

Capture the Flag

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 17 February 2019

Preacher: Rev. George Sinclair

[0 : 00] Father, we ask that you just pour out the Holy Spirit deeply upon us, that you might bring these words to our heart. And Father, you know our real hearts, not the imaginary hearts that we think we have, not the imaginary or fake hearts and fronts that we present to other people.

Father, you know those things within us that we're afraid of. You know those things that we desire strongly, even lust after. Father, you know what's really going on inside each one of us.

And so, Father, we thank you that you see the real me, the real each one of us, and that you love the real me, the real each one of who we are.

And you pour out the Holy Spirit upon who we really are and minister to us as we really are. So, Father, we thank you for this, and we ask that your Holy Spirit would come with power.

And all these things we ask in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen. Please be seated. So, speaking of what we're really like and what goes on in our hearts, I have a bit of a confession to make to you.

[1 : 11] So, no surprise, I'm working on my sermon in a coffee shop, and it's a coffee shop in Centertown on Friday morning. I was there for a while working.

And at around 1230, I'm walking down Bank Street in Centertown towards the office and towards the first one of my afternoon meetings. And my heart was really heavy, actually, as I was walking, because I thought to myself, we're going to be looking at John chapter 16, I thought to myself, like, what on earth, like, why would any non-Christian come to hear about this?

I'm just being honest. Like, why would any non-Christian want to come and spend some time looking at John 16? You know, I invite people to come to the church, and I think to myself, what if a couple of them came today?

And we're looking at John 16. And they'd probably just shake their head, like, there's nothing in there. I mean, it might be interesting if you're a Christian, but there doesn't seem to be anything like that in me. And it was really weighing on my heart that that's sort of how I was thinking about the text.

And I guess indirectly, I'm complaining to God as well, right? True confession. And so, you know, in heaven, I'll find out that around 12.30 on Friday, one of you were praying for me, that it didn't come from me.

[2 : 35] But I felt this thing, well, I need to pray about that. I need to not only complain about this. I need to not complain about it to myself, but just say it to God. Like, God, like, what on earth am I supposed to do with this type of text?

Like, I could preach it to Christians, and I could give a lecture on it, but what on earth am I supposed to say? Like, why on earth would a non-Christian want to hear this text? And I start to pray this as I'm walking down Bank Street, you know, on a Friday afternoon in Centre Town in Ottawa.

And one of the very first things that came into my mind was it's as if God almost rebuked me, but in a gentle way. And he said, George, what do you mean that there's nothing in this text that connects to non-Christians?

And then I start to remember what's in the text. And in the text, it talks about being excluded from important social institutions.

And I'm thinking to myself, good grief, we have the Me Too movement, the Black Lives Matter movement. We have all sorts of people in Canada complaining in the First Nations about the demotion of the attorney, you know, the, oh, what's her name now?

[3 : 44] It's gone from me. You know who I mean. Her being demoted and put into Veterans Affairs. And here this text is going to talk about exclusion from important social institutions.

The text is going to talk about religiously motivated and justified killing. And you can hardly read a paper for a week without seeing about that there's something going on somewhere in the world and even in North America where people are killing their kids for honor reasons and shame.

And the text talks about sorrow and it talks about right and wrong. And it talks about self-justification. And it talks about how people judge things.

And it talks about the importance of truth and the importance of lies. And it talks about weeping. And it talks about lamenting. And it talks about joy. And it talks about childbirth. And it talks about anguish.

And it talks about rejoicing. And it talks about love. And it talks about hiding and being scattered. and it talks about peace and it talks about politically expedient murder and political show trials and all these things start to go through my head and I think to myself, well, God, I guess you're right.

[4 : 58] Like maybe this text does touch the real world. I mean, that's all in John 16. Everything I just said is in John 16. Like I didn't add something. So then I start to puzzle over the text and what on earth I'm going to say.

And I, you know, sometimes when you watch movies about the, you know, like Star Wars or Star Trek, you'll see aliens with four arms. So I'm going to do four on other hands.

You have to be an alien to do all four of the other hands because there's going to be four on other hands. You see, on one hand, this text really does talk about the world that we actually live in all the time, even in Canada, which we might think is one of the best countries in the world.

We might say that we're way better than the Democratic Republic of Congo or some other place. But the fact of the matter is, is that, I mean, we're better in some ways economically, but there's all sorts of other things about our country that's wrong.

And this Bible text is actually talking about all sorts of really important things. On the other hand, you could say that the problem that, like, people have are that, like, if there's some non-Christians who've come for a variety of reasons, maybe because you're on a spiritual quest, maybe because it's an assignment at school, maybe because you were dragged here, you know, whatever.

