

Gospel Transformation

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[0 : 00] Father, we confess before you that sometimes your word just offends us, and we want to pretend that it doesn't, but it does.

Sometimes, Father, your word makes us proud when it should really be humbling us. And sometimes, Father, your word just makes us feel bad when it's actually very, very good news. Father, we need the help of your Holy Spirit that we might understand your word correctly. So we ask that the Holy Spirit would move at a very deep level of who we are so that we might, Father, enter into your word, and your word might enter into us, and in light of the gospel, that we might be changed more and more and more into the new creation that we will eventually be in fullness and glory.

And this we ask in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen. Please be seated. So one of the things I do sometimes when I get into conversations with people about the Christian faith, they find out I'm a Christian, at some point in time I might ask them if they actually own a Bible, if they'd be interested in reading the Bible, and sometimes they say, no, I don't have a Bible.

And I say, would you like it if I gave you a New Testament or a Gospel of John? And sometimes they say yes. And one of the things I like to do sometimes when I'm working on my sermon is I like to imagine what would happen if I discovered, let's say on Monday, that they actually had been reading the Bible by themselves, and they came to me.

[1 : 34] This actually did happen to me once about a year ago. They came to me and said, George, how come it says this? Like it was something about Jesus that said, I can't remember the text, but he said, this is really bloodthirsty.

And he was a bit shocked, and we ended up having a bit of a conversation about it. So I don't know how many of you caught what Ken said when he was reading from Ephesians 4, verse 17 and following. It'd be helpful if you get your Bibles out and look at it, Ephesians 4, 17 and following. But you can well imagine that if your non-Christian friends saw this, they might be a little bit bothered by it. And if you don't have your Bible, I'm just going to read it very, very quickly, just the first, the little hard bit, and then we'll talk about it.

And here's how it goes. Note what it says. Now this I say and testify in the Lord. And in the original language, this is like a solemn declaration. The word say, in some contexts, could be also translated as I decree.

Like if you were the emperor, I decree this. It's a solemn thing. It's not said flippantly. It's not like a put-down comment, snide, or anything like this. This is something very solemn.

[2 : 48] I solemnly say and testify in the Lord. Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do in the futility of their minds. Now just listen.

By the way, one of the reasons that what we're doing here is this. One of the things which some of you know, I was just in Israel and I came back. And one of the great privileges of this tour that I was able to be on in Israel is that we got to meet different Israeli officials and also some ordinary people. For instance, we had the privilege of going to an Orthodox Jewish home and seeing how they celebrate the Shabbat, the beginning of the Sabbath. But one of the things I noticed time and time again when I was speaking to Israelis, especially around problems, is they said this particular phrase, you got to see the world as it is, roll up your sleeves, and deal with it.

Like, isn't that good wisdom? See the world as it is, roll up your sleeves, and deal with it. Get down to it. And so it is with this text. It's very easy for us to quickly just go over it, hope that nobody really notices, not meditate upon it, but it's a very stark text.

And so what we're going to do is we're walking towards the text. We're going to camp in the text for a good part of the sermon, just trying to understand what it says and what it's not saying. So I'll

begin reading at verse 17 again.

[4 : 10] Now this I say in testifying the Lord. Remember, this is a solemn thing. It's to be read solemnly. That you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do. And Paul would be saying that anybody other than a Jewish person is a Gentile.

And many Christians would just see it as this is describing non-Christians. I'm going to comment on that in a moment, but that's how they would be heard at least on one level. That you must no longer walk, verse 17, and as the Gentiles do in the futility of their minds.

They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.

Now, aren't you glad you invited your non-Christian friend to church today? This would be such a good text for them to hear. It's a very, very powerful and stark text.

We're going to walk towards this. Now, the first thing you need to understand before I start to unpack it is this. It sounds like it's an us versus them statement, but it's not. If you understand it as an us versus them statement, you're going to misunderstand it.

[5 : 27] What Paul is doing is he's describing the baseline of every human mind. He is describing the baseline of the human mind for every human mind.

