

# When I am weak, then I am strong

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Preacher: Philip Wells

[ 0 : 00 ] I'll put on the board the notes I've been able to prepare during the past week for this talk. We've got them starting in chapter 8.

And the trumpets, I don't know whether you remember this, we said had a particular purpose. Can anybody remember the purpose? It's in chapter 9 verse 20. I know it's a bit of a stretch on the memory.

The trumpets were calling out something in chapter 9 verse 20. Is the word repent? Yeah, there were seven trumpets calling for repentance.

Now actually we haven't finished the seven because the seventh trumpet is in chapter 11 verse 15. So we're somewhere between the sixth trumpet and the seventh trumpet.

Seventh trumpet is the end. And what the book is telling us is that we've got part of the story but we just need one more ingredient before this sequence is finished.

[ 1 : 19 ] And I'm going to suggest to us this morning that this missing ingredient is the character and role of the church of Jesus Christ.

And I'm going to suggest to us this morning that in the text that was read, in particular chapter 11, is a sort of... Now I've forgotten the word. What is it? What is it when you cut out little things from the Radio Times and from the paper and stick them in a scrapbook?

What's it? A collage is what I was thinking. A collage where you take... Well, it just came to mind. I think that's what I did when I was at school. You'd take pictures out and stick them in your sticking book and bring them into school.

A collage. Lots of different little pictures stuck together. Bump, bump, bump, bump, like that. To give an overall impression. And that's what I think is happening in chapter 11.

I don't know what you think about the church. The church is a puzzling thing in this world.

Particularly if you're not a Christian and you're looking at the church from something of the outside, you think, what a funny old group they are.

[ 2 : 31 ] Can't make up their minds what they believe about things, apparently. All the stories about sexual abuse and things.

It seems to include priests. Mind you, it includes disc jockeys as well. Is the church pure or is she corrupt? Is the church dying?

Is the church growing? So if you believed the propaganda of, I don't know, in China or Marx saying, was it Marx who said that it's the opiate of the people?

You'd think the church has pretty much had its day. But yet the church is growing. And there are more Christians now than there ever were. Is the church a strong thing?

Or is it weak? Is the church supreme? If you listen to some Christians talk, you'd think that the church is going to take over the world in the next few years.

[ 3 : 32 ] Or is the church really a suffering body? If you think of all the terrible suffering that's inflicted on Christians in Syria and so on, you'd feel pity for Christians.

So what is the character of the church? And I like to say this morning from this text, that in a way she's all of those things. And if you think of the church, the more you think about it, the more she is just an amazing institution.

Amazing in many ways. Not least the paradoxes that we were talking about before. She's weak and she's strong. Well, I'm getting ahead of myself. So let's read, let's look at chapter 10.

And I'm going to enlist your help in this. Which is where the roving mic may or may not be helpful. So let's do this together. Look at chapter 10.

First main character. Sorry, I should explain. I'm not going to try and do all the details. We're just trying to get the big picture of what's happening here. So first main character in chapter 10 is...

[ 4 : 38 ] A mighty angel. A mighty angel. Okay. A mighty angel.

And where is the mighty angel standing? Please have the text in front of you, because otherwise you're going to get... Right, okay. Well, it's very difficult for the stick person to say whether... Which is a... Seeing as it will fit if I do it this way. That's the land. I might even have a blue one. No, I don't. So the sea is going to be purple.

Okay, there's the sea. Right, so there's the mighty angel. Sort of astride the earth. And what surrounds the angel?

What other... With what is the angel accessorized? If we use to accessorize as a verb. Cloud. Okay, let's do the cloud.

[ 5 : 34 ] So we've got a cloud here. And... Rainbow. Right, I've got plenty of colors here, so I can have a little bit of a go at a rainbow.

So a rainbow. And I don't have a blue, strangely enough. So it's going to be a rainbow with... Oh, we'll have orange. Okay, a rainbow. Okay, a mighty angel like this. I won't do all the details, because I can't do face like the sun, and legs like fiery pillars, because that will just confuse the picture.

But what has the angel got in his hand? A scroll. I'd like to suggest that this scroll... A scroll... Scroll or a book. Anybody got a book in there? Or just... Everybody got a scroll? Scroll. Okay, let's have a scroll. Okay, scroll.

[ 6 : 38 ] A little scroll, it says. Yep. And what activity does he do? Shout.