[6 : 23] On the other hand, it could seem like this is, like, not a good text to talk about the real world because in some ways it sounds a little bit about, like, a horror movie because it's going to talk about a world where there's a devil and the devil is described as the ruler of this world.

And that sounds a little bit like a horror movie. You know, on the other hand, like, with that still hand, I'm still on that hand. And on that hand, horror movies are really popular and lots of people, in fact, believe that demons exist.

It's not unusual to see people in coffee shops and others that wear talismans to repel evil spirits.

So, in fact, a text about the reality of the devil, it might exclude some people, but for other people, it's talking about something that, in fact, matches their experience and their fears.

On the other hand, though, it sounds a little bit like the world of those religious fundamentalist crazies that are so politically incorrect that all the way through the text, it talks about God as Father. And, George, don't you know that I've had an abusive father or somebody else might say, I've spent my whole life trying to get under the foot of my dad, get his voice out of my head because he was such a bad dad.

[7 : 40] And, George, why are you so stuck on using a text that talks about God as Father? That just sounds like the worst type of religious fundamentalism. And on the other hand, well, actually, if you could put up the first point, Andrew, and the first point is just the last verse in chapter 16, verse 33.

If we're honest, a text like this sounds like something a crazy person would say, right? Just before I, well, in fact, I'll read it right now.

What the text says, and I've used it at the net version of the Bible, which is a really good version of the Bible, by the way, I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace in the world. You have trouble and suffering, but take courage. Take courage. I am victorious over the world. It's Jesus speaking.

I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace in the world. You have trouble and suffering, but take courage. I am victorious over the world. And right in the context of the book and this book is written by an eyewitness and he wrote the book while lots of eyewitnesses and earwitnesses of Jesus were still alive and they could have said, no, no, no, no, no, no, that's not what he said.

[9 : 01] This book is written by an eyewitness and Jesus says this just before he's captured, just before all of his disciples run away, just before he is unjustly accused and just before he's unjustly condemned as guilty and just before he is declared to be guilty purely and utterly for reasons of political expediency because the Roman ruler knew that he was innocent and he's found guilty purely and utterly to score political points and just before he's whipped and beaten and just before he's crucified and just before he dies he says he says I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace in the world you have trouble and suffering but take courage

I am victorious over the world. and if we are honest this is complete and utter crazy talk but here's the problem with this nothing about if you read the biography of Jesus and you read any one of the four ancient biographies of Jesus at no point in time does he actually come across as crazy.

I mean we all know crazy right? I mean you're in a church in downtown Ottawa just go for a walk down Rito Street you will meet all sorts of crazy people and some of you have been in move-in and you live right amongst crazy people and some of us struggle with mental illness and I'm not saying this to stigmatize mental illness but you know we have face-to-face or maybe even family relations with people who go off their meds and they talk like crazy people but Jesus is not there's you just can't there's this huge disconnect between crazy talk like this and the fact that there's nothing else about the way he speaks that makes him seem like he's crazy there's this profound disconnect to which you know I say the only reason any of us would be reading these biographies about Jesus is because the resurrection changes everything like the resurrection changes everything the death of Jesus on one hand we know from a spiritual perspective changes everything but from a worldly perspective the Romans crucified

I don't know 100,000 people they crucified tens of thousands of people there'd be no real interest in reading a biography of somebody who ends up being falsely accused and crucified but the resurrection changes everything if the resurrection actually happened and there really is good evidence for it like there really is good evidence for it if the resurrection happened then that means that most Canadians think they live in the real world but they don't and I'm not saying that to insult anybody like most Canadians it's funny on one hand we think we live in the real world yet a lot of what we think of as the real world we get from watching movies and videos I just the other day I finished a novel by a Greek American I'm going to pronounce his name incorrectly Pelicanos something like that he's written a lot of novels and he's done some very good work in the medium of TV and shows and I said to my wife after I'd read about a third of the book

I said this guy's the most amazing writer in the world for one particular thing you know what's so shocking about him people go to church in his book like just think about that if you watch most American things you would not think anybody in North America goes to church that nobody in North America reads the Bible that nobody in North America prays but that's just wrong and I'm reading this book and it's filled like it has you know it has cross dressers it has thieves it has hoodlums it has gay people and it has people who go to church and people who read the Bible and people who pray and I said to Louise like this is the first novel I've read in five years that actually describes the real world like what America's actually like you know including the drug dealer who goes to church on Sunday you know I mean it's just it's the real world and most of us think we're living in the real world but we don't if the resurrection actually happened in 2004 some of you have heard a version of this story before it's a true story 2004 there was this couple and they decided at the

