

I have set before you this day life and good, death and evil

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- [0 : 00] of God, we pray that he would bless our time together. We shall begin singing to God's praise, Psalm 40.
- The words of Psalm 40, from the beginning down to verse 5. I waited for the Lord my God, and patiently did bear.
- At length to me he did incline my voice and cry to hear. He took me from a fearful pit and from the mighty clay.
- On a rock he set my feet, establishing my way. He put a new song in my mouth, O God to magnify. Many shall see it and shall fear, and on the Lord rely.
- O blessed is the man whose trust upon the Lord relies, respecting not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies. O Lord my God, for many of the wonders thou hast done.
- [1 : 06] Thy gracious thoughts to us were far, above all thoughts are gone. In order none can reckon them to thee, if them declare. And speak of them I would, they more than can be numbered are.
- We can sing these verses 1 to 5 of Psalm 40. I waited for the Lord my God, and patiently did bear. I waited for the Lord my God, and patiently did bear.
- The Lord my God, and patiently did bear.
- The Lord my God, and patiently did bear. And on our own, He set my feet, He shall wish him my way.
- He shall wish him my way. I waited for the Lord my God, and patiently did bear. The Lord my God, and patiently did bear. The Lord my God, and patiently did bear.
- [2 : 58] And on the Lord my God, and patiently did bear. The Lord my God, and patiently did bear.
- And on the Lord rely. O blessed is the mind of God, O blessed is the mind of God, The one the Lord relies, Resent in arms of God, and patiently did bear.
- The Lord my God, and patiently did bear. O blessed is the King to be the King. The Lord my God, and patiently did bear. O blessed is the King to be the King.
- The God and patiently did bear. O many are the wonders of a child.
- Thy wishes are to us for a child. Our love, O Lord, the Lord, the Lord.
- [4 : 29] In order none can reckon them.
- To thee it never did. And keep your death, my holy Lord.
- That I will never die. Let's turn together in prayer.
- O Lord God in heaven, enable us to draw near. Even though in our mind's eye.
- Because we cannot see you. And because you are God. To us you may appear to be far removed from us.
- [5 : 33] Someone who occupies a distant space. Occupies glory when we are earthbound.

And involved and engaged in what is ordinary and mundane. But your word teaches us that you are God who is spirit.

Who is infinite. Eternal. A God who is all powerful. A God who is ever present.

A God who is wherever we are. At any moment. Whatever we may be engaged in doing. Whether we are aware of your presence or not.

We are never far from you. There was a woman of old who was driven out of her home.

[6 : 39] Driven away out of jealousy and enmity. And she wept bitterly.

But mercifully you revealed yourself to her. And spoke to her. Directly and personally. And her confession at that moment was.

Though God seest me. Because not only did she know that you were. In her near company. But that you understood.

The grief that was. Breaking her heart. And so it is in the experience of every person. Who is in this world. There is not one who is.

In a situation where they are. Not able to pour out their heart to God. Who is able to. Make known to them. That even before they speak.

[7 : 40] You are able to answer. Even before they are able to articulate. Their longings. And their desires. And their fears. You are able to speak.

Into. Their. Situations. So we bless you. And thank you that. Even today as we are met in this place. We are.

In the gaze of one another. To a degree. We can see who. Who is. In front of us. We can see. Who is beside us.

And. We may be aware of who is behind us. But there are limits. Placed upon. Our. Knowledge. Of. Each of these. Individuals.

We cannot see. Beyond. Beyond. The. The. The externals. There may be things. That are true. Within. These lives.

[8 : 37] That are represented. By these persons. That we may. Be privy to. That we may have knowledge of. By reason of. Our. Knowledge. Of them.

But most. Of what they are. And what they are going through. May be hidden. From our side. But that is not true. Of our God. And we.

Are thankful. For that. And not only. Can we bring. Our own burdens. But we can bring. The burdens. Of others. And even. When we may not be.

Sure. Of what these burdens. We. May be. We can still bring. Our cares. And concerns. Into the presence of. The God. Who is God.

Over all. Enable us so. To do. And to be. Attentive to. The needs of others. We give thanks. For those who are. In this place today. And we.

