

The Call of Abraham

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[0 : 00] Father, sometimes even the good things that you promise us frighten us at least a little bit, and sometimes a lot. We thank you, Father, that you know our hearts, you know what we're really like, and we thank and praise you that knowing what we're really like, that you love us.

And so, Father, we ask that your Holy Spirit would move gently but deeply and powerfully in each of our hearts, that we might hear the words of the Scripture, that those words of your Scripture, in light of the Gospel, might enter deep into who we are.

And we give you permission, Father, for your word to speak and rule and heal and lead and guide in our hearts. And we ask this in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Saviour. Amen.

Please be seated. Amen. So, this morning I might touch on some things which are a bit painful for people emotionally, so I ask that you sort of give me a little bit of grace, given that some of the things I say might be a bit painful to some of us.

But we're beginning a new sermon series. It's on the life of Abraham, so we're going to be going from Genesis 12 to Genesis 22. This week and over the 10 weeks that follow, we'll finish, God willing, in the first Sunday of July.

[1 : 27] And so, if you turn in your Bibles to Genesis 12, verse 1, Genesis 12, verse 1, we're going to look at a very, very simple text, a very profound text, and for many people, a very scary text.

And why is it scary? Well, let's look at how it begins. And actually, I'm just going to say one thing before we... No, I'll read the text, then I'll read it again. I'll make a bit of a comment about it.

Here's how it begins. Now, the Lord said to Abram, Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you.

And I will make of you a great nation. And I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse.

And in you, all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Now, just before this, in terms of the context of the book, the first 11 chapters of Genesis, in Genesis chapter 1 and 2, you have the story of the creation of the world and the first humans and sort of basically setting up the fundamental Christian understanding of creation and what it means to be human and what it means to flourish.

[2 : 49] And God saw that everything was good. And in Genesis chapter 3, we have the profound turning point in the cosmos and in human life, where evil and brokenness and bentness, so to speak, enters into the world when Adam and Eve choose to exalt themselves over God, to not trust his word, to exalt themselves over God.

And there's this rupture, this break that happens in humanity and in all of creation. And then there's other things that happen, which we're not going to go into between that moment and the end of Genesis 11.

But here's sort of the point. Up until this point in time, there are three judgments by God. And there are five times where God pronounces a curse.

So between sort of the first few verses of Genesis chapter 3 and the end of Genesis chapter 11, you have these three times where a judgment is issued by God against human beings and five times where he curses things.

And I know that just even for many of us listening to this, the whole idea that God would pronounce a curse is both sort of hokey and childish and also just somehow seems wrong.

[4 : 14] And I'll explain in a moment what that means. But mindful of that, what you're now going to see is this turning point in the rest of the Bible.

And in some ways, what God says to Abram in these three verses sets the agenda, the program, for all of the rest of the Bible.

All of the rest of the Bible, in a sense, is going to try to unpack that and develop that and unearth that and deepen that and extend it and fill it in.

So mindful of the three curses, sorry, the three judgments and the five curses, we now have this statement again. Hear it again. Now the Lord said to Abram, go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you.

And I will make of you a great nation and I will bless you and make your name great so that you will be a blessing. And I will bless those who bless you and him who dishonors you I will curse.

[5 : 17] And in you, all the families of the earth shall be blessed. This, in the original language, five times the word blessing in some form is mentioned in the original language.

Now what's the scary part of that? The scary part of that is the very first things that God says to Abram. Look again at verse one. Now the Lord said to Abram, go, go from your country, go from your kindred and go from your father's house to the land that I will show you.

He's told to go and leave behind his family, his country and his kindred, in a sense, the larger clan or tribe. And he's told to go to a place that he's not even told where it's going to be.

He's just told to go. And if you're watching this and you're sort of a seeker trying to figure out what the Christian faith is or you're maybe looking here for more ammo as to why you shouldn't be a Christian, well, first of all, welcome if you're here and welcome if you're here.

I just want to share with you that Christians find this idea frightening as well because part of what it means to be human, but not the best part of what it means to be human, is desire to have a lot more control over things.

[6 : 38] And so one of the fears is that if you actually sort of launch yourself in the Christian faith, that it's just going to be this open-ended thing and before you know it, like you get weird and you get weirder and you get weirder and you get weirder and you get weirder because God just gives you this command just to go and he doesn't even tell you all the steps that he's going to give you.