[13 : 56] I think it was like the second week of August that they wanted to go see a movie and that summer there were two movies there was a movie that came out in July I think I hope I have this the order right and the movie that had come out in July was Will Smith the movie starring Will Smith called iRobot did like 350 million dollars worth of business or something like that iRobot and then in early August a movie starring Tom Cruise came out called Collateral very good movie if you like those types of movies Tom Cruise plays a bad guy who sort of gets a cab driver to drive him around while he kills people not the cab driver Tom Cruise murders people while the cab driver drives him around and so this couple true story this couple they're going to the movie theater and the guy says to the girl like which movie would you like to see and she says I'd like to see both of them but you know I'd rather see the Tom Cruise movie but I'll see either of them so she's not really paying any attention the guy pays the tickets they go into the movie and halfway through the movie she leans over to her boyfriend and says this is a really weird

Tom Cruise movie like when's he going to show up and he leans back to her and said we're watching iRobot with Will Smith we're watching iRobot with Will Smith she spent half the movie

thinking it was a Tom Cruise movie wondering why nothing made sense because iRobot said in the future with robots that try to take over the world and the Tom Cruise movie is said I think it's in LA in modern times and you know the fact of the matter is is that one of the reasons that the world doesn't make sense to most Canadians where they take refuge in the manufactured real world of Hollywood is they think they're in one movie but it's actually a different movie and we can only say that if the resurrection actually happened if Jesus really did rise from the dead then what Jesus is doing here when he speaks is reminding us you and I who spend our whole week we read the newspapers well I mean maybe one or two of us newspapers are these things made out of paper that they used to read like a hundred years ago but where you look at newspapers online and YouTube and Netflix and movies and TV and all that and we live that whole week and one of the reasons that church is so important is that we come together to be reminded about what the real world is that's actually what church should be is where we are reminded oh yes in the real world in the real world in the real world not the world of Globe and Mail editorials and CBC News but in the real world there is a God who does exist in the real world that God has revealed himself through the scriptures but preeminently he has revealed himself in the person of his son in the real world he has revealed himself most fully by dying on a cross and it is precisely by his death upon the cross and his resurrection that the glory of God and the love of God is most fully and perfectly revealed and that's the real world and the wonderful thing about this text because what's going to happen immediately after this we will look at this over the next couple of weeks is that we over John records for us how Jesus prays not only over the disciples that are in front of him but how he prays over you and me and he prays a prayer of consecration over us but what we're hearing here from Jesus and what we see in this quote is that if Jesus really did die upon the cross and he really did rise from the dead then the justice of this world is judged and the religion of this world is judged and the spirituality of this world is judged and we human beings are judged and for a brief moment we are reminded of the reality of the fact that every single person will die and death appears to win and in this text it is not about how great and glorious we are but it is that Jesus has conquered all of the injustice all of the false religion all of the lies and he has conquered death itself and he reaches across eternity to human beings ordinary human beings like you and me and says that if you put your faith and trust in me you will share in my victory you ordinary people like you and me will share in my victory just before we start to read this text because we are actually going to read it because it's at the end of the day all I'm doing is helping us to understand the text but it's more important that you remember the text than you remember what I said because the text is God's word my words are my words just one other thing about the text which makes it very hard for us to understand even when we look at this text you know I have told you these things so that in me in me you may have peace in the world you have trouble and suffering but take courage what does that take courage I am victorious over the world part of the problem we have with reading the text when we read it is that we all week we have two different basic songs playing in our heads and partially it will connect to political differences amongst us by the way those of us more on the left our favorite song is we shall overcome we shall overcome we shall overcome someday with the emphasis on we and those of us who are more on the right we sing I shall overcome I shall overcome I shall overcome someday but those are sort of the two basic narratives that we or I will overcome it's viewed as immature to have somebody else overcome for you we all sort of understand that there's some times in our life when things are just completely and utterly chaotic and terrible in our life and we just want somebody to come and rescue us but once we're rescued we want to be able to go back to singing we shall overcome or I shall overcome because that's the song of the world and it's immature to live your life as if somebody else will overcome but you see the problem with this text is once again this text is talking about the real world the real world where people die the real world where people have trouble and sorrow the real world where there is injustice the real world that we actually live in and at the heart of this real world entering into the real world is learning to sing a very different type of song worthy is the lamb that was slain worthy is the lamb that conquered the grave worthy worthy worthy worthy is the lamb that was slain to receive power and wealth and riches and glory he is the one who's conquered he is victorious and my victory comes not in being who I am but in who he is and having my hand in the hand of the one who is victorious and so it is that I learn some other song

I surrender all I surrender all all for thee my precious savior I surrender all and the funny thing about this text as we're now about to read it is that when we actually the thing about Jesus is that as we listen to this the text the text is all talking about how Jesus is the savior but and we're to trust in him

that our peace and our courage comes in him but if you look at the text again it's when we acknowledge that he is victorious over the world that he wants us to have courage to face life he wants us to have courage to face education he wants us to have courage to face our debts he wants us to have courage to face our problems he wants us to have courage to face those huge things that we have to face in our lives it's this funny funny thing is and it's not funny because it's the real world because in the real world, I'm a creature and God is God.