[9 : 31] Pray for every one of them. Every home. And family. Represented. Each one. Young or old. We remember. Before you. We pray.

That you will remember. Any who cannot be here. And who. Whose desire. Is. In this place. You cannot. Be.

Be. Ignorant. Of these. Desires. Because you have. Implanted them. Within the heart of man. And for that reason. We are thankful. We pray for those. Who are confined.

To their homes. And we ask your blessing. To be their portion. Of this. Time of worship. We give thanks. For the opportunities. That are theirs.

Even though. This one. Has not been. Afforded them. Today. They can still worship. In spirit. If they.

- [10 : 25] Are not able. To worship. Through various. Other media. That are placed. At our disposal. From time to time. We give thanks. For these things. That you have given.
- To us. We pray. That you would. Sanctify. Them. So that all. Who are. Able to. Would. Avail themselves. Of that provision. And to hear.
- The word of God. Proclaimed. Through various sources. There are many. Who still. Deny themselves. That privilege.
- And live. As if their. Their opportunities. Have their own. To do with us. They will. And yet. Each one of us. Will answer. To. How we have.
- Lived our life. In this world. What we have done. With these. Privileges. That you have. Placed at our disposal. Not one. Not one of us.
- [11 : 19] Will be allowed. To. To make little. Of. The very things. That you have. Decreed. Are. Able to make us.
- Wise. And to salvation. And. When we are. Presented. With Christ. In the gospel. There is no. Greater privilege. Than to. To hear. Of his.
- Of his. Willingness. To come. To the cross. To die. In the place. Of sinners. And that all. Who would come. To him. Are assured. Of salvation.
- May that truth. Penetrate. Our broken. And. Our. Dark. Sin darkened. Hearts. That you may. Bring healing. And bind up.
- What is broken. And. And. Bring the balm. That is. A balm. Of love. And apply it. To. These.
- [12 : 17] Sources. That sin. Has. Murdered. Human existence. With. We pray. That you would bless. The preaching of the world. To the. Far corners.
- Of the earth. And we remember. In your presence. All. Who seek to. Proclaim Christ. Onto him crucified. May they do so. With power. And may they do so.
- With affection. For those. To whom it is preached. That we would understand. That. That which is done. In love. Is. Bound.
- To secure. That which you have. Promised for it. Those who sow. In tears. Will see a reaping time. And we pray Lord. That that would be true.
- Even in this place. Remember. Those who are. Governing us. At this time. Of. Incredible. Disheartening. Their.
- [13 : 12] Experiences. When we see. So much. To disappoint us. In those. Appointed to. To be. Our leaders.
- Especially. At a time. Of. Pandemic. And we. Can see. How. Selfishness. Reigns. And how. Self-importance.
- Makes people think. That. They are above the law. And that the law. Is not. Applicable. To them. But if the law. Is good. And if it is meant.
- For our. Of our well. For our well. Being. May that. Be impressed upon us. And may we. See. Evidence.
- Of. Laws. That are good. Being. Established. And the ones. That are less so. Being. Negated.
- [14 : 07] And. Shown. To be. The dross. That they are. Remember then. The various parliaments. Remember. Our local council. Remember.
- Those who are afflicted. In whatever way. By reason. Of the pandemic. And. As these. Bodies. Seek to. Alleviate.

Suffering. May they. Be. Enabled. So to do. We pray for those. Who. Who are suffering. Because of covid. Or the aftermath. Offered.

We would pray for any. Who may be housebound. Or hospitalized. Those who place. Themselves at risk. In caring for. Such. And. We know that.

Our. Hospitals. Are under duress. Because of the. Of the way. So many. Have been afflicted. By it. In various ways. May we look.

[15 : 01] To the hand of God. And understand. That it is. Under your hand. That we are. And not allow us. To believe. That there is a providence. That you have not appointed.

And however much. We feel. Bidden towards. Such a God. Who has appointed. Such a providence. May we. Understand. That. There is a reason.

For all things. That are done. By you. And that. The. The goodness. Of God. Is never to be. Undervalued.