Shout. So he's a mighty angel. Shout! Okay. And when he shouts, what accompanies the shout? Thunder.

Thunder. Okay, so let's do a shout. And then we'll do seven thunders. I can't... I won't do seven, because that will just fill up the space.

Seven thunders. So we've got a lot of noise. Big... A big sound. Big... Something being said. Something being shouted out.

And I need to include John, who is not as big as a mighty angel. So there he is. There's John the writer. He's the writer of the book.

[ 7 : 40 ] And he's... He's already... Now... Is he... Able...

Able... To... No, let's put it this way. Does... No, no, I won't ask that question. Is he able... To communicate to us... What the angel said?

No. Which is an interesting thing, because the book of Revelation is a book of disclosure. Because Revelation means to unveil. So it's really quite strange in this little bit that what the angel said is we're not permitted to hear.

So he's... If I give him a scroll... Shall I give him a scroll? That's a very little scroll. But he's not allowed to write anything in that. Or he's to seal up and do not write it down.

So let's put a cross through that. Okay. That's the story so far. Let's carry on. The angel raises his hands and swears by him who lives forever and ever.

[ 8 : 50 ] He who created the heavens and all that is in them. And says there will be no more delay. So at least we can hear that bit. So no more delay.

So we can hear that. Time is short. Not going to go on forever. But in the days that the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet the mystery of God will be accomplished just as he announced his servants the prophets.

Now let's look at the next bit. And the voice that I heard from heaven spoke to me. What does what's the action that happens next?

He takes the scroll. So this I think was the script that the angel was working from. He takes the scroll and what does he do with it? He eats it.

So I don't know whether I can do this. He's got his mouth open. And here's the scroll. And he's going to eat it. Does that work?

[ 10 : 07 ] Sort of. It's a bit of a funny shaped face isn't it? So he's going to eat the scroll. And what is his reaction to eating the scroll? Sweet.

Yeah. And sour. So he's got two reactions to it that it has a sweet taste and in his stomach it has a sour reaction too. So it works in two ways.

And what is he told to do as a result of eating the scroll? To prophesy. To whom? Yeah.

People's nations, tribes, languages and kings. So here they are. I won't draw all of them of course but peoples, nations, tribes, languages and kings.

And he prophesies to them. Which is an interesting that's the first little bit of action in this. So let's try and identify as we'll try and work into this a little bit more.

[ 11 : 15 ] Now who do we think the angel is? Who does the angel remind us of? Does remind us of the Lord Jesus because Jesus is portrayed as having a face like the sun and legs like burning fire.

So he's like the Lord Jesus. The cloud, anybody? I'm sorry if you don't know the Bible particularly well because the way this book works is making constant reference to other parts of the Bible.

So it does depend on you having a bit of a background and if you're not familiar with the Bible you might have to take just take some of these things on trust. But let's think I've forgotten where I got to.

The cloud. Yeah. What does the cloud in the Bible usually God's glory? Yes. You think of Mount Sinai there was a cloud there where God was.

The Mount of Transfiguration where Jesus yeah and in the temple the cloud came. So the cloud is very much to do with divinity. The rainbow where does what's the rainbow to do with?

[ 12 : 26 ] God's promise. God's promise. Which which particular covenant? Noah. Yeah. It's to do with Noah. and that was a promise of grace in fact wasn't it? It was a promise that judgment wouldn't be repeated in that same way.

It was a sort of promise of grace. Now so we've got divinity we've got Christ likeness we've got reminder of God's covenant.

So the question is who are we what are we to understand by this angel? Now it would be certainly a possibility to say that the angel is Jesus Christ however I don't think that that is the correct identification because never in the book of Revelation is Jesus called an angel.

There's always a big distinction angels you don't worship you know as soon as John tries to worship an angel he said no you don't worship angels you only worship the divine Christ and the lamb upon the throne the one who sits upon the throne and the lamb who sits upon the throne so I would say that this angel is not is not God is not Jesus Christ but is someone who is very much at home in the presence of God and Jesus Christ so my example is if President Obama were to visit us this very moment what would happen obviously there would be a blockage on Viaduct Road as all the all the big black cars stop there and his security men would come in first and they'd have the sort of earpieces and they'd have very sharp suits they'd probably have sunglasses and when they came in you would probably immediately think that is the president he's so good looking and so well dressed but he'd say no ma'am no sir

Mr. President is coming on behind and the attendance of somebody take on a lot of the characteristics of the person that they're attending so I'd say this angel is somebody who's very much at home in the presence of God but is not God himself so he's saying something but we can't hear what he's saying mighty mighty angel let's think about this eating of the scroll seems a bit bizarre but in fact it's a quotation from another part of the Bible does anybody know which part of the Bible somebody eats a scroll ah it's okay we've got lots of possibilities in fact Ezekiel look at the if you are good at finding places in the Bible I can probably give you the reference Ezekiel chapter 2 Ezekiel chapter 2 verses 7 to 3 verse 4 2 7 to 3 4 so could

[ 15 : 24 ] Steve give the roving mic to Zach would you be kind enough Zach to read these things for us if you could hang on to the mic because there'll be another few things to read as well Ezekiel chapter 2 verse 7 to 3 4 this is addressed to Ezekiel test right okay page 831 if you haven't got it yet Ezekiel 2 verse 7 you must speak my words to them whether they listen or fail to listen for they are rebellious but you son of man listen to what I say to you do not rebel like that rebellious house open your mouth and eat what I give you then I looked and I saw a hand stretched out to me it was a scroll which he unrolled before me on both sides of it were written words of lament and mourning and woe and he said to me son of man eat what is before you eat this scroll then go and speak to the house of Israel so I opened my mouth and he gave me the scroll to eat then he said to me son of man eat this scroll

I am giving you and fill your stomach with it so I ate it and it tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth then he said to me son of man go now to the house of Israel and speak my words to them great thank you very much so do you see what's happening in Ezekiel he's being is actually being commissioned as a prophet and the way this is portrayed is that God says I want you to take in my words and then speak them out again and it's put in the picture of him eating this scroll which is like his script and it's sweet and he then prophesies he then speaks out what he's previously taken in anybody point out a couple of quite big differences between the Ezekiel thing and the one in

Revelation sorry yeah it doesn't go sour in his stomach and I wonder if John is telling us that the gospel of Jesus Christ in many ways is wonderful but it also has this characteristic of being quite in some ways quite offensive to people there is an offense to the cross of Jesus Christ that perhaps wasn't so much there in the Old Testament so there's that sourness that's one important difference another important difference pardon ah right okay yeah yeah I'm not sure whether that's I mean it might be a difference it might be a difference might be difference yeah thank you thank you yeah Ezekiel his target audience is Israel but John's target audience is every nation tribe language and people big big difference from the Old Testament a narrow group of people but in the New Testament the prophetic ministry of the church is to everybody so that's that's a big difference and do you notice what's happening the angel has this message but we don't hear it from the angel the angel gives his is told to give his script to John and it's

John who gives the message to the world there's a very similar this is interesting there's a very similar thing in Acts chapter 10 just turn over to Acts chapter 10 it's there with Cornelius one of the first people to hear the gospel of Jesus one of the first non-Israelites to come and believe in Jesus Christ I know Zach could retrieve the mic and be kind enough to read this one for us as well in Acts chapter 10 could you just read first of verse verse 3 and verse 5 this is page 1103 chapter 10 verse 3 one day at about 3 in the afternoon he had a vision he distinctly saw an angel of God who came to him and said Cornelius verse 5 5 right yeah this is the angel speaking now verse 5 now send men to Joppa to bring back a man named Simon who is called Peter yeah okay this is very interesting so this man is going to hear the gospel and God sends an angel to Cornelius and you'd think God could really optimize his use of resources by getting the angel to tell Cornelius the gospel there and then but he doesn't he says it's not for you to tell Cornelius the gospel he must hear it from Simon so the angel says get Simon to come and tell you the gospel that's what happens in Acts chapter 10 and I think that's what's happening in Revelation that we've read why does

[ 21 : 17 ] God not just get a whole lot of mighty angels to tell the world the gospel well he doesn't he wants sinners to hear the gospel from other sinners from other human beings the mighty angel is shut up and the script is given to John and he speaks and I think this is rather amazing I think there are many pastors in different churches who are saying oh Lord the work I have here is so difficult the people I'm trying to teach are so resistant would you please send the angel Gabriel to speak to these people and then they take notice and God says no you do it and there are many evangelists who are plugging away at preaching the gospel in different places places even like Brighton and they might sometimes turn in prayer to the Lord and say oh Lord you've made a big mistake asking me to do this if you were to send a mighty angel then people would take notice and God says