So the good news is this. He's not insulting non-Christians. He also is insulting everyone here in the room. He's insulting all of us. He's saying this is how the normal human mind works in these patterns.

And many of you would say, George, that doesn't help us at all. It just doesn't, in fact, seem true. It seems way, way, way too extreme. So let's just look at some of these phrases and think about it for a second and see if we actually think it's as extreme and as bad as it sounds.

Look at, we're not going to begin with futility. We're going to end with futility in verse 17. Let's look at the first phrase, they are darkened in their understanding. And the word understanding there could also, some of your words, your Bible, your Bibles have thoughts.

But the best word actually, the most literal word is mindset. That there's something about the actual mind itself and the way it's set that is darkened.

[6 : 40] Now, let me just ask you some thought experiments. How many of you look at things in the paper or things that are going on in community and you say to yourself, how can they not see that that is wrong?

Am I the only one? Everyone does it, right? How can they not see that that is wrong? And you know what? You can be absolutely guaranteed. I don't know what your political views are. I don't know what your views are on climate change.

I don't know who you voted for. But I can guarantee whatever your view is, if it was published, there'd be a whole pile of Canadians who would say, how can they not see that that is wrong? Right?

That's what we say about each other. How can they not see that that is wrong? And if you think about it for yourself, if you think back on your former way of thinking, I did a bit of a faux pas about a couple of months ago.

There's a neighbor of mine who goes to my old church. And I started to talk about somebody that I thought was dead. Okay? And one of the things I talked about, I was just sharing. I was just smiling.

[7 : 45] He's dead. I can say this thing about the guy in the past. And this guy in the past, this was in 1985 when I was just ordained. And I remember him going on this long rant. He said, I work in the computer business and I can tell you this.

No computer will ever be so portable and ever so fast and can handle so much information that it could ever be connected to a gun that would shoot down a missile. And he went on an hour-long rant about how stupid Reagan was and how stupid anybody was to think you'd ever have computers small enough, fast enough, powerful enough to shoot down a missile.

And I just shared that with a chuckle. And then the guy told me he's still alive. And then he said with a smile, I really look forward to telling him this story. Because it will make him very uncomfortable.

He was in the computer business, right? That's what he said. I'm in the computer business. I know no computer will ever get like that. Well, some of you are in the computer business. We don't make those types of claims because who knows what's going to happen. But here's the thing.

Remember I said, all of Canada we say, how could they not see that that was wrong? But if you think about yourself, think if somebody was to remind you of something that you said or believed a year ago, five years ago, 20 years ago, now you might say to yourself, I don't know how I couldn't see that that was wrong.

[9 : 04] What are you describing? A darkened mind. A darkened mind. In fact, just think about it for a second.

Imagine you meet somebody and they come up and they start gushing to you. Oh, you should meet this woman. You should meet this man. He's a teacher. And all of his teaching is light.

He is completely and utterly enlightened. Everything he sees, he sees clearly. What will every single one of us think? Nut job and cult, right?

What do we not believe? In a mind which is only light. I just proved it. So why are we bothered here? Let's look at the next one.

They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to their hardness of heart. So what that just said, if you unpack it, verse 18, we have a hard heart.

[10 : 03] And because of a hard heart, we have ignorance. And because of this ignorance that comes out of a hard heart, we're alienated from God and his life.

Does that sound extreme? Well, let me ask you this thought experiment. Imagine in a couple of years, human beings are able to land on Mars. And so they land on Mars, a big enough ship and a group of a team of astronauts, men and women, they get out and they have maybe, first they just walk around a little bit, but they unload some type of a rover that can move on the surface of Mars. And they hop in and the cameras are going and they're talking and everybody, like billions of people on Earth will be fixated with this when the day happens, right?

And so they go around a corner and they get to be able to look down a bit of a crevice, a valley, and on the bottom they see something that can travel on the surface of Mars.

And they can see that there's lights coming out of it. It means it has power and it's turned on. Now, if they said that, all of Earth would be riveted.

