despairing than you ever thought possible. Well, there are times when all of the love and all of the attraction is just not enough and you want to walk out the door.

[27 : 27] And you're like, that is not on the map. I don't see this. I don't even recognize where I am. This is not what I was promised. And so maybe you leave. Maybe you just shut down.

You know, maybe you just kind of shift into a coexistence. You know, a kind of ceasefire, which is an intimacy. But it's you looking at the map and saying, I don't know where I am. I'm lost.

Right? Right? My map looked good, but it's not accurate. Right? And then the question becomes, well, here I am at this point in my life. I'm not at that point yet.

This map that I'm following, is this the right map? You know? Or is there a better map? Is there a better path to follow? Because the wrong map can lead to disaster.

Right? And so Christians have always been tempted. This isn't just a Christian, non-Christian thing. Christians have always been tempted to think we finally arrived at a point where we can sort of

depart from Scripture.

[28 : 30] You know, we're finally advanced enough. We're culturally advanced enough. We're scientifically advanced enough. The social sciences have advanced enough.

We're sophisticated enough as people or as a culture or as a church or as a society. We're at a point, the issues that are facing us now, we're at a point now where we see a better path.

We don't need this path anymore. That worked back in the Bronze Age, but we don't need that anymore. We see a better way. We'll still be Christians. We'll still be faithful.

We'll still follow Jesus. We'll still do all of that stuff. But we found a better path. And we're all headed in the same direction, and this is a better way to get there. And so they begin to distance themselves and begin to depart and begin to lose their way.

And church history is filled with those stories. Right? This was happening in Peter's day. Beginning next week, you're going to hear about some of the specific ways that they were being tempted to depart from the path. And it's happening today.

[29 : 27] And it will continue to happen until Jesus comes again. It's part of human nature. Right? So Peter's message is, as he's looking around at all of these different paths, at Christians who are tempted to say, I don't think I need this light in this path.

I want to go this way. Peter's saying, stay on the path. Trust the Word. Use it as a lamp. Continue to follow the path that it has shown you. Don't go off the path.

And, of course, the greatest disaster possible. You know, it is a disaster to realize that you spent your life on the wrong priorities. It is a disaster to go into marriage with unrealistic expectations.

But, of course, the biggest disaster possible is getting to the end of your life and realizing that there was, in fact, a God who made you. And that all along you had an opportunity to know that God and that you didn't.

And you never took that opportunity. And as a result, you get to the end of your life and you realize that all the things that you were aiming for, they're all null and void. They're all empty apart from him. And so that's why, because that's the greatest disaster possible, that's why the Word of God is ultimately a lamp unto our feet that is meant to lead us down the path into relationship with God.

[30 : 37] That's the central purpose of Scripture, not to teach us about marriage, not to teach us about priorities. It's to lead us down the path into relationship with God. And so that's why all the Scriptures point to Jesus, because he's the way.

And so when we look at this image, it's a very powerful image to orient us as to how to think about Scripture, what it's about, what it's for. And of course, as we think about Scripture, we do know, as Peter will admit later in his letter, parts of it are very hard to understand.

We never will get it 100% right. There are things, the interpretations that I make about parts of Scripture that I feel very confident in, maybe 85%, 90% confident. And there are other interpretations that I make that I may be 50% or 40% or 30% confident that I've got the right read on it.

And that's a part of what it means to be a human being. But Peter's saying, follow it as a lamp. In other words, it's not a floodlight. You're not going to see everything clearly and all at once.

All you're going to have is a lamp. It's going to show you maybe the next step to take. And that's it. And it's hard because we want to see the whole thing. But he says, no, it's a lamp, one step at a time.

[31 : 48] But then, to counteract that, he reminds us of the ultimate promise that we see in Scripture. That the day is going to come when we no longer need Scripture. In other words, the day is going to come when we no longer need the lamp.

Why? Because daylight will come. Dawn will come. And when dawn comes, the darkness will be dispelled once and for all. And he says, when that day comes, the morning star will rise in our hearts.

And, of course, what's he talking about? Jesus Christ. He says, the day is going to come when you're going to be so full of illumination. Transparenciation, as the Scripture says, you're going to be so full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

There's going to be so much of the presence and the glory of Jesus that we won't need a lamp.

We'll be able to see all things clearly. So, to bring all of this back together, Peter's mission and his message.

What's his mission? Between now and when I die, I want to feed my sheep. I want to feed the sheep that belong to Jesus Christ. Well, how's he going to do that? He has to convince us, the sheep, to do two things.

[32 : 53] Trust God's Word. Trust the Scriptures. And then use the Scriptures as a lamp to light our way and guide our path until the morning light comes. Let's pray.