

# Why bother with church?

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[0:00] And the title eventually came into Why Bother? So let's pray. Lord, help us to understand your purposes in this age and what church is all about through Jesus Christ.

Help speaker and hear us for his name's sake. Amen. Now then, there is a really funny group of people who meet in a funny building in Viaduct Road and they don't look like...

Does anybody know who this is? Tom Cruise. Tom Cruise. Okay. So if you look around, boys and girls, see if you can see anybody who looks as handsome and talented as...

Okay, I don't wish to embarrass anybody. And they don't look like this either. Does anybody know who this is? Who is it? I've no idea, actually.

But maybe somebody else can tell. Is that Taylor Swift? Yeah, okay. Taylor Swift. Right. And if you look around, boys and girls, no disrespect to any of the females here, but I don't think there are many people who look...

[1:25] Who could be mistaken for Taylor Swift. We're not a particularly... We're not... Maybe so. We're not a particularly glamorous bunch of people.

We're just ordinary. It says in the Bible, not many noble, not many distinguished people. And the building. What about this?

Anybody know where that is? What's that one? Anybody know what that one's called? Yes? Is it in Dubai? Is it in Dubai? Actually, it isn't. It's closer to home than that. But that's a good guess because it's very much like that.

Where do you think? Is it the Gherkin? Is it the Gherkin? Yes, it is. Should we do... I think well done for that. It's the Gherkin. It's in the City of London.

A fantastic building. Amazing architecture. I saw it while it was being built. And they lowered these sort of diamonds of glass into those crisscross shapes.

[2:28] Just an amazing building. I'm afraid if you look around our building, it's got damp coming in and cracks and things. We don't have an amazing building.

And a place that doesn't put on shows. If you had come here for a remarkable show, you wouldn't have seen this.

Does anybody know who this is and where it happened? And it was the dome and it was Abba.

And I think this is when it was... Was it 50 years ago? Waterloo. Now that I feel if you won the...

That one. Oh, well, please.

But apart from that particular outburst, we don't... We're not really particularly wonderful at... You know, you'd pay a lot of money to go and see Abba or the AI version of it.

[3:27] But I don't think we're in that league. So it's a... You know, why bother with a place like that? The place just... The place that I was referring to was this.

Can anybody finish off the words? It's Calvary evangelical. And then there's another word that follows on after that. Have a go.

You think it's church? Anybody else think that the word that follows after Calvary evangelical is church? Hands up, please. Yeah, that was the name of it. It's church. That's what it is.

It's a church. And the church isn't the building. It is the people. Not a building, but people. So when you look around at the... I know people say you're voting in Calvary evangelical church and they're referring to the building.

But actually, properly, the church is the people. And in the Bible, church is used in two ways that are related, but not quite the same.

[4:30] It can mean all Christians everywhere. The whole group of people that Jesus died for. That is his church. And you might say it's all the Christians in the world at one time is his church.

Or you might say that all Christians down through space and time and all God's people down through the centuries is that one assembly. I mean, the word just means an assembly or group. And it seems to me the point of the book of Revelation is to say that all his people will be there. The ones before Christ, the ones after Christ.

And they'll all be there from every tribe and tongue and nation. And that's the big use of church. And it's also used to mean, like we are here, a localized group of church where people can see each other's faces and shake each other's hands and give each other hugs.

A localized group of Christians. And that's a couple of water droplets.

[5:38] It's both water. And some things are true of the sea and of water droplets. And the clue is the sea is this.

Water droplets are this W something T. Correct. Wet. Give the man a round of applause. Yes. The sea is wet. Water droplets are wet. That's shared by the big version and the small version. There's lots of other things that are shared by the big version and the small version. But if you wanted to experience water, if you ever have experienced water, how much of it did you experience?

So let's just see. Just working out how to ask this question. If you've ever drunk water, how much of it have you ever drunk?

At one go, I mean. How much do you drink? Two liters. What does that look like? Can you do that with your hands? Is that that much or this much? Okay.

[6:50] That's pretty impressive. Yeah. Okay. And if you've... I mean, the other way you might experience water is swimming in it. How much water do you experience when you swim in water?