[22 : 50] And God is the one who's created all things. And God is not a distant God off snoring or in the bathroom or doing something different while the world moves on. But in the real world, God is active and present and hidden and moving towards its end.

And he takes human beings like you and me, ordinary, fallen, fallible, dying human beings like you and me. And he makes us his children and he helps us to share in the victory of Jesus.

And as we listen to the words of Jesus, it's all about how you go and how you do and how you go and how you do. You see, it's this very odd truth.

It isn't that the Bible teaches us that we should always be bowing to other people as if we shouldn't be doormats and everybody else has to be taller than us. It's this profound, continual spiritual truth that when we bow to Jesus, we are taller in our day-to-day lives, but not taller in a way that will mean that we oppress, but that we bless.

Taller in a way that means that we don't bow down to evil or to lies, but we stand straight and speak truth to the lie. Because that's how Jesus saves us to be, to be more fully human.

[24 : 06] So let's look very briefly at the text. Turn in your Bibles to John chapter 16. John chapter 16. And here's how the text begins.

Remember, he's been talking for chapter 13, 14, 15. He's talked about a variety of things. 13, about how he cleans them and the shock about the fact that they're going to die, that one of them has betrayed him.

He shocks them by saying he's going to leave and they can't go where he's going. He shocks them by saying Peter's going to betray him. In chapter 14, he primarily talks about comforting his disciples because of that bad news.

John 15, he talks about understanding what it means to be in union with him and how out of union with him, we have the basis to have communion with him and that fruit will flow into our lives.

And now he continues to teach and exhort us to move forward. And here's how he begins verse one. I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away. They will put you out of the synagogues.

[25 : 06] Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God. And they will do these things because they have not known the Father nor me. But I have said these things to you that when their hour comes, you remember, you may remember that I told them to you.

Now just sort of pause. It begins with a very stark motive. And you can already see it. Remember I said how it talks about the real world, the real world of religiously motivated killing. This is the real world, folks.

This is the real world. Religiously motivated violence and extremism which the Bible here, Jesus condemns unequivocally.

Anybody who does that doesn't know the Father or me. Period. Exclamation mark. No happy face. Period and exclamation.

Now here's one more thing. And in some ways, I'm going to give you, I'm going to bring out seven, just very, very brief. I'm just going to read the text. Basically, the sentence will be self-explanatory. But here's the thing that will start to confuse us a little bit as we read the text.

[26 : 16] When I was a kid, when I was a kid, like, I don't know how old I was, but when I was a kid, I loved playing hide and seek. And in my neighborhood, by coincidence, in the houses, about two or three houses either way, there happened to be all kids roughly my age, like within, you know, in the age of my sister and my brother and me.

And on summer nights, when there was no school the next day, one of the things that we loved to do after dark was play hide and seek. And I think about it now because we just ran into any old neighbor's property.

We had some type of rule that you couldn't go, like, beyond, you know, whatever, you know, Zelda's house that way and you couldn't go beyond, you know, Friedrich's house that way or whatever it

was. But here it's dark and we're just running into our neighbor's backyards and their bushes and there was never any complaint about it.

The world was different. I was just thinking about that when I was preparing to the sermon. That's really weird. Anyway, there you go. It was just a different neighborhood with kids. Maybe it was because it was a Jewish neighborhood, all Jewish.

I was the only, my family was the only Gentile family in our street and Jewish people love kids. I don't know. Maybe that's the reason why. I love playing hide and seek. And later on, when I was a kid, I'd never heard of the game Capture the Flag.

[27 : 24] But when my own kids were a certain age, one of the things they loved to play was Capture the Flag. And if we brought other people over who had kids and we had a huge front yard at the time, we lived just outside of CARP in the country and one of the things they loved to play was Capture the Flag.

Now here's the thing. Here's the thing. If we think we're playing hide and seek and you're giving people advice about how to hide, that's one thing.