By the things. That we. See. When we are. Not able to see. Very far. Into. The present. Let alone.

The future. We pray. Lord. That you would. Remember. The nations. Of the earth. That are suffering. Not just. From the pandemic. But various. That are current.

[15 : 59] Some. Have. Seen. Floods. Assail them. Some. Disease. Some. The fruits. Of poverty. Some. The outcomes. Of war. Constant. Reminders. To us. Of the. Nature. Of sin. And that this. World. The sun. Good. You have just. As pleasure. We pray.

Lord. That you would. Keep us. From. The harms. That. Such sin. Can do. Even in our own. Lives. Continue to. Bless your word. We pray.

And as we. Hear it. This. Day. In this place. We pray that. What we hear. Would. Be. Speaking.

To us. Loudly. And clearly. Whether it is. In the Sunday school. Or in the. Service. Here at this time. In all. We ask. We ask. With forgiveness.

[16 : 54] Of sin. In Jesus name. Amen. We're going to. Read from the scriptures. Of the Old Testament. The book of Deuteronomy.

And we're reading. From chapter 30. The book of Deuteronomy. Chapter 30. We'll read the whole chapter.

And it shall come to pass. When all these things are come upon thee. The blessings and the curse. Which I have set before thee. And thou shalt call them to mind.

Among all the nations. Whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee. And thou shalt return unto the Lord thy God. And shalt obey his voice. According to all that I command thee this day.

Thou and thy children. With all thy heart. And with all thy soul. That then the Lord thy God. Will turn thy captivity. And have compassion upon thee.

[17 : 57] And will return and gather thee. From all the nations. Whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine be driven out. Unto the utmost parts of heaven.

From thence will the Lord thy God gather thee. And from thence will he fetch thee. And the Lord thy God will bring thee. Unto the land which thy fathers possessed.

And thou shalt possess it. And he will do thee good. And multiply thee above thy fathers. And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart. And the heart of thy seed.

To love the Lord thy God with all thine heart. And with all thy soul. That thou mayest live. And the Lord thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies.

And on them that hate thee. Which persecuted thee. And thou shalt return. And obey the voice of the Lord. And do all his commandments. Which I command thee this day.

[18 : 58] And the Lord thy God will make thee plenteous. In every work of thine hand. In the fruit of thy body. And in the fruit of thy cattle. And in the fruit of thy land for good.

For the Lord will again rejoice over thee for good. As he rejoiced over thy fathers. If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God. To keep his commandments and his statutes.

Which are written in this book of the law. And if thou turn unto the Lord thy God. With all thine heart. And with all thy soul. For this commandment which I command thee this day.

It is not hidden from thee. Neither is it far off. It is not in heaven that thou shouldest say. Who shall go up for us to heaven. And bring it unto us that we may hear it and do it.

Neither is it beyond the sea that thou shouldest say. Who shall go over the sea for us. And bring it unto us that we may hear it and do it. But the word is very nigh unto thee.

[20 : 00] In thy mouth and in thy heart. That thou mayest do it. See I have set before thee. This day life and good and death and evil.

In that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God. To walk in his ways and to keep his commandments. And his statutes and his judgments.

That thou mayest live and multiply. And the Lord thy God shall bless thee in the land. Whither thou goest to possess it. But if thine heart turn away.

So that thou wilt not hear. But shall be drawn away. And worship other gods. And serve them. I denounce unto you this day. That ye shall surely perish.

And that you shall not prolong your days upon the land. Whither thou passest over Jordan. To go to possess it. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you.

[20 : 58] That I have set before you life and death. Blessing and cursing. Therefore choose life. That both thou and thy seed may live. That thou mayest love the Lord thy God.

And that thou mayest obey his voice. And that thou mayest cleave unto him. For he is thy life. And the length of thy days. That thou mayest dwell in the land.

Which the Lord sware unto thy fathers. To Abraham. To Isaac. And to Jacob. To give them. Amen.

And may the Lord add his blessing. To a reading of his word. And to his name. Be the praise. Amen. Amen.

Well boys and girls. Before you go out to Sunday school. Last week I think you were looking at the story. We have in the book of Genesis.