I'm not doing that I'm sending you and maybe even you in your workplace or your family have said I try so hard to tell people the gospel I've told it to my children I've told it to my parents I've told it to my workmates they don't take any notice Lord if you sent the angel then they take notice please send an angel and God says no I haven't made a mistake I want you to do it I want you to keep on saying the things that I've told you to say that's the way I work amazing isn't it but encouraging too I've sent you you get on with that work you're in the right place that's how I work that's chapter 10 let's move on into the next chapter now the next chapter has

I think it adds to this picture of the prophesying church in quite a lot of little details so let's try and we won't deal satisfactorily with all the details but I think we can try and get the hang of it at any rate so he is given a measuring stick like a measuring rod and he's told to measure the temple of God and the altar and count the worshippers there so this is a style of writing which is very pictorial nowadays gets called apocalyptic there are a number of documents that we have written in this same style some of them in the Bible some of them are not in the Bible the idea of measuring a building is there in a number of places and I suppose it's like saying think about the institution represented by the building but here is to measure the temple of

God and count the worshippers there so the temple of God representing the place where God lives the place where God is not I think his temple in heaven but his temple on earth because we're told exclude the outer court do not measure it because it has been given to the Gentiles they will trample on the holy city for 42 months so we're given a picture here of the place where God lives his temple but it's not in its perfect condition it's been trampled or I put overrun on the screen so it's not in its perfect condition it's not what it should be but that's what it is at the moment and the idea of the city being trampled on by the Gentiles quotes from Old Testament history of invasion of people

trying to take over people attacking and being partially successful in attacking the kingdom of God that's the picture that we've got so I'd like you to do a little bit of arithmetic now then let's just see there is a time period James chapter 5 verse 17 let's nip back to James chapter 5 verse 17 this period of time crops up as being quite important so James 5 17 if Zach could please read 17 and 18 please right James 5 17 18 Elijah was a man just like us he prayed earnestly they would not rain and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years again he prayed and the heavens gave rain and the earth produced his crops thank you very much this is appeared in

[ 27 : 13 ] Old Testament history where God's people had been disobedient the results of disobedience was that rain wouldn't fall when they came back again to obedience God would send rain again this was in answer to prayer Elijah prayed that it wouldn't rain and then after this time of him prophesying teaching urging people to repent them being under judgment but after this period of time he prayed and it did rain again so this three and a half year period sort of a testing time a time where things are still in the balance so that three and a half year period is there in Old Testament history anybody good at maths like to turn three and a half years into months thank you yeah three and a half times 12 is 42 and the convention for years in those days was that you had the same number of days in a year as you have degrees in a circle how many degrees are there in a complete circle it's very geometrical this morning 360 360 3 and a half times 360 can you do that in your head

Chris can but I that's actually do you want me to do it out in long 360 360 360 180 0 18 26 9 10 11 12 12 1260 and so you notice that that's the period of time that he's talking about he says things happen verse 2 for 42 months that's the three and a half year period I will give power to my two witnesses They will prophesy for 1260 days so I think he's quoting this and saying think of this period of history as being a period of everything to play for of people being called to repent and that's the sort of period of history that this is characterising and I think that's the period of history that we're in now

I think he's describing how things are now only using a period of using this symbolic number three and a half years so let's take a look at what happens in this period of testing and in particular I would propose to us that he's describing the way the church prophesies into this world in this period of history that we're in now so let's you may or may not agree with me but that's the way I'm going to proceed with it and in verse three we've got two witnesses so I've drawn the two witnesses there two witnesses and you're going to say who are these two witnesses I think it's a symbolic number I think it symbolises prophetic ministry if you think when Jesus sent out his disciples he sent them out two by two didn't he so I think there's that sort of thing and often but not always prophetic ministry comes in too so you've got Moses and Elijah

Elijah and Elisha John the Baptist and Jesus just as an example and you've got in the time of Zechariah you've got the duo let's just think Zerubbabel and Joshua yeah and they are being quoted you might not be familiar with that bit of history but he does quote this so let's look at verse four these are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth I think it's going to be a little bit difficult to do justice to this let me have a quick go at it two lampstands this is from the book of Zechariah so from a prophetic book it's a picture and the idea being that you had two trees two olive trees and they supply oil down some pipes to it's a seven fold lampstand isn't it in Zechariah no is it two get your glasses on and check it up what have I put in my notes I do actually have some notes Zechariah four one to fourteen that's what I thought yeah yeah it's like one reservoir with seven lamps coming off it and I better not get into too much detail on this we know this don't we where do we where in the bible do we find a lampstand with seven seven lamps like that where in the bible do we find a seven branch lampstand in the temple in the tabernacle yeah so it goes back a long way in the bible and revelation takes this picture and sort of twists it about and uses it in different ways but it's basically giving out light giving out light in a dark place and I would say that in

[ 33 : 29 ] Zechariah he's thinking of the community of people who in all the darkness of that world were sending out the light of God's grace and God's goodness and there were two people that were particularly instrumental in that in the book of Zechariah who encouraged that community which were in fact Zerubbabel and Joshua so he's picking up on that idea of people involved in spreading the light let's put it that way so he picks up on this idea and here are these two olive trees he's now made it two lamp stands that stand before the Lord of the earth so I think they're the people making the message of God known now let's just take a look at how he describes these verse 5 if anyone

tries to harm them fire comes from their mouths and devours their enemies that's a quote actually from the Old

Testament anybody know the story where somebody is going to be arrested and fire comes down from heaven and sizzles up the army that have come to arrest which one is it is it Elijah or Elisha I think it's Elisha I always get them mixed up I can never remember but it and I'm not even sure that I've got the reference for this but you can look that up the idea being that the prophet was doing his prophesying and the king sent the military to arrest him and every time the commander came they were zapped by fire from heaven until the last commander who was a little bit more sensible than the others said please don't zap me I'm just trying to do my job or something like that if you were in a position whereby any of your enemies got zapped by fire could you think of an adjective to describe that situation you would be what pardon all your enemies are destroyed by fire relieved yes relieved shocked well I was going to say something like

I was actually going to say indestructible indestructible but can I spell indestructible do you think it's an A there or an I well Chris says I so we'll leave that to the reader's imagination I think that's quite a situation to be in that when anybody comes against you they're zapped so I'm going to use the word indestructible for that so this is a little picture of being indestructible this is how anyone who wants to harm them must die verse 6 these men have power to shut up the sky so that it will not rain during the time they are prophesying so this is verse 6 who are they like who are these people like if they have power to shut up the sky so that it will not rain during the time they are prophesying they are like like Elijah so if I do a column of things like like Elijah and could you think of an adjective to describe that if you pray and it doesn't rain how would you describe that effective yeah the prayers of a righteous man are something ineffective what's the word powerful is it powerful and that's to do with prayer okay let's let's go on it says in still in verse 6 they have power to turn the waters into blood who in the bible turns water into blood

Moses so they're like Elijah and they're like Moses and again I would say powerful and then it says they strike the earth with every kind of plague as often as they want who struck the earth with plagues Moses so like Moses again sorry yeah it was God's power but it was through human beings so again it's this thing that God likes to use people so these are powerful that's you know if we were thinking of little collagey things we'd say a picture of Elijah and say it's like that and a picture of Moses like that sticking all those pictures together verse 7 when they have finished their testimony the beasts that come up from the abyss will attack them and overpower and kill them so I don't think that's like anything sorry yeah like martyrs actually there's one person in the book already called Antipas who has been killed he's there in the church at Pergamum I think is it okay yes that's right yes Hebrews 11 there's loads of people that were killed for their faith so here I think we would put weak what are they they're vulnerable it's interesting when you put those pictures together in the book of Acts you have some people who were miraculously escaped from prison and weren't martyred but you have other people in the same chapter who were martyred so you get both these things so I put down there weak and vulnerable that's my mic working because I'm not it's okay their bodies will lie on the street of the great city which is figuratively called Sodom and Egypt and also where their

[ 40 : 03 ] Lord was crucified where was the Lord crucified Jerusalem so he's got three pictures going at once there think of it like Sodom very ungodly place think of it like Egypt very hostile place think of it like Jerusalem place perhaps where Jesus should have been welcomed but wasn't it's like all of those for three and a half days men from every people tribe language and nation will gaze on their bodies and refuse them burial to refuse burial I'm not sure whether there's that like anything I can't think of a like what how would you describe it if how do you describe the treatment if there's a dead body which is refused burial!

It's ungodly isn't it it's not even civilised to do that I think every every civilisation recognises that if you have well that's not quite true actually it's not quite true they were telling me in Sri Lanka that before the missionaries came I think it was the Buddhist teaching I could be corrected if I'm wrong was that once somebody's dead what's left over is just rubbish and people just fling fling bodies out into the jungle and just leave them but I think most societies would say that's that's rather shameful treatment and this is how these people are treated so I'm going to put shamefully I'm going to put shamefully treated yeah Jezebel for example she wasn't buried properly was she and verse 10 it says the inhabitants of the earth will gloat over them and will celebrate by sending each other gifts because these two prophets had tormented those who live on earth because the prophets were so

unwelcome that it becomes like

Christmas when they're dead that's what's happening in verse 10 isn't it the inhabitants of the earth will gloat over them and celebrate by sending each other gifts but so this is a short period it's not the three and a half years but three and a half days after the three and a half days the breath of life from God entered them they stood on their feet what is who or what is that like that is dead and after a period of time it's like Jesus isn't it it's not exactly the same because with Jesus it was three days but this is three and a half days they come alive again and then they it says come up to heaven and they go up to heaven in a cloud who is that like who goes up to heaven in a cloud well Jesus does and there's other people who go up to heaven Elijah is it Elijah he went up in the whirlwind didn't he and there was somebody else who was taken

Enoch he didn't go in a cloud but he did he did go to heaven though didn't he so I'm going to put Enoch there and yeah okay that's the that's the end of the description of these people and I want to suggest that what he's giving us is a rather amazing combination of different descriptions that the church of Jesus Christ is in some ways extremely powerful she can pray and God answers but in other ways the church of Christ is extremely vulnerable because people can be cut down they can die they are indestructible to a in a way do you notice this here if anyone tries no no no verse 7 when they have finished their testimony then they become completely vulnerable there's a song isn't there now I didn't look it up which says not a single shaft can hit till the till the God of love sees fit it's interesting isn't it that is it John Newton is it Gatsby saying that Christians are protected by God nothing can touch them until their work is finished when God when they've done what God wanted them to do they're as vulnerable as anybody else so I think of Pastor Les Hill in our church here who died when he was was it 53 52 and he did the work of 10 men until he was slowed down a bit and then he did the work of about 5 men and he did a fantastic ministry when I was in Sri Lanka people were saying we're so grateful for what we learned in Brighton under the ministry of Pastor Les Hill that ministry has gone from a little mission hall here in Brighton and affected probably countless lives certainly a large number of lives in

[ 45 : 30 ] Sri Lanka and God sustained him year by year and month by month Les used to make the lunch in the house next door pretty much by himself and every Sunday would feed 18 or 20 students and visitors he had a full time job and he did that year in year out he would preach two sermons a week except when he got me to do them and he did that and he was sustained amazingly until his ministry was finished and he died at the age of 52 in the Sri Lankan context one of the guys who was over here was Jody Hull Jody was a great man of God he was here as a student he learnt biblical things here was greatly helped he was a very intelligent man he could have earned a lot of money in the west but he chose to go back to

Manar his hometown Manar is really in the backwater of Sri Lanka it's one of the least developed areas he went back there to teach and preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and he ministered throughout the years of the war he ministered to many people and then the Lord took him now I don't know how old he would have been early 50s as well great shock to everybody that was left behind but here's another man who was powerful and strong and indestructible up until the moment the Lord said you've done all that you needed to do think of the church in China changing to this bit about the resurrection power of the church the communist authorities thought we'll get rid of the church we'll get rid of the missionaries send them all out the church will die how wrong they were after three and a half days

I speak figuratively the church in China rose up with the breath of God within it and people were amazed so I've got some let's see whether I've said what I meant to say she's indestructible and powerful and vulnerable she's supernatural yet she's treated with contempt she has a heavenly life yet she's very very earthly so why don't we why don't I make the closing thought what I brought to the boys and girls isn't the church of Jesus Christ an amazing sort of contradiction let me read you what Paul says actually I'll read from 2 Corinthians 4 where he says this we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all surpassing power is from God and not from us

Paul says we're hard pressed on every side but not crushed we're perplexed but not in despair we're persecuted but not abandoned struck down but not destroyed we always carry around in our body the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body the church of Jesus Christ an amazing thing an amazing institution if you're a Christian wonder if you're not a Christian be jealous and wish that you were