He doesn't tell you exactly what it's going to look like and that on one hand is sort of very frightening to people and it's frightening at different times to Christians. But what's actually, I don't know if this will make it easier and this is where I might, I need your grace because I might touch on a couple of things which are very uncomfortable for you.

Some of the things which are most key to human flourishing involve the same type of step into the unknown. Now, just before I give you these examples and I know that there are people in the room who long to be married and haven't been able to be married and I know there are people in the room and people watching who have been married and their marriage is either in the process of dissolution or has broken up and it's been very painful.

And I know there are people in the room who would desperately love to be able to have children or more children and haven't been able to have children.

I know there are people in the room who have had miscarriages. So I know that this example can be painful to some. But, well, I'll use a personal example.

[8 : 22] When I got to hold Elizabeth, my daughter, my sixth child, in my arms, I didn't know that five years later I would spend a couple of days in the intensive care unit of the children's hospital watching her fight for every breath and not know whether she was going to live or whether she was going to die.

And I didn't know. I mean, she ends up surviving. Those of you who don't know me, she survived. Turned out she had a very rare form of pneumonia that usually only very elderly people get.

But somehow or another it's very rare for a five-year-old girl to get this type of pneumonia that usually only elderly people get. And they were able to treat it.

But, you know, some 16, 17 years, 18 years later, whatever, I got to walk her down the aisle because she's going to marry David. And just a couple of weeks ago I got to hold her fourth child in my arms, Levi, the grandchild.

Now, the point of all of this is that we all know that there are areas of human flourishing that when you take that first step into it, you have no idea what's going to be down the road.

[9 : 48] And that's why I shared that in some ways I know I'm touching upon things here which can be very, very difficult. So that one of the things that's really important for us to know as Christians, two of the things which are very, very, very wonderful, profoundly, emotionally important for Christians.

From the outside you might not realize it but once the gospel grips you there are two things about the gospel and the biblical narrative that are of profound emotional importance.

And the first one is that our flourishing as human beings doesn't depend upon being married or upon having children or upon having certain types of professional accreditation or having a large family or any family at all.

that one of the things which is so profoundly beautiful and important about the Christian faith is that every individual just by the virtue of them being born and becoming God's children by adoption and grace the possibility of flourishing is there.

Like real flourishing. Like real flourishing. In fact, one of the things there's this wonderful book if you get a chance to read it by a scholar who taught at University of Edinburgh he died just a couple of years ago.

[10 : 59] he wrote two books before he died on how on earth it is that anybody in the ancient world would have become a Christian given that it involved such a profound break from your culture.

The man's name was Larry Hurtado and both of the books there's a more scholarly one published by Oxford University Press or something like that and a bit of a more popular version. But you see, one of the things which was so profoundly important to these that the gospel brought is that slaves despite the fact that they were profoundly constrained were fully loved by God and if you read the New Testament and you read it and see that there's this profound message that even though they're constrained even though they're slaves that Jesus loved them enough to die on the cross for them and that given even their constraints it's possible for them to flourish in that and to be vehicles by which the gospel becomes known and people are saved and good is done in the city and God is praised and women who were profoundly powerless in much of the ancient world the gospel is profoundly powerful to them because they come to realize that even though there's all these limits and from the outer view they're unqualified they're unsuitable it's unlikely that God would use them but God uses women he blesses women and they're able to flourish even in the midst of constrained situations and so one of the things which is very powerful about the Bible is this profound message that you are not of more worth or value if you're married than if you're single or of more worth or value if you have children than you don't have children that there's this profound flourishing and gift of blessing which every human being in Christ gets and they just get it but at the same time we acknowledge well that there are things like marriage that we embark on and some of us in the room know the pain of the marriage that doesn't work out and we know that there are

I know that there are people here whose moms and dads rather than loving them abuse them some in quite horrendous ways but we all if you think about it for a second if you think about it for a second if you were to meet a human being and they decided that because of the fact that there is a possibility of pain in a certain path that they weren't going to take any path at all and maybe they just spent the rest of their life because they had a little bit of money that having Uber deliver food to them and they never go outside they never talk to anybody they never engage in anything they never try anything and by doing all of those things they never give their heart to anything and by doing all of that they in a sense they protect their heart from any type of being broken but we would not look at anybody like that and say that they were flourishing and so for many people in our culture who desperately would love to have a person they could spend the rest of their lives with but maybe they themselves have been you know divorced or their parents were divorced maybe multiple times and there's a lot of just