[11 : 17] And then if they go down and they see that there's this thing that can travel on Mars and it has obviously power and it's turned on, but there's nobody in it. Like every single one of us, we'd be worried about aliens.

Are they around the corner? Are they going to kill us? Are they going to eat us? Are they going to befriend us? It'd be all this thing. But imagine if a week afterwards NASA said, don't worry about it. That thing that we found, it happened by chance.

We figured out that there were some explosions and some windstorms on Mars. And a result of that, you have a rover with power turned on.

Who would believe them? Zero. Let me tell you. Let me tell you. The human cell is more complicated than that device and it got turned on by chance. Why do we think that one idea is absurd and the other is the thing you have to believe to enter into polite society?

Try being a politician in Canada that says you think that a cell could not just happen by itself. What Scheer is going through about abortion would be nothing compared to how everybody would hound them.

[12 : 29] You think that's too extreme? Imagine a second story. Jenny comes in on a morning into the office and she finds me dead on the ground.

And she calls, there's a pool of blood. She calls the police. They come. They discovered afterwards with an autopsy that somebody had broken my back and I was paralyzed.

And then they stabbed me several times and I bled to death. But, before I died, with the blood that was pooling from my chest, I write on the side, Bob Jones murdered me last night in my blood.

And I hope there's no Bob Jones here. I picked a name. Maybe I should have picked Frodo Baggins. I don't know. But then we'd know there's no Frodo Baggins. So, Bob Jones murdered me last night. And if in his defense, when the police go, they arrest Bob Jones, you know, and Bob Jones said, that blood, that writing, George didn't write it.

It just happened by chance. It's just the way the blood flowed. Who would believe it? But that simple message, Bob Jones murdered me, you know, whatever the date, is vastly simpler than DNA.

[13 : 43] By a huge order of magnitude. And DNA is just information, chemically put together. Why is it that we think, that we would not believe that Bob Jones killed me this evening, that that couldn't

happen by chance, that we believe DNA can happen by chance?

Is it possible that what we have is a hardness of heart that leads to ignorance, that means that we will not want to know the true and living God? Is it possible, in fact, that when the Bible says here they are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to their hardness of the heart, that we have hard hearts when it comes to God? And consider the next thing. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality. What does this mean here? Just think about this for a second.

And I'm sure this has happened to everybody here. But if you have any friends, if you have brothers and sisters, if you have any family, in fact, if you're anybody other than somebody who's lived in a test tube and behind some veil and never met a human being, at some point in time, one of these moments will come to you, your wife or your friend or your child will come to you and say, five years ago you did this and it hurt me unbelievably badly.

And you realize when you think about yourself. And they said, not only did it hurt me really badly what you did, it didn't seem to bother you at all.

[15 : 25] You just kept going on. You were so caught up with just doing your own thing, you never even noticed how deeply you hurt me. Every single one of us, if we haven't had that experience yet, just wait.

We get so caught up in pursuing our own pleasure, what pleases us, we don't realize the damage we might have just done to an important relationship.

What does that describe? That describes what the Bible just says here, isn't it? They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality. And let's look at the last one.

Greedy to practice every kind of impurity. Now, at the level of the original language, impurity here is not referring to sexual purity. It's referring to a relationship with God, the true and living God, the holy, good, only good, only loving, only truthful, only just, only merciful God.

And it's describing something here about the flow, the flow of our lives, so to speak. Human beings aren't static, we're in motion. And we're moving along a current.

[16 : 41] And what is part of the current that describes every human being? Well, a bit of a thought experiment. And you might not agree with it, but I think you will if you think about it.

All of a sudden, I said, I think it would be a great moral evil if you touched one of those bronze door opening things underneath that exit sign over there.

And if I was to go on and on and on about how great a moral evil it would be and you should never do it, what would all of you want to do? Touch it. Touch it. So, you said, why? Because the fact of the matter is, is that within every single human being there is a flow.

there is a flow to do things to say to God, you're not the boss of me. You're not the boss of me.