[21 : 54] Of the flood. And today again I think you're going to return to that story. Which features after the flood.

When the flood has come to an end. And God makes a promise. To those who are in the world. That there will never again be a flood.

Sometimes when we have a lot of rain. We think that the rain is going to be so heavy. And the effects of it so lasting.

That the water. Of the rain will not abate. It will not go down. But after a wee while. Especially where we are. It seems to go away very quickly.

Sometimes we see it in the cities. It's that. Because they're building their towns. And their cities. And places. Which are really.

[23 : 02] Ignoring the fact. That there is no place for the water to go. If there is heavy rain. Then. There is flooding. There is no place for the water. But God made a promise.

And when he made this promise. He said. He was going to. Remind them. Of that promise. And he was going to do so.

By way of. A rainbow. And. God said. This is the token. Of the covenant.

Which I make. Between me. And you. And every. Living creature. That is with you. For perpetual. Generations. I do.

Set my bow. In the cloud. And it shall be. For a token. Of a covenant. Between me. And the earth. And it shall come to pass.

[24 : 00] When I bring a cloud. Over the earth. That the bow. Shall be seen. In the cloud. And this is the interesting thing. And I will remember. My covenant.

Which is between me. And you. And every living creature. Of all flesh. I will remember. He says.

Not you will remember. But I will remember. I would have thought that. God. God. Never forgets. And I know he doesn't. And yet.

He is saying. To the people there. That. When they see. The rainbow. And when he sees. The rainbow. He will remember. His promise.

And. That is something. For you to think about. Why do you think. God. Says this to us. That. He will. Remember.

[24 : 57] His promise. His promise. Well I think. I'll. Make a suggestion to you. I think. That. What is important. Of.

The greatest importance. Is. That God. Will. Remember. His promise. And God. Will never. Break. His promise. I think that's what's.

At the heart. Of what you see. Every one of us. Has at some point. In our life. Made a promise. And. Unfortunately.

We have not. Catch that promise. We have made promises. That we couldn't keep. And yet. Foolishly. We made them. Anyway.

And sometimes. We need to remind ourselves. That. When we are making a promise. We are doing a very solemn thing. We are undertaking. To do something.

[25 : 54] And. Not only. To do something. But to make sure. That we do it. And sometimes. When we make a promise. We are not in a position. To say. That.

We are going to do it. No matter what. Because. We are not God. But. God is. A God. Who. Can make a promise.

And that promise. Will never be broken. So. When he says. There is not going to be a flood. Like there was. In the day of Noah. He means it.

There will never be a flood. Like. The day of Noah. Even though. You may see. Parts of the world. And they are flooded. And there are. Parts of the world. And. There are.

Very serious. Problems. With flooding. But these floods. Are not like the floods. Of the day of Noah. At some point.

[26 : 49] These floods. Will abate. These waters. Will go down. And things. Will return. To normal. God. Promises. That.

There will never be. A flood again. Now. That's just one of. The promises. That God makes. He makes a promise. That every person.

Who believe. In the Lord. Jesus Christ. Will be saved. And that is a promise. That he will not. Break. And yet.

Many people. Look at what God says. In his word. As if. What he is saying. He is not going to fulfill. That's not the case.

If God has said it. We must remember. That he means it. And. Sometimes. We make rash promises. We make foolish promises. But.

[27 : 45] God. Never. So I hope that. You remember that. Even when you see. What he himself. Has set up. To be a reminder to it. He will put.

I will put. My bow. In the cloud. He says. And because. He gives. That ownership. To us. To it. It is a reminder.

Not to us. But to him. Of his promise. To us. A promise. That amongst many. He will not. Forget. We are going to sing now.

As we go out. To Sunday school. From Psalm 31. Psalm 31. And at verse 19. How great is the goodness.

Thou for them. That fear thee. Keeps in store. And wroughts for them. Trustingly. The sons of men. Before. In secret of thy presence.

[28 : 41] Thou shalt hide them. From man's pride. From strife of tongues. Thou closely shalt. As in a tent. Them hide. All praise. And thanks. Be to the Lord.

For he hath magnified. His wondrous love. To me. Within a city fortified. For from thine eyes. Cut off I am. I in my haste. Hath said. My voice.

Yet heard. Thou. When to thee. With cries. In my morn. I made. O love the Lord. All ye saints. Because the Lord. Doth guard the faithful. And he plenteously proud.

Doers. Doth reward. Be of good courage. And he strength. And to your heart. Shall send. All ye. Whose hope and confidence. Doth on the Lord. Depend.

These verses. Of Psalm 31. How great's the goodness. Thou. For them. That fear thee. Keeps in store. On wrote.

[29 : 44] The good Lord. That paralyzes. For them. Thou do. Theyh. In the faith. And a Θ. For them. As King. And a heavenly knight. That fear thee.

For them. Theography. Who've silenced. You. For them. The new people. The Bible. And a blessed. in peace the sons of men behold in secret of thy presence of the light and the light from time on the good station as in the dead of all praise and thanks be to the

Lord for he hath mine in life his wondrous love could be within a safety for him for for from thy hands I have my voice yet heard the way to thee.

With eyes, my Lord, I may. O does the Lordony that jury because the Lord does not dying.

Behold to the riches and riches, And to the heart of the sin, On ee who hope and confidence, And honor the Lord, amen.

[33 : 32] You can read that verse 15. And the Lord thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it.

And so on down. There are many people, And they are convinced that they can live their life any way they choose.

And the intent is that the end of the life that they live is that they're happy, That they're content.

That is, living it the way they choose to live it brings them the satisfaction that they believe such a life will bring.

Here, we are reminded that that is not always the case. The Lord reminds us that the only way to true happiness is to live our life by following his way.

[35 : 14] The words of God spoken through Moses, his servant, Shows us why this must be the case. Why it must be the case that those who follow the ways of the Lord will find true happiness.

And those who choose other ways will find disappointment. When I was preparing this, I was, well, it just was a kind of foolishness that is in my head at times.

I began to think of the words of the famous song, I did it my way. It was probably, it's been sung by many people, but made famous by Frank Sinatra in particular.

And when I reflected on these words, it's a very defiant song. And let me quote to you the first verse.

And now the end is near, and so I face the final curtain. My friends, I'll say it clear, I'll state my case, of which I'm certain.

[36 : 28] I've lived a life that's full. I've travelled each and every highway. But more, much more than this, I did it my way.

I'm sure you're glad I didn't sing it. But throughout this song, there is more than a hint of defiance.

And very often, it's a song that's chosen at funeral services, which are not really considering the end of the person, but the life that they lived.

And it's a celebration of life. And that's where the emphasis lies. Very often, no thought is given to the fact, as the Bible teaches us, that there is something beyond life in this world.

In these last words of Moses, he shows the futility of such defiance. That there is a need for wise intervention before that can change.

[37 : 50] And I suppose in many respects, the emphasis within this chapter is an emphasis on the need for repentance. Because Moses is speaking to a people who have known God, but have chosen to go away from God.

And the path that they have followed away from God has brought nothing but sadness and grief. But through his servant, God is telling them, that's not the way it must end.

There's always the potential in any man or any woman's life to return to God. And to come back to the right ways. If you go back for a moment to chapter 28, Moses is there speaking to Israel and reminding them of this fact.

That's the previous chapter. Lest there should be any among you, man or woman or family or tribe, whose heart turns away this day from the Lord our God, to go and say, the gods of this nation, lest there be any among you a root that beareth gall and warrant, and it come to pass when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace.

Though I walk in the imagination of my heart, who art drunkenness to thirst. The Lord will not spare him and so on. I mean, that's the kind of people he's speaking to, speaking to a people who have gone astray, who have gone away from God.

[39 : 47] And when God speaks to them through Moses, he tells us, he helps us appreciate that God understands that this is the kind of people he is dealing with.

He's not dealing with a people who do something outlandish that God was unprepared for. He knows exactly, and he repeatedly says it through the scriptures, he knows what the heart of man is like.