I mean at the end of the day the bottom line is that the step that will lead to flourishing involves a step in a sense it's not a leap of faith it's a step into the darkness at least it's darkness because you can't see what's beyond that next step or two and part of what we learn actually is that while you step into that darkness in things which really are connected to human flourishing what looks like darkness on the outside when you step into it is actually bright but there's still that next darkness before the next step that you need to step into and you step into and you step into so in the Bible here when we see the Lord calling Abram to leave behind his family his kindred his nation and to go in a place where I don't know on one hand that's the exact same thing that's required for all human flourishing and it's the exact same type of thing of being bound to in a sense to a path that is also key to flourishing just as we don't really think that the person who flourishes is the person who has a different girlfriend every night

I mean I know that goes against the playboy philosophy and I know it goes against how most of Hollywood presents things where the hero or the heroine has a different boyfriend or girlfriend every show and they never show any type of remorse they never have any type of emotional breakdown any type of emotional wounding any type of hollowing out or deadening or anything like that they just go from one to one to one to one as if there's no consequence to that but in real life if we were to meet a person who had a different girlfriend every night and they'd been doing that for 20 years we would not use view them as an example of human flourishing most people wouldn't the part of flourishing is some types of commitments into darkness which as you walk turns to be light and that's what the Lord calls Abram to here he says go from your country and your kindred and your father's house well he can't go if he has them with him can he he has to leave them behind and he doesn't know where it's going to take him

[17:08] God doesn't tell him where he's going to take him so on one hand it's very frightening and part of the frighteningness is because it reveals a little bit about the fact that we have a deep not fear of God in a way that's healthy but a type of fear of God of the fact that when we at the end of the day if it's God that we're dealing with there's no way getting around the fact that you lose control I mean in a sense all relationships is going to mean you lose some control I mean even parents with little kids you know you might think you have control but they poop when they're going to poop they throw up when they're going to throw up they cry when they're going to cry they do all those things whenever they're going to do it and you just have to deal with it it's your commitment to them and your love to them and it's part of human flourishing and that's actually even here seen in the text and the thing which we should really jump out at the text is not the problem with cursing which I'll explain in a moment but the fact that it's so and use a big word asymmetric it's so unbalanced

God merely asked Abram to do on one hand it's a very simple thing it's a very scary thing but it's a very small thing on one level compared to all of the good that comes to it that God does look at it again go from your country verse 1 and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you and I will make of you a great nation and I will bless you and make your name great how is it he's going to make your name great how is he going to bless he's going to bless us so that we're a blessing it's an image in a sense of that it's like an image of where not only does God's blessing going to come into his life to bless him but that it doesn't just sort of become he doesn't become like a big bloated blessing you know as if you know in those cartoons where the hose goes into a person they just get fatter and fatter and fatter you know or the air hose goes into a person they get fatter and fatter and fatter and they eventually float away that's in a sense

I mean if anything like that actually happened it would be a form of torture to kill you so it's not as if the blessing just comes in and you just become like this dam this reservoir this dead sea this dead sea of blessing but he blesses you so that it will flow out that you are a blessing to others and verse 3 and I will bless those who bless you and him who dishonors you I will curse and in you all of the families of the earth shall be blessed you see this piling on a blessing that's very incommensurate so what does blessing mean blessing very simply in the bible is this at least in this particular type of a context a blessing is that it's the power and the presence of god to flourish that's what it means it's the power and presence of god to flourish and to thrive and it and in the bible it either refers to physical things creational things or to spiritual things and spiritual things are also created but they're not of this created order and it can either be creational just like physical or very just merely human so to speak it can also be spiritual it can be both and it's in a sense a coming from god of a type of presence and a power into your life that causes you to thrive or to flourish some of you get emails from me and I often end them