You're only the boss of me to the extent that I allow you to be the boss of me. And that describes every human mind. So all of a sudden, you see, when we Christians are afraid of the word of God and run from it, we realize, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, one second.

[17 : 52] The Bible here is describing every human mind, including you and me. Including you and me. Now, what about that first phrase way back up in verse 17, which sort of launched all of this?

Now I say this, and I have to watch my time. Now I say this, now this I say, verse 17, and testifying the Lord that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do in the futility of their minds.

And I describe to you how what the Bible is doing here is it's describing the baseline of every human mind. It's not an us or them statement. The other thing you need to understand here is this, that the statement, and some of you who are theologically trained know that what we see here is the doctrine of total depravity, by the way.

And what this doctrine is saying here, especially if you look at the rest of the Bible, is it's not saying absolute futility, but true futility.

It's not describing minds as being completely and utterly broken. If that was the case, we couldn't have any communication. Paul couldn't write and we couldn't read. But it's saying that there's something in every human mind which is broken, that's bent, that doesn't work right.

[19 : 00] It would be as if you went hunting and you didn't realize that the rifle was just not actually straight, and every time you lined it up to shoot, it always kept missing. But you just never try to adopt.

It's always just missing. Or maybe it's a rifle that every time, even when you adjust this. Anyway, I don't want to forget, the mind is bent. And so here it is with futility. And every single human being is

touched by it.

And part of the reason that this flow that I just described about wanting to show God that he's not the boss and why this flow doesn't completely and utterly unmake us is that the rest of the Bible teaches us that there's this thing called common grace, that God spares us from the full results of our decision to say to God, you are not my boss.

I am the boss. Or this, the company is the boss. Or this ideology is the boss. Or money is the boss. Or my wife is the boss. Or my husband is the boss. Or my kids are the boss.

And I'll only acknowledge your authority to the extent that I allow you after I serve these other types of things. And the fact that that doesn't completely and utterly unmake us is described in other parts in the Bible as the doctrine of common grace, that God restrains things that go on within us.

[20 : 13] But what about futile? Well, it's another topic of a conversation. But what this is implying here is that there is a true meaning to life.

There's a true end to life. And the Bible is telling you very solemnly and truly that there actually is the possibility of real meaning to life.

At Dig and Delve, I got asked, I got to do a presentation just last weekend on Friday night. It was on intelligent design and science and whether science is leading us more and more to believe that you have to have a designer to account for what they're discovering about reality.

And I got to do one of the presentations, the opening presentation to set the stage. And they ended up inviting me to be on the panel. And one of the questions that came to me was, isn't it the case that lies sometimes lead you to the truth and that lies are important to knowing the truth?

What do you think about that? And my response was, do you want me to lie or tell you the truth?

And I mention this because it's sort of important, is that what the Bible is saying here, and it's beyond the scope of my sermon, is that there really is meaning to life.

[21 : 31] It's not just self-declared, because there really is a God that does exist, who has created us as human beings for a purpose, and our chief end, the true meaning of our life, is to know God and enjoy him forever and bring him glory.

We were made for this. What about futility? Here's the thought experiment. Imagine in the spring, you go up into the Ottawa Valley somewhere, and you go to a river where it's dammed, and if you know anything about dams, sometimes the dams have runoff areas off to the side.

And you go, and you go the day before, and you see that there's people camping there. And you say to them, tomorrow at this time, they're going to open some floodgates because of the waters rising, there's going to be a runoff here, and if you don't get out of this place, you're going to drown. The water will come through with a great torrent, and will overwhelm you. But in the meantime, between now and then, they don't listen, they don't acknowledge. In fact, what happens is, one of them designs an app that if it ever got released, would make a million dollars, a five million dollars, ten million dollars, lots of money.

Another person designs a poet, a poem, that if in fact you were able to show the poem, it would end up being something that would end up being put in school textbooks. It's so brilliant. Another person designs a dance.

[22 : 53] Another person designs some new camping equipment. Another person solves a problem on their computer, a mathematical equation, that had never been solved. They do all of these things, and then the next day, the water comes, but they don't actually leave, and the water comes and kills them all.

Now, they've been absolutely brilliant. They've been creative in dance, in art, in technology, in math, and all of those things, but what would you say about their thinking? It was futile.

It was futile. They all died. They just died. It was futile. And in fact, it might be that there was somebody in the room who was fairly average IQ with their Down syndrome kid, but they took the warning and got up out of the thing, and they're not as high an IQ, but what would you say about their thinking?

It wasn't futile. They're still alive. They heard it, and that's what the Bible is saying here. You see, if you look at it, the Bible is describing the possibility of real meaning, and the Bible's description is true.

And here's the thing. Why is it to read this and hear that it's true? Why does it depress people? Why does it depress people? Why does it depress people?

[24 : 08] You see, like, part of the thing is that the fact that it depresses us both says something about our pride, but it also says something about our longings.

Our pride says we don't want to acknowledge that there's darkness or callousness or impurity within us, but it also, at the same time that it reveals our pride, it also reveals something about our longings, that surely our minds are meant for more than this.

Surely our minds are meant to be healthy and responsive and filled with light and longing for light and pure.

that this text opens something about our longings and our pride.

So what does the Bible say about this? Let's look what Paul moves to very next. That's verses 20 to 24. And by the way, as you turn to this in the Bible, here's a little bit of a geek moment, okay?

[25 : 24] Those of you who are geeks, timeout, geek timeout moment, okay? Okay, you can go to, those who aren't geeks, you can go to sleep for about a minute.

I'll tell the geeks this geek moment. The way that this letter is structured is very, very interesting. Verses 17 to 24 basically sets up the framework to understand all moral and spiritual exhortation that makes up the rest of the letter.

From verse 25 to the end of chapter 6, Paul is going to talk about forgiveness, language, spiritual things, marriage, relationships, parents and children. And in a sense, if you were going to try to organize it, you could say that over here there's this basic framework and then he gives a whole pile of, for instance, that flow from it.

And so in a sense, every time you looked at any moral thing, spiritual warfare, anything, you could say, okay, let's go back to this. This is the framework to understand it. Ah, here's a, for instance, end of geek moment, back to the text.

So what does Paul do? Let's look at what he does. And at first, it's going to seem like it's not very much. But that's because often we don't think the gospel is very much. You see, because we are addicted to the type of immoral advice that says, try harder, improve your education.

[26 : 41] If you just know the truth, you'll do the right thing. If you just get a better willpower and you try harder, that that will be good. Where our other type of moral advice will be, you know, to appeal to our pride.

Like, just think how bad people will think of you if you don't do this. Or the other thing that we'll do is, well, our moral improvement and moral exhortation often comes around to a type of bribery. If you give to people, if you give more money to the church, you'll feel better.

So give more money to the church, you'll feel better. It's appealing to your own self-interest. And often, we're so used to thinking about it in those types of terms where if you can't make it, fake it.

Like, you know, we're used to those types of things and when we actually see what the Bible speaks in light of the profound insight into how we actually function, we're disappointed at first.

But it's wisdom. Listen to what it says. Verse 20. But this is not, but that is not the way you learned Christ.

[27 : 44] Assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him as the truth is in Jesus. To put off your old self which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds and to put on the new self created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

So what's Paul saying here? What's going on? Early on in the book of Ephesians in chapter 2 Paul uses a very, very graphic image to describe what conversion is and what it means to become a Christian.

He says in a sense you want to understand what the gospel is and how you become a Christian go to a funeral home and if you go to a funeral home you find dead bodies and what you have to understand is that apart from Christ you're like a dead body.

How good are dead bodies at seeking God? Well, dead bodies can't do anything they're dead. So how do you understand how conversion works? What you have to understand in conversion is that God calls you and not only does God choose you and call you but God gives you the power to make you alive to respond to his call and as you respond to it he makes you fully alive.

You have the power to respond to God the same as a dead body has the power to run a marathon. None. You are completely and utterly dependent upon God.

[29 : 18] Paul uses a similar type of analogy here with us. He's just described how our minds don't work at least not in terms of any ultimate sense.

There's something just bent and broken with them. And so he said here's the power it's very similar if you go back later on look at 2 Corinthians 4 verses 1 to 6 it's a very similar type of thing and this is

how the image goes.

Look again at verse 20 but that is not the way you learned Christ assuming that you heard about him and were taught in him as the truth is in Jesus.

And this is one of those phrases that in English is very, very, very, very dense. It's really like you know how if a kid draws you a picture it's full of scribbles and it looks just cute because it's a kid but most of the lines don't really matter and they don't really illustrate anything.

This is more like some of those like Chinese and Buddhist drawings where there's just a very small number of lines but every line is very, very important because there's just a few of them and it shows the real skill of the artist and that's what Paul is doing here.

[30 : 26] What he's doing here is he's saying is this George I have just described your mind and one day in the midst of your mind being the way your mind is the message of Christ came not what was this message of Christ this message of Christ is that God saw George your unbelievable need and your inability to unbend your mind and fix yourself he saw the direction and flow of your heart and your inability to fix that yourself he saw you in your weakness he saw you at your worst and God's response to that is love he loves you and so Jesus comes and lives the life that you could never live he dies a death in your place he rises from the dead he defeats that which keeps you separated from me burying it in his person he defeats death his perfect light all of what is going to be now described you hear this message and this message pierces your darkened mind not because of the power of my not because my mind is somehow special that I have an IQ that you don't

I have an aptitude that you don't know the power comes from the proclamation of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord which is humbly shared in my case by an ex-drug addict who shared that with me in a way that pierced me pierced me and that message comes to our darkened mind and what happens I my I'm I respond with yes and he becomes my Savior and Lord and how can you describe what has just now happened when I in my darkened mind have heard the gospel and it pierces me not by my power but by the power of the gospel the love the power of love the power of mercy the power of grace the power of goodness and it pierces me and how can I understand what happens well the Bible says

George here's how you can understand what just happened the light of the gospel comes in and Jesus takes your old existence in Adam and he takes it off puts it away he said your old existence as Adam I paid for that on the cross and then you move to the third image and George there's you you're naked you're shivering you're pitiable I put on this new life this new life that is eternal that begins to you begin to experience eternity now but it's it's a new it's a new putting on that's my perfect fulfillment of life my perfect relationship with the father that now stands for you I died for the old thing that came on me that's why it's off of you and what you now have is my standing before God and I put that on you and my standing before you and this new clothing is preparing you to live the way that I always designed creation to live and is preparing you for the new heaven and the new earth and I put that on you

I put that on your mind and the in between thing is it's not just that I took this off and I put this on and then off I go and do some more fun things no the very very center of who you are the very center of your spirit the center of your mind there's now like an IV and my life and my wisdom and my mind is coming into you every day until you die and see me face to face or I come again and you see me face to face and then there is no need for an IV because you become a beautiful cup that I will fill with my love and my life and my truth and my goodness and my justice for all eternity and it will always be new and it will be always fresh and it will never come to an end and that is your destiny now in

Christ that's the image so how does this help us in the moral life you see here's the thing look again at verse verse 24 created and put on the new self created after the likeness of God and true righteousness and holiness from our point of view I become converted from God's point of view he creates me and you and new a new creation I've used up my time how does this matter how does this help us here's how it helps us when I look within my life and I think about whether I'm doing bad things or whether I'm doing good things sometimes I think there is good fruit in my life

[36 : 02] I'm not as snarky as I used to be I think I don't get angry as quickly as I used to and I'm not going to start going through all my vices by the way okay you know those things that George you still got a lot of work to do in this and this and this and this but here's the thing when I look within what happens is this I either get filled with pride because I imagine that there's lots of good

fruit or I get filled with despair because there's not much good fruit or I pretend and deny as if there is lots of good fruit when everybody around me knows that there isn't see what happens to human beings is this it's all part of how our minds are bent having good things that we accomplish becomes my hope my identity my fuel but here's the problem

I and you and I will never have enough good fruit in your life to silence your conscience or the devil or the world isn't that true unless all you do is pretend deny and pretend deny and pretend deny and pretend and everybody else is holding their nose like this when they're around you but you're denying and pretending denying and pretending but when I look into my life and I want to have the good accomplishments I want to have the good fruit and my hope is built on that my identity is based on that my fuel to do other good things is built on that but the fact of the matter is that my good fruit there's never enough to silence my conscience to silence the devil and to silence the world what am I to do what happens every time we do communion

Jesus is about to go to the cross and his disciples and his 20,000 foot in the air understanding of what's about to happen and he gives them a very simple habit and discipline to help them learn how to live their life in light of what he's about to accomplish and what does he say my body given for you do this in remembrance of me the blood of a new covenant a new way of relating that I have established it can be for you this is the blood of the new covenant do this in remembrance of me every morning I wake up and I can choose to forget I can just act as if nothing has ever happened of importance in my life and what happens is I walk out of the baseline of my mind but what do I do as a human being I'm trying to deal with moral things I'm trying to deal with the end of the day it's not just that the gospel

I put my faith in Jesus to save me I need to put my faith in the gospel every day to live I cannot say to you that Christ has put off the old self and put on the new self and that I am being renewed every day by the Holy Spirit and by God's word on the basis of the fruit of my accomplishments if I try to tell you that and if I believe that for myself I will be crushed I will die I cannot do that it does not work it doesn't work for you I believe that Christ made me right with him and I need to hear that gospel over and over and over again I can say to the Lord Lord my fruit is not showing that the old self is gone you have clothed me with a new one and I have been renewed by your Holy Spirit but I believe in Jesus I believe he died on the cross

I believe he rose I believe he came and gave me life I believe his light came into who I am I believe that that is true I believe I have an old self and a new I believe that that is true I need to hear the gospel what happens when we start to believe the gospel and with gospel comes more and more real to us as we remind ourselves of it as we preach the bible about it and as we understand that it's Christ who takes away my old self that it's Christ who gives me the new self that it's Christ who gives me the Holy Spirit that comes into my whole myself there's two things that come the first thing is I can look at my life and my day and I can see the world as it is and I have a security and a hope to roll up my sleeves and in the power of Christ to deal with it amen remembering the gospel can roll up my sleeves see the world as it is and say

[41 : 16] Jesus help me to deal with it the other thing that happens as the gospel becomes more real to our hearts and to our minds is that we can work out a gratitude a security that comes in our identity in Jesus a gospel based identity that we can work out of gratitude that means I don't have to deny I don't have to pretend I don't have to be proud of my accomplishments why Jesus pierced the gospel pierced my darkened mind and when the Holy Spirit helped me to say yes Christ took off my old self Christ puts on the new self Christ renews me day by day all praise and glory to him please stand Christians remember the gospel remember it when you gather in your small groups remember it in your families remember it as you face your day remember it as you celebrate accomplishments remember it as you deal with bad news help us to pray for me that

I remember it that I can help you to remember it that you can help me to remember it Christians remember the gospel and if you're here and you've never received the gospel friend today is the day you can become a new creation the gospel has been proclaimed say yes say yes say yes in your own words say yes let's bow our heads in prayer father thank you so much for Jesus thank you so much father that you never your love is unending your love is unending you saw us as we really are and still you loved us and sent your son we thank you father that there is nothing in us that will be of a surprise to you you saw us perfectly

Jesus knew us perfectly when he died for us on the cross the Holy Spirit knows us better than we know ourselves we thank you father for your grace your mercy the power of the gospel we thank

you that the gospel came to us and that you work within us that we might say yes and father we ask that the Holy Spirit might move and might empower upon us as individuals as friends as couples as families as a congregation that we might remind each other the gospel and be reminded of the gospel and that we see ourselves in the world and that which draws us forward to live in a way that is good for people proclaims the gospel and brings you glory and all God's people said Amen