Let's put it this way. How many people have ever swum off the beach in Brighton and Hove? Okay.

So that's a lot of water. Because that water goes from there all the way around the world.

How much of it have you actually experienced? Yeah. About this much. Yeah. Yeah. You don't...

The way we experience water is only a small amount at a time.

You can't experience an ocean. You could experience a bit of ocean there, a bit of ocean there, a bit of ocean there, a bit of ocean there. You can't experience the whole thing at once. And I think it's true of church. You can't engage with the whole church.

You just engage with a bit of it that you can see, that you can touch, that you can shake hands with, that you can give a hug to. So that's why we'll see some things that are true of the church on the large scale.

[8:03] But actually, they work out on the small scale, a little bit like water. Okay. So I've got four or five reasons to bother with the church.

Four or five reasons to bother with the church. So the first one is in Ephesians 1, 19 to 23. So let's look at that together. Okay. Ephesians 1, 19 to 23.

It's quite a long sentence. We come in in the middle of it. It says something like this. Ephesians 1, 19. That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms.

Far above all rule and authority, power and dominion and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age, but also in the one to come.

It tells us how high Jesus is. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

[9:32] So just taking those verses to pieces. It says Christ is like a king who has a throne and he has a footstool where he puts his feet and everything under his feet is under his control.

Back in the old days, if you defeated an enemy, you might say to the enemy, you kneel down there, you lie down there. I'll put my foot on your head just to show that you are defeated and I'm on top of you.

And everything is, well, that's what it says there. And there's another part of the body related to Christ. Does anybody notice?

It is in verse 22. God appointed him to be something. Another part of the body there. We had feet. Yeah, this is another part of the body. Head. Head. So he's the head and under things are his feet. Now I'm asking the question, how much did God put under Christ's feet?

[10:37] How much did God put under his feet? Yeah, what do you think?

All things. Any other suggestions? Julia, what do you think? You think all things. Pete? All things. Yeah. So you can say, how many things are left out? Nothing. Everything under Christ's feet. Everything. Everything. Stock market. Earthquakes.

Wars. Whether you get a cold or not. Whether you miss the bus. How difficult your homework is. All things under his feet. And what does he do it for?

What does he do it for? That's in verse 22. All things under his feet. Head over everything. For. So he's thinking, what would be best to do this?

[11:37] If I give that person a cold or let them get a cold, will that help towards this or not? What's it for? For the church. Which is a remarkable statement, isn't it?

All things under his feet for the church. And I think that that is a statement which says, well, my question is, how much do you think God is bothered about the church?

And I think the answer is, enough to run the whole world for the church. That's what it says, isn't it? I'm sure God's got many purposes that fit into that.

But what we're told here is, he runs the world for the church. Now, I'm not saying that that works out nice and simply. But I'm sure there's a great mystery in it.

But that's what it says. God is bothered about the church, so much so that he runs the whole world to do that. Right. Let's look at another one. So this is Ephesians 3, 2 to 7, which is the bit that I read earlier.

[12:46] Ephesians 3, 2 to 7. In which it was saying, you've heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me.

That the mystery made known by revelation. And in verse 6, the mystery is that through the gospel, the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel.

Members together of one body and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus. So my second point is that the church is the place where even Gentiles can get the promises that believers in Israel looked forward to.

That's what he's saying, isn't it? He's saying that there were promises, there was an inheritance, there were grand purposes, and they were given to Israel.

And the thing that amazes him is that Gentiles are let into that now. So let's just take this to part. It was a mystery.

[13:57] Mystery in the Bible doesn't necessarily mean a conundrum, but it means something that was hidden and that's now been made known. Did the Old Testament understand how this would happen?

Well, you say, sort of. The angels longed to look into these things. People sort of were wondering in what way all these prophecies and purposes would be fulfilled.

I think Paul's point is that if you only read the Hebrew scriptures, you wouldn't get it unless you had the apostolic gospel as the lens to see everything through.

You would still be puzzled until you had had Jesus is the answer. Right. But the apostles and prophets have the insight through the gospel and the gospel, which is Christ and his cross and his resurrection.

That's how it all fits together. And I'll give you one little example of this. The Old Testament has a huge theology of the temple.

[15:09] And the temple, I'm not going to go into it all, but the temple was God's headquarters on earth. And if you wanted to meet God, you'd have to go to the temple, even if it meant a long journey. And in some sense, you are invited to think that God lives there.

Although as soon as you'd said that, people would say God doesn't live in a temple made by hands. But you would approach God in the temple. And if you were a long way away, you'd have to make a long journey to meet God in the temple.

There's a lot of... Temple was the place of sacrifice. The temple was the place a bit like the TARDIS, that what was inside, it was bigger than the envelope that it was in. And Paul says, yes, absolutely.

But this is the way the temple is fulfilled. I think we'll go for grown-ups with this. Anybody know in Ephesians where he talks about the temple?

And he says, this is the temple. Anybody know? I'm just going to point you to chapter 2.

[16:18] Have I got it? Oh, well, okay. Somebody read what I've written then. Yeah, go on then. What does it say? Carry on.

In the whole building, in him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. Carry on. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

Thank you. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his spirit. And all that theology of the temple is fulfilled in Christ, in his resurrection, and in the people of the church. And this is a good cue to sing this song about brick by brick.

So if Mark could come and teach us this one please. Good, thank you. Well we're halfway through this second reason of why bothering of the church. And thanks very much for the song, that was great.

And well done, well done kids. Excellent. Yeah. So what we're saying was that Paul is really impressed by this. That the church is the place where even the Gentiles can get the promises that believing Israel look forward to. Now I should probably ask, Gentiles means what? I should have made this clear first. Boys and girls, what is a Gentile? Is it something you put on the floor and then put a, what is a Gentile? Correct. It's somebody who is not ethically a Jew. So that's most people in the world. And from the Bible point of view, the Gentiles are really, they don't know anything about the Old Testament. God has never shown very much of himself about them. And in the way the Bible looks at it, the Gentiles are really sort of pretty rubbish actually. There's the place including all sorts of ragged misfits, outcasts, no goods, losers. That's what Gentiles would be. Just the sort of people you wouldn't want to associate with. But those are the people that God brings into his blessings.

[18:42] Isn't that great? Does anybody know these two ragged idiots? Anybody like to hazard a guess? You have to be of a certain age. One of them goes, ye dirty rotten swine. And the other one goes, what, what, what, what, what, what, what? It's the goons. Yes, this is the telly goons.

One foggy evening, a ragged idiot wandered into a limehouse area. That's the way this character is described. It was a radio program. It was a funny radio program. It had these sort of really bizarre, ragged, outcasts, no good losers, Eccles and Blue Bottle. And I guess spiritually speaking, that's who we are. Ragged idiots brought into the great grace, the riches of the Christ, the long-promised Christ. And I think this is part of the wonder that Paul has. How could undeserving people like that be brought in to these enormous riches, to this huge eternal purpose?

How could this happen? And the answer is in verse 7. There is something by which this invitation becomes operative. Would anybody like to tell us what the thing is? I've mentioned it before, but just just to pinpoint it, it's chapter 3 verse 7. What is it that brings people in like that?

No boys and girls, it's going to have to be a grown-up. I say grown-up. God's grace. Yeah, God's grace. Thank you.

God's grace. Wonderful answer. In the gospel. That's what the gospel is. A wonderful message of grace.

[21:00] It says to people, you can belong in this place. You can be part of this. Through what Jesus has done, through who Jesus is, through what he's done on the cross, you can be part of this.

And as I said earlier, this is a big thing to be involved with. It is part of God's purpose, as we read in chapter 1 verse 11, to bring everything together. It's a cosmic plan.

That is what the church is involved with. And why bother? Well, here's the second reason. Number three, third reason. The church is the place where God shows his supreme craftsmanship, and wisdom. So I'm thinking of chapter 3 verse 10. So boys and girls, I'm going to go to chapter 3 verse 10.

And it says, His intention was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose. His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities. That's quite a thing to say, isn't it? That through this group of people, God is showing just how wise and skillful he is. Now we've got a picture up there. I'm not sure whether it makes much sense. Can you work out what it is? There's a sort of hair dryer thing at the bottom.

[22:46] But can you see what he's hair drying? It's a skateboard. Sorry? A skateboard. It's not a skateboard. No. No. It's a skateboard. Is it a violin?

No. Violin is nearer. It's actually, it's bigger than a cello. It's a great big double bass. This is one of the things that fascinates me on Facebook. I get easily captivated by Facebook.

This is one of the things that's quite worth getting captivated by. This guy is Luke something or other. He's based in, I don't know, Nevada or somewhere. He repairs musical instruments.

It's a hot air gun. Yeah. He's melting the hide glue and he's got a great big double bass and it had been kicked in at the side.

It was split. It was all wonky. And what he's doing here is using, it's actually a hot air gun, to part the glue and to pull off that bit that's broken.

[23:50] So I don't know whether, how well will this work? Yeah. This is a whole bit that's broken off the side of it. If this was a, if it was a guitar, it would be this bit which has been kicked in.

And this guy Luke is so clever. He's taken all the bits off. He's manufactured bits that will fit where the broken bits were.

He's curved it exactly so that the new bit will fit on the curve. He's scraped away all the old glue. He's put in new glue. He's re-glued the cracks. He's put little strengthening pieces over the cracks. He's sanded it down. He's straightened it up. He's varnished it. It is just fantastic. And I think, look how clever this guy is.

See what he can do with such bust-up, unlikely raw material. And would you agree with me that if you were to look at that, I mean, I haven't got it. I'd try to get a picture of it, but you have to imagine it.

[24:58] You imagine this thing now gleaming and working and all put back together again. Would you not agree with me? You would say, wow, what a clever guy this is.

Because I think that. I actually texted him and said, I think this is so great. Can we see a picture of it finished? And he texted back and says, yes, I'll show you a picture of it finished, which he did.

I was so impressed. It was through that base, the manifold wisdom and skill of Luke was shown to anybody in Facebook.

And what it says here is that through the church, the manifold wisdom and skill of God is shown, where he takes broken, bust-up people, puts them back together again, and changes them to make them beautiful.

And as people see the church, wow, isn't God a great God? And God says to the powers and authorities, you think I can't do anything?

[26:08] Look at this. Look what I'm doing in that funny building in Viaduct Road. Look what I'm doing there. That shows how great a God I am.

It's awesome, isn't it? That's reason number three. To be bothered about the church. What creativity from such unlikely material made known by the church to the praise of his glory.

And one day, of course, that project will be completed in heaven. We'll be, as people used to say, trophies of his grace. Be there in heaven to the praise of his glory, to the praise of his glorious grace.

Look what God can do with such unlikely material to make them into the image of his son. Wow. Number three.

Number four. The church is a place of wonderful human connectedness. When I woke up this morning, I thought I should go and change that to say the only place of wonderful human connectedness.

[27:16] And I'm looking in Ephesians chapter four. So here I go with chapter four. As a prisoner of the Lord, I then urge you to live a life

worthy of the calling you have received.

Be completely humble and gentle. Please look out for where it says one. Be completely humble and gentle. Be patient, bearing with one another in love.

Make every effort to keep the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body, one spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called.

One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and father of all who is over all and through all. And what I'm just touching on here is that for all these disconnected people, when they come into the church, there is a connectedness of a really profound nature.

Because they come and there is one something. Not many somethings, but one something. Could anybody give us one of the ones? There is one. One body. Thank you very much.

[28:25] There is one body. Thank you. Any other one things? One alone. One another. Pardon? Bearing with one another.

Yeah, that's right. Yes, that's absolutely true. There is one Lord. Thank you very much. There is one Lord. There is one body. There is one Lord.

Any other ones? There is one faith. There is one gospel. Yep. There is one hope. We are all going on the same route forward.

Yep. There is one baptism. There is one point of entry to the church through baptism in the name of the Holy Trinity. Yes?

There is one spirit. There is one spirit. So, one sort of animating, organizing, propelling, encouraging spirit.

[29:25] The spirit of the Lord. So, there is a oneness. There is one. There is one. There is one. There is one of all those things. And therefore, he says, be completely.

There is spin-offs to this. There is the way we treat one another. And anybody like to pick up on those? And that's, those are in verse three.

Be completely something beginning with ha. Thank you. Humble. Well done. And be completely something beginning with j or gu. Gentle.

Thank you very much. And also be something beginning with pa. Patient. That's right. Thank you very much. And bearing with one another in. And there's a clue.

Oh, no, there isn't. There is now. Bearing with one another in. In love. And this is the place where by God's grace there is this connectedness.

[30:25] This is the place where there is this profound connectedness. I know there are other connections. There are connections through family. There's connections through education. There's connections through ethnicity. But this is the deepest connection.

Because there is one Lord. One hope. One spirit. One faith. One baptism. And when you join that. It's like the wetness of water.

Water is always wet. And when you join that. Relationships work like this. People are humble.

They're gentle. They're not cruel. They don't try to score points off each other.

They're patient. They give people time to change. And they don't push home expectations on one another.

They bear with one another in love. And that love sounds a bit of a wishy-washy word. But actually it's a very strong word about how people relate to one another. It's a place of wonderful human connectedness.

[31:26] And I don't know if you are a member of the church. You are in that connection. If you're not. You're actually alone floating around in the universe.

Without connection to God. Or deep connection to other people. And here is the community that is certainly meant to deal with that connectedness.

And of course a lot of that is by actually being present with God's people. That's not always possible. But that's the way it works. Number five. Why bother with church?

It's a community where ordinary life really matters to God. I've gone into Ephesians chapter 6 now. And I'm going to pick up in verse 7. If you have a Bible there.

You might just scan. And see what the context is. It's something about wives and husbands and children and fathers and slaves. Sort of just what life is.

[32:26] You know. If you happen to be married. Wives and husbands. Everybody comes from one sort of family or another. Fathers, children. And many people, not everybody.

Is going to have some occupation or work. So it's a little bit like the slaves situation. It's just ordinary life. In chapter 6 verse 7. He says, Serve wholeheartedly.

As if you were serving the Lord. Not people. Because you know that the Lord will reward each one of you. For whatever good they do.

Whether they're slaves or free or whatever. The Lord will reward each one of you. He's talking about marriage. Washing up. Putting out the rubbish.

Sorting the recycling. Cleaning the bathroom. Talking about work. Stacking shelves. Doing spreadsheets. Whatever your work involves.

[33:29] And he's saying for all of those things. Well, look. Anybody tell us, boys and girls. What that graphic is. Can you see it? What is that little picture of? Yes.

A medal from World War II. Oh, that's a very good answer. I think that deserves a round of applause. It is a medal. I don't know whether it's from World War II or not.

How do you get a medal? Why would you get a medal? Do you have to... Go on then. You win something. You win it.

You win it. You achieve something. Yeah. You could win a medal in a race. If it was from World War II. What do you think the medal would... How do you get that? And if you were brave or you'd done something special like that.

And the people would say, that is really, that is really fantastic. Well done. I'd say, you deserve a medal for that. And the medal is a sort of showing that what the person did is really valuable.

[34:35] You get it when you do something really valuable. And although God doesn't give medals, he does give rewards. And it says in verse 8, you know that the Lord will reward each one of you for whatever good they do, whether they are slave or free.

And he puts it in the context of ordinary life. He says, you know, husbands, you've encouraged your wife. That's great. I think that's a great thing.

There's a reward for that. Wives, you've supported your husbands. That's a great thing. There's a reward for that. You were working in the shop.

You stacked the shelves so carefully. Nobody else noticed. But you did it really carefully and you took extra time to do that. There's a reward for that. That's really valuable.

And here's the place, the community, where ordinary life really matters to God. I think that's wonderfully liberating, isn't it? You think, ah, the church, well, that's sort of every Sunday and that's all there is to it.

[35:47] But actually, when you join the church, you're in the community where God's spotlight is and he starts looking and saying, that was good. That was good. That's what you did on Monday.

That was good. That's what you did on Tuesday. That was good. I think that's such a wonderful thing to belong to. Number five. Another sort of way of understanding church.

I've gone to Ephesians chapter six. So, and it's one of these, boys and girls. What have I put up on the screen? Have I put it up on the screen?

Yeah. What was it? What is it? Car? Motorcycle? Bridge? Carrot? Squirrel? Circle? I didn't hear that.

Don't hear it. It's like a centurion. Yeah, it's like a centurion, a Roman soldier. He's got his armor on, got his helmet on, got his uniform on. He's equipped for battle and he's in a strong place because if you try and stab him, he's got all his armor and everything like that.

[36:59] And the church is to be thought of as a place where you get your armor and where you can be strong. I'm just looking at Ephesians chapter six, 10 to 17.

Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and the spiritual forces of evil in heavenly realms.

Therefore, put on the full armor of God so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground. And after you've done everything to stand, stand firm then with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.

In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, and pray in the spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests and so on.

He's describing things as they were armor. And he talks, let's just pick them out, shall we? He says, truth, truth.

[38:19] Can anybody work out this verse 14? Truth is like a soldier's... Verse 14? Belt.

Yeah, something like a belt. And righteousness, this whole area of righteousness is like... What sort of bit of armor does he say it's like? Yeah, presumably the bit that guards your chest and your tummy.

And what else have I got? The gospel message is a little bit like... Now, which verse is that in? The gospel message, but verse 15 is a little bit like what?

Fitted feet, yeah. Does it say... Is that what it says? Yeah, maybe it does, yeah. Your feet fitted with the readiness that... I suppose it's like whatever boots or shoes a Roman soldier would have had to guard him against being trampled by horses or stubbing his toe or something like that.

All of these things... Have I got another one or not? Faith is like what? What part of an armor is faith like? Correct. Well done. A shield. It's like a shield.

[39:34] And it's capable of extinguishing all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And the word of God is like... The word of God... Does it have that? Yeah. It's like a sword.

Yeah. I don't think we've got to push all these things terribly far. But what he's saying is that here is armor. If you don't have the armor, you are weak. I think that's one lesson.

Without armor, we are weak in a great spiritual conflict. With the armor, we are strong. And the armor is just being church.

It is just being a Christian. It is specifically things like holding to the truth. It is things like living in the realm of righteousness.

That's all sorts of things involved with that. It is being ready with the gospel. Having the gospel sort of on your mind at your fingertips. It is praying.

[40:36] It is having God's word in your heart and mind to hand. It is trusting God's promises. Doing these things, which is the church things.

We encourage one another in this. That gives you armor. I mean, isn't that really encouraging? That we don't have to go out into the world thinking, Oh, I can't cope with Satan.

He's too strong for me. What on earth am I going to do? I better look at some special thing on the internet to tell me how to cope with Satan. It's all here. You do the things that Christians do.

You read your Bible. You pray. You walk in obedience. You trust God's promises. That's armor.

That's church. Why bother with church? Well, here's a good reason for it. So, I just went through those things.

I hope you get the idea of what I'm trying to say. Why bother with church? Why bother with church? There are lots of things that might seem much more important than church.

[41:36] Shopping. When am I going to do my shopping? Isn't it more important to do shopping than church? I've got cleaning. Isn't it more important to do cleaning than church?

Playing football. I've only got limited opportunities to play football. Isn't it more important to play football than church? Watching TV. I mean, there's so much TV to watch. I've got to dedicate my whole life to watching TV, otherwise I'll miss some of it.

Isn't that more important than church? Doing homework. I've got to do homework sometime. Why can't I do it instead of church? Hobbies. I mean, you need some relaxation.

Isn't that more important than church? Doing overtime and getting more money. Isn't that more important than church? Just having a rest. Isn't that more important than church? So, is the conclusion that we shouldn't bother too much about church?

And I'm saying God is bothered about church. He runs the world for the church. This is the place where international people come to benefit from the promises to Abraham, Moses, David, and so on by the preaching of the gospel.

[42:44] This is the place where God shows his craftsmanship and his artistry and wisdom by showing what he can do with the most unlikely material.

This is the place where people really get connected. This is the place that transforms ordinary life so that it becomes important to God.

It's like this. This is the famous stone that turns all things to gold. It was like King Midas, wasn't it? Everything he touched turned to gold. And this turns life to gold, if you like. It's where ordinary things become things that matter to God.

This is the place where powerful armor is put on. And I ask, are you bothered about church? And I hope your answer is yes. We're going to sing.