I hope you're thriving in Jesus and when I say that I'm in a sense saying I hope you're being blessed to be a blessing because that's what blessing in a sense means what does cursing mean well cursing is the opposite of it and fundamentally in the Bible I mean it's in a sense a decision that's made by God but fundamentally what it usually means is it means in a sense a removal of presence and power that leads to your diminishment you know it would be as if you know to give you an example some of you maybe have known elderly couples and while the couple is still alive they seem to thrive and then the wife dies and all of a sudden you see that the man's life starts to completely and utterly fall apart you know because maybe it's because of his wife's involvement in his life that the house is tidy that there's food in the fridge eats his vegetables there's a whole pile of things that allows him to thrive but his wife's absence means that the natural tendencies towards being slovenly to being lazy to just eating fast food those natural tendencies of his just come out and what you see is his diminishment not his thriving just a bit of an aside

I think it's still the case I don't know how COVID has affected it married I think something like a man who's married lives I don't know 10 years longer 20 years longer something crazy it makes no difference to the length of time the wife lives but it makes a big difference to the man I can see from myself I eat way more vegetables because I'm married to Louise and I probably would naturally all by myself and my diet is definitely more healthy and I'm more likely to actually go see a doctor all those types of things but you can see that in that example a little bit of what is meant it's not so much that God all of a sudden starts throwing things at you to make things bad happen to you but by in a sense a slight withdrawal the natural tendencies of you towards diminishment and destruction begin to have some type of current and weight one of the ideas which is presented in the New Testament about the same line is it's almost as if grace is the rope that binds the boat to the dock there's a dock on a river and there's current and there's a rope that binds the boat to the dock and what happens is it's almost as if the cursing is where

[23 : 35] God in a sense begins to let the rope loose where it has play and the natural current starts to take the boat away and that's what's behind this idea and you see at the heart of it is if what has caused us to be fallen creatures is our separation from God then ultimately true blessing has to involve reconnecting to his presence and his person and to be connected to his presence and his person is also to be connected to his power for us to thrive whether it's in physical things or whether it's in spiritual things and even if you look at it it's a very subtle thing which you can't actually see in English very very well but when it says to him who dishonors you I will curse sorry I will bless those who bless you plural to him singular who dishonors you I will curse it's a very simple level at the in the in the original language to emphasize that

God's fundamental heart is to bless that the blessing in a sense has the greater weight and the greater distance and that it's not his heart to curse that his fundamental heart towards you is to bless you it's why I think it's in the book of Ezekiel three different times that it has this idea and those of you who do morning and evening prayer from the book of common prayer you'll get this phrase that God takes no delight in the death of God takes no delight in the death of a sinner but rather that he will turn from his wickedness and live and that captures perfectly this idea of the blessing and the cursing that his heart is to bless you his heart is to know you his heart is to have you receive his presence into his life his heart is that you will trust him to leave and to go and to trust him as he leaves as he leads you and takes you that you will trust him and it doesn't mean in your life that you will never have bad things or hard things happen to you but because you know it isn't as if blessing means that you'll never be stretched you'll never be tested you'll never have just very very hard things happen to you but it means that as you as you come to these things you have his fundamental promise to help you you have his presence and his power to help you face those things and deal with those things which are very very hard and very very difficult and so in a sense what you're seeing here remember what you're seeing here in a sense the pattern of the rest of the Bible the program of the rest of the

Bible the promise of the rest of the Bible these are all things are unknown Abraham doesn't realize of course that him taking these small steps of faith will down the ages culminate in him becoming a mighty nation becoming the people of Israel that the Torah and the prophets would all be revealed to his offspring through the years and that eventually because salvation comes from the Jews that the actual Messiah who will be the person who is the profound blessing for the present the future and the past Abraham is going to give birth to the one who gives birth to the one who gives birth to the one who gives birth to the one that eventually will bring about the Savior that Abraham needs himself to be made right with God that this on one level small step away from his family his friends his country in obedience and trusting that God who has called him to do this it culminates in these profound blessings down the world down the road so what happens in the rest of the text the main thing about it is you wonder is there something special about Abram well that's sort of the question is there something special about