But if you're playing Capture the Flag, and those of you who don't know what these games are, you can talk to somebody, a younger person, and they'll tell you what the games are. But if you're playing Capture the Flag, it's a very different set of rules.

You give different encouragements to play Capture the Flag rather than playing hide and seek where you're always hiding. Okay? And what Jesus is talking about here is Capture the Flag, not Hide and Seek. That's what he's talking about.

Jesus isn't saying, listen to my words, I'm going to tell you how to hide. No. Listen to me, I'm going to tell you how to capture the flag. I renamed the sermon.

[28 : 26] The bulletin has one name for the sermon. If you go online later on, the sermon's name is Capture the Flag. And the seventh sermon, just little things, the rest of it will all be very obvious.

It'll be very, very quick. But Jesus is giving us advice about how you capture the flag, not how to hide. Could you put up the first point, Andrew? So all of my points are going to begin the same way. As you go, as you go forward, always remember. As you go forward, always remember that belonging to Jesus may cost you your life.

That's what Jesus just said. Always remember, as you go forward, that belonging to Jesus may cost you your life. These will all be available online if you can't get them down now.

And so, that's how he continues to go. Remember, this is all advice about how to play Capture the Flag, not about how to hide when you're playing hide and seek. Verse, the next part, 4b of chapter 16.

[29 : 27] I did not say these things to you from the beginning because I was with you. But now I am going to him who sent me. And in other words, he's going back to God. He's going to the Father. The Father had sent him.

And none of you asks me, where are you going? They did ask him earlier, but they haven't persisted in asking because in the Irish expression, they've been gobsmacked. And they're sort of like the deer in the headlight and they don't know what to say.

But, verse 6, but because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. This is really important. Listen to this. Nevertheless, remember, he's telling them that he's leaving.

I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away. For if I do not go away, the helper, some of your Bibles might say the comforter, some might say the counselor, some might say the advocate. The Greek word encompasses all of these ideas. Advocate, comforter, counselor, helper. If I do not go away, the helper, the Holy Spirit, will not come to you.

[30 : 32] But if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment concerning sin because they did not believe in me.

I mean, that's in a sense the solution to sin. On one hand, the solution to sin isn't for me to be able to successfully show you how sinful you are so you can just feel unbelievably miserable or just stop feeling miserable and just walk out of the room.

True story. When I was in the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa and I was in my rural parish, there was a guy who got up in the pulpit. He came back from his holidays and he began to preach and all he did was tell off the whole congregation about how bad they were.

And about seven minutes in, the whole congregation got up and left. He was left at the front of the church, empty. They all got up and left.

In fact, in Anglican polity, there's things called wardens. The wardens had to get the bishop involved because the bishop had to negotiate with the wardens to get any of the people to go back to the church.

[31 : 48] So I could get them. But you know what? The solution to sin isn't for me to say, you're terrible, you're terrible, you're terrible. No. On one level, we all know, everybody knows we're not perfect.

The thing that we need to be convicted of is the remedy to sin, which is Jesus. Verse 9, concerning sin because they do not believe in me.

Concerning righteousness, that is, how things are made right. Okay, how are things made right? Well, because I go to the Father and you will see me no longer. You see, Jesus' death upon the cross and his resurrection, that's what makes us right with God, with the creator of all things.

That's what makes us right. We need to be convicted of that. It's the Holy Spirit who does that. And then, and then, in verse 11, concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

And that's a reference to the devil and it's a very profound statement that when you see evil in the world, whether it's evil in North Korea, whether it's evil in parts of Canada, that there is always a demonic aspect to it.

[32 : 52] And many people suffer under a fear of a personal type of demonic oppression and Jesus says, my death and resurrection is a complete unmasking and defeat of all that is the most evil in the world and all spiritual powers.

And if you were in certain parts of the world that still believes in animism, all your belief in spirits connected to trees and rivers and birds, that's all judged.

If you could put up the next point, Andrew, what is Jesus saying? That as you go forward, always remember that the gift of the Holy Spirit is to your great advantage.

That the gift of the Holy Spirit is to your great advantage. Friends, the Holy Spirit is not a charismatic thing and we shouldn't be upset. We all probably know stories of crazy charismatics. I'm not saying all charismatics are crazy, but we all know stories of crazy charismatics. In fact, probably if I just said, during coffee time, just share crazy charismatic stories, there'd be lots of laughter as we talked each other with crazy things they've said and done.

[34 : 05] Okay? But let me tell you, what does Jesus say? The gift of the Holy Spirit to Christians is to your advantage. It is a good thing every day to say, just in the words of Galatians 5, I try to remember to pray this every day, every day.

I know some of you think I'm crazy, so