And that there are dissimulations, that there are wanderings, that there are forsakings that occur because of that. But not only is God aware of that, he is willing to bring people back to himself, to help them appreciate that there is life in the path that he has set before them, as opposed to the path that they have chosen.

A path that is a path of life and a path of true happiness. So God, through his word here, tells us that not only is there a need for repentance, there is the opportunity to do that.

And the choosing of life is really him setting that before us. Make this your choice.

[41 : 16] Don't believe that the path that you have set out for yourself is the final word. learn that really.

As you are discovering for yourself, if you are not in God's way, that it's not always joy and light and happiness.

Choose life, he says, that you may live. Not just you, but all who follow your ways, as that you set out before them. Your descendants. So there are a few thoughts we can glean from what we have here.

He, in verse 20, he says the following, that you may love the Lord thy God, that thou mayest obey his voice, that thou mayest cleave unto him, for he is thy life and the length of thy days, that thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to kill them.

So these words, focusing on love, obedience, and cleaving, and the end product, life, length of days, and the inheritance of a legacy that he has set before them.

[42 : 44] Now when we speak of love in the biblical sense in which love is spoken of, it is quite different to the human base understanding of it.

The best or the highest understanding that we have of what love is like, or what love is made up of, may draw some of its content from the biblical picture that love presents to us.

But usually, if not always, it will come far short. Love, if you think of it in the best description the Bible sets before us, it's not really the way you would expect it to be spoken of.

For example, when the Gospel directs us to the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, what does it say? It says, Now at the heart of that statement is God's love.

And that is what is highlighted. But how did God love? Well, he loved by giving his son to die on the cross.

[44 : 16] And it may be that we cannot understand that to be really a demonstration of love.

It seems quite different to what we think love is. What kind of God would give his son to die on the cross to suffer?

Inestimable suffering in order to bring salvation to sinners. And yet, God in his word says that that is what love is.

And just in case we think, well, Jesus might have something to say about it, because he's the one who suffered. Well, he does. And Jesus says, just as surely, as far as he is concerned, that he loved his own and gave his own, his life a ransom for many.

He was not an unwilling victim on the cross. He was someone who, because of the love that he had for his people, was willing to die for them.

[45 : 27] And it's love spoken of in ways that are far beyond the capacity that we have to understand the true nature of love.

It is a love for those who do not deserve to be loved.

I hope that you try and grasp that, to try and understand it. Because this is what God wants his people to do in order to repent.

That they might grasp or grapple with this fact of the reality of a love that is directed towards a people who are not lovely and who have gone out of the way against God.

And yet God exercises love towards them. I came across this illustration, and I suppose it is an illustration, of what it is for God to love in this particular situation.

[46 : 49] One of the commentators tells this story. It's the story of quite a famous surgeon. He lived many, many years ago.

His name was William Mackay. And he went away to college to learn to become a doctor. And like so many people who were leaving home, his mother put a Bible in a suitcase.

And like so many people who had that experience, that Bible was never opened.

Perhaps you were one of them. Certainly I remember when I went away to the hostel, first of all, my mother put a Bible into my bag. I didn't think I needed one, but she did.

And many others beside, the Bible was put in the bag. And this young man went away to learn to become a doctor. And he was very gifted.

[47 : 59] But unfortunately, he fell in with a bad crowd. And he was heavily involved in drink. And he wasn't from a wealthy family, as far as I remember it.

So what did he do? He had this Bible, which he decided to sell. And he took it to a pawn shop and sold it, so that he would have money for drink.

And that was the end of the Bible. But he became a successful surgeon. And he made a good life for himself. A number of years after that, he was treating a patient who was seriously ill after an accident at a factory.

And he was so seriously injured by an explosion or an incident in the factory, there was nothing this surgeon could do for him.

And he knew that. So he spoke to the nurses and said, Well, I've done as much as I can, but I'm afraid it's not going to be enough. So do whatever you can to make him comfortable.

[49 : 11] And while this man was at death's door, he was wanting his book. And he was very much agitated, so that the nurses would go and get his book.

His book was in his belongings. And the surgeon went away. And when he came back to do his rounds, by that time, the man had passed away.

And he asked the nurses out of curiosity, what was the book that he was looking for? And the girl, the nurse said, It's under his pillow.

And when he went to the pillow, and to the pillow was this Bible. And he took the Bible out. And in the Bible was an inscription.

And it was the very Bible that his mother had given him. And it just broke his heart. It just broke his heart there and in.

[50 : 21] He had gone away from God. He had gone away from his mother and her devotion to him and her desire for him. And yet, here he was, presented with that very book.

And it was through that miracle of providence that the Bible was put back in his hands.

And through that, he came to know the Lord. Now, the thing was this. How could a God, who is the God of providence, so mercifully, make such a provision for somebody who had gone away from him, willingly, willfully, and with no interest whatsoever in anything God had for him.

And yet, God, in his mercy, in his grace, and in his love, suffered to bring that Bible back into his hands.

If you don't understand the love of God, try and understand how such a God could do that very thing. But that's the nature of his love.

[51 : 36] And that's the nature of what we have here. He is speaking to a people who have gone away from him. And yet, he tells them about his love.

And not only does he tell them about his love, he shows them his love. He shows a love to a forgetful Israel.

He shows his love to each one of us when we forget him. Some of the Lord's people, some professing people who know the Lord, sometimes go away from him, and you'd think, well, God, God will say the last word with regard to these people.

Never again will he allow them to come back to him. But again and again, his love is there to undergird what he is doing in all our lives.

Love the Lord and obey his voice. The two surely go together. If you love me, he says, keep my commandments. And they are often linked together in the word of God.

[52 : 48] Life and prosperity in the promised land. God is linked in with their obedience. If you are willing and obedient, you will eat of the fruit of the land.

That's what they are told. One of the commentators, Raymond Brown, says, you cannot drift into loving. You cannot drift into loving.

It is something that you do. It is something that you do willingly and willfully, just as surely as you willingly and willfully go away from God.

Matthew Henry, the well-known commentator, says, if they would make conscience of keeping his commandments and do it from a principle of love, then God will do them good so that they should be as happy as his love and blessing could make them.

Now, many people don't believe that that loving God and being obedient to God's word brings happiness, brings oppression, brings, you know, it stifles freedom.

[54 : 01] That's not the case. It's very much the opposite of that. How many people that such happiness and contentedness is to be found elsewhere?

Lives are miserable even when they seem to possess what others are striving for. John Blanchard has written many popular books of, you know, popular theology, just helping the ordinary person understand what God's word is teaching.

And, on more than one occasion, makes reference to many well-known people who have written or made comments that reveal to us that the very thing that you would expect to be true of them because of their popularity or because of their success or because of their wealth.

It doesn't brought any of the things that they want to do. We may envy them. We may think, I would like to have what they have. I would think that by having what they have, then I would, you know, I would be happy instead of miserable.

He cites many examples. He speaks of one, I mean, this is a very, very challenging thought. He speaks about Jack Higgins.

[55 : 38] Maybe you read some of his books. He's written over 60 popular fiction novels. He was a millionaire because of the number of books that he had published.

But this is what he said. If there is one thing I would have liked to have known as a small boy, it would be this.

Now, this isn't a Christian who's speaking. This isn't somebody who knows the Lord as far as I know. If there is one thing I would have liked to have known as a small boy, it would be this.

When you get to the top, there is nothing there. When you get to the top, there is nothing there. And that's a thought.

Somebody who achieved success and to climb to the summit and many, many people who have no interest in God or knowledge of God are surprised by this discovery that having reached the pinnacle, get to the very top.

[56 : 55] They're so miserable. They don't have the joy that they expected to have because of it. Some of you know the name Britney Spears.

She's been in the news recently. because of her state of mental health. There was some legal agreement where her father would take control of her affairs.

I'm not sure about the actual ins and outs of what happened, but she was recently granted permission to have full control of all her affairs because at some stage in her life, her life was out of control.

But this is what she said at one point. If there is nothing missing in my life, then why do I wake up at night crying?

crying. If there is nothing missing in my life, then why do I wake up at night weeping? And, you know, this, if you think about it, there are many people and this is what they think.

[58 : 14] Well, take the misery away. wealth and the opportunity to do anything in the world that you want. And yet, that opportunity, even when it is yours, it doesn't necessarily bring that.

What God, through Moses, is saying here, look, there is the way of God. And that way of God involves you loving him, obeying him, and craving to him.

Some translators have that as loyalty or holding fast to him. And that is what we are encouraged to do.

That is what the believer is encouraged to do. And sometimes we lose sight of this fact and when we do, that is when things go wrong. Some believe faith to be a sign of weakness, having to go outside of yourself.

Many psychologists taught that, but faith is really a sign of weakness. We should be independent and strong in ourselves, mentally strong and certain of what our aspirations are and how to achieve them and accomplish them and be content with the ability and, you know, this, the power of self.

[59 : 48] but think of the alternative. The person who by faith goes to God goes to somebody who is greater than themselves, goes to somebody who is almighty.

is that necessarily a weak thing? Truly not. The wisdom of doing that is surely revealed in the last part of the passage here.

This God is life, he is length of days, and he has promised an inheritance in his own kingdom, the fullness of life.

of life. I believe that we all know Christians and we may be one of them and this might appear to be true or this might appear not to be true.

You know, Christianity is never a spectator sport. Christianity is something that you live out your life in the world doing.

[61 : 01] But there are many spectators who look at the life of the Christian and they want to find out well what's different about this life to my life?

What is it that is to be gained by being like them or being with them? If there is anything at all and sometimes unfortunately maybe there isn't all that much difference.

but if you ask a simple question is it God that has defaulted on his promises? We spoke to the children about the promises of God and he never makes a promise that he doesn't keep.

We have made plenty of promises to God that we haven't kept. Many are promised that we made about being more faithful, being more diligent, being more alert, being more more willing to present the gospel in our lives or to others and we've not fulfilled that.

Just think of that for one moment. Something other than God is not God. And if it is not God then that life is not his.

[62 : 22] and if it is not his he will not sustain that life nor anything that comes out of it. The fullness of which he speaks is his to bestow, ours to possess and nothing greater than that exists.

If thine heart turn away so that thou wilt not hear but shalt be drawn away and worship other gods and say them I denounce unto you this day that you shall surely perish that you shall not prolong your days upon the land whether you pass over Jordan to go and possess it.

When God says he is setting before us life and death good and evil or life and good death and evil he is setting before us the reality of what this world does all about.

Now think about this for yourself ask yourself searching questions hard questions if needs be and the choices that you make where are they taking you where have they taken you there's always the possibility that you have if we have made wrong choices in the past if we have followed wrong roads in the past that God sets before us a true road because he sets before us Christ in the gospel who says I am the way the truth and the life and no man who comes to him will ever lack may God bless to us these your thoughts let us pray oh Lord oh God as we come before you we come before you as those who have at often times been guilty of neglecting the path of life that you have set before us we crave mercy and are thankful for your willingness to receive us as an act of your love which is without end watch over us each one we pray cleanse from sin guide us in the path of life in Jesus name amen our concluding psalm is psalm 106 psalm 106 at the beginning of the psalm give praise and thanks unto the

Lord for bountiful is he whose tender mercy doth endure unto eternity God's mighty works who can express or show forth all his praise blessed are they that judgment keep and justly do always remember me Lord with that love which thou to thine dost bear with thy salvation O my God to visit me draw near that I thy chosen good may see and in their joy rejoice and may with thine inheritance triumph with cheerful voice these verses to God's praise give praise and thanks unto the Lord for bountiful is he give praise and thanks unto the Lord for bountiful is he his tender in us and you unto eternity

[66 : 18] God's mighty words you can express are **■uct■**, **■■■■■■■■■■** my **■■■■■■■■■■**
■■■■-■■■■-■■■■-■■■■ Fear Diese Remember me, Lord, with that love With the dark blue love you'll see With an obligation, O my God

To live in me, Lord, with that love That I am a chosen duty And in the joy of His joy And with that love In every man Triumphant with the joy of the Lord Now may we grace, mercy, and peace In God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit Rest and abide with you all, now and always Amen Thank you