Abram well the rest of the story these next 17 verses will help to make that far more clear let's look and see what happens verse 4 so Abram went as the Lord had told him and Lot went with him Abram Lot is his nephew Abram was 75 years old when he departed from Haran and Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son and all their possessions that they had gathered and the people that they had acquired in Haran and they set out to go to the land of Canaan when they came to the land of Canaan Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem to the oak of Moreh at that time the Canaanites were in the land then the Lord appeared to Abram and said so he's appearing to him at the oak or the terebinth tree of Moreh in Shechem and the Lord appeared to Abram verse seven and said to your offspring I will give this land so Abram built there an altar to the Lord who had appeared to them let's sort of pause here one of the things which are very important about the Old Testament stories which is why it's important for us to read them is that stories prepare our imagination and sort of our our mind to receive abstract ideas it in a sense that it prepares us to receive these things it's one of the reasons why I know that parents of children you

I mean obviously the kids are going to watch different things on TV and other places you know we've all seen over the last little while that you have to be very careful about that what you let your kids watch but one of the most important things that parents can do for their children is to read Bible stories to them like if you're if your children are just getting a diet of purely Disney type stories and never hearing Bible stories they're going to be deeply impoverished and it's going to be hard for them to understand different things in the Bible and here in this very simple story God has taken Abram to the very center of the promised land to a place where paganism is celebrated and taught because more means teaching so right in the very center where Canaanite religion is celebrated and taught in a sense pagan you is right there and right in the center right In the face of it God says I don't care if if all those gods that are being worshiped believe they control and own the land in a sense today he says I don't care if Apple thinks they own everything I don't care if

[30 : 14] Google thinks they own everything I don't care if Disney thinks they own everything I don't care if the Supreme Court thinks they own everything I don't care if Trudeau thinks he owns everything I don't care if the CBC thinks they own everything. I own everything. I'm giving you the land.

The land is yours. You see, in a very simple way, it's preparing us for this idea of God being almighty and owning the whole, all of the earth, that he would lead Abram to the center of the promised land where it's ruled by other people and paganism is celebrated. And God says, disregard these gods. I am the true God. The land is going to be given to you because it's mine to give, not theirs. But is Abram special? That was a bit of an aside. Look at verse eight.

From there, he moved to the hill country on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and A on the east. And there he built an altar to the Lord and called upon the name of the Lord. And Abram journeyed on, still going toward the Negev. And Abram sounds like just a very, very faith-filled, special type of guy. In fact, some of us might be saying, well, George, the problem I have is that I'm not Abram. I don't have that type of faith. I don't have that type of self-possession. My life is more fits and starts with more fits than starts.

I'm more the type of guy that I can take three steps forward. Yeah, but then I end up taking seven steps back. I'm the type of guy that if you play snakes and ladders, I'm always getting the thing that sends me backwards and very rarely climbing up. And so I can't relate to Abram. But we'll look what immediately happens right afterwards in verse 10. Now there was a famine in the land. So Abram went down to Egypt to sojourn there for the famine was severe in the land. When he was about to enter Egypt, just one moment, one moment. God has just given the promised land. Abram's having a hard time.

Abram says, I'm just going to trust my reasoning and thinking abilities to sort this out for myself. Abram says, I'm just going to trust my life. And he leaves the promised land. He gets frightened by his circumstances. And it gets worse. Verse 11, when he was about to enter Egypt, he said to Sarai, his wife, I know that you are a beautiful woman in appearance. And when the Egyptians see you, they will say, hmm, this is his wife. Then they will kill me, but they will let you live.

[32 : 47] Say you are my sister, that it may go well with me because of you, and that my life may be spared for your sake. Now just pause. This is never good advice.

Like don't... So Abram thinks he's going to solve this by his ability to deceive people. And in the process, he wants to pretend he's not married to his wife. But one moment, how's God going to make a mighty nation if he's not married? Like all of these promises, all of them just flee from his mind.

He doesn't consult God. He just depends upon his natural human reasoning. And look at verse 14, and when Abram entered Egypt, the Egyptians saw that the woman was very beautiful. And when the princes of Pharaoh saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh. And the woman was taken into the Pharaoh's house, which means his harem. Well, how is this plan going to end well for Abram? Like we might say, what were you thinking? I mean, actually, what were you not thinking?

Like, how did you actually think any of this was going to work out? And for her sake, he dealt well with Abram. And he had sheep and oxen, male donkeys, male servants, female servants, female donkeys, and camels. So Abram, with the consent of his wife, Sarah, the two of them come up with this plan. It ends up that Abram gets very rich, but she ends up in the Pharaoh's harem, and they're not in the promised land. But the Lord afflicted Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarah, Abram's wife. The Lord intervenes. So Pharaoh called Abram and said, what is this you have done to me? Why did you tell me that she was your wife? Why did you say she is my sister, so that I took her for my wife? Now then, here is your wife. Take her and go.

And Pharaoh gave men orders concerning Abram, and they sent him away with his wife and all that he had. Now, here's the thing. One of the things that you don't know in this text, and you know it from archaeology, in the Hebrew, if you go back to the bit just before chapter 12, and you look at the names, you can see that there's a connection to the moon god in all of them.

[35 : 07] God only blesses the unlikely, the unsuitable, and the unworthy. Abram was a moon god worshiper when God called him. A moon god worshiper. He wasn't like some profound, it wasn't as if God looked around and said, gosh, look at Abram. He's so spiritual, he's so profound, you know, he's so deep, you know, I just gotta have him on my team. No, it's not like that.

The thing about it is, and see, one of the persistent problems for us as Christians is, it's very hard for us to accept that Jesus knows the worst about us, and dies for us knowing the worst about us. But that's, remember, that's what we looked at last week. He died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures. In other words, he looked at me, and he looked at you, he saw the worst in us, and seen the worst in us, what it elicits out of him is love, and the love is not merited, it's not worthy, it's a pure, complete, and utter gift, and God, purely and utterly, out of his mercy and love and desire to give, he pours his love and his grace upon the unlikely, the unsuitable, and the unworthy. And that's what Abram's revealed to be. He's a worshiper of the moon when God calls him. He's a guy who's going to try to pretend that he's not married to his wife. He's a guy who's going to try to figure out, to pretend that he's not married to his wife, they're going to work it out together so they can make money, and they can be protected, and it's, and he's not listening to

God, he's not consulting God. He's not particular, and this is all, like, not, why is he, I mean, the other thing about it is, as if we didn't talk about it beforehand, but it's in the part before this, is that Abram's old, his wife, they've been married for many, many years, his wife is old, they haven't been able to have kids, they worship the moon, by their very nature that he's going to try to think of ways to lie and deceive, to get himself out of problems, he's going to forget what God has said, he's going to do it, he is completely and utterly unlikely, unsuitable, and unworthy of God's grace, as am I, and as are you. God never gives his grace to the suitable, the likely, or the worthy.

He only gives his grace to the unsuitable, the unlikely, and the unworthy, of which I am one. And so we see the very, very pattern of the rest of the scripture and the very gospel itself is set before us here in these very early words of the scriptures. I'd like you to stand.

Let's bow our heads in prayer. Father, we confess before you that we who are Christians, that we very, very quickly forget your scripture, and we imagine that there are things about us that are really worthy, that make you sort of need or have to give us grace, or have us on your team, or have us have you as your child, that there's just things within us, Father, that sort of just compel that, or that somehow, Father, that we easily fall into thinking that we've done some things for you that now put you in our debt, and then you need to reciprocate and give us some blessing. And Father, we confess that there's something deep within us after you have blessed us by giving us saving faith, that that's still there.

[38 : 58] And we ask, Father, that your Holy Spirit would gobs smack us with just the graciousness of grace, the depth of grace, the depth of your love, that you never are in our debt, that you never weigh our merits, that you are never in need, that we are always in need, that we are always in need of your love, we are always in need of your grace, we are always in need of your mercy.

And that to be your child is to learn to be on life support from you for the rest of our life, and that this is a good thing. Father, we ask that you bring home to us our profound need for grace.

And we ask, Lord, that you bring home to us ever more deeply our need to respond to what you are offering us, that you would help us respond, respond in a way that accepts your grace, that trusts you, that trusts you with our future, our present, our future.

And we give you thanks and praise for all that Jesus has done for us. We thank you for the way that Abraham has been used by you to be that first step that would lead to Christ, that would lead to us receiving grace.

And we ask that you make us deeply grateful and to trust you more and more, whether it's with our money, our sexuality, our time, our career, our past, our future, our place in culture, that you would help us to trust you.

[40 : 37] That Jesus is our Savior and our Lord, that he is our hope of glory. And we ask all these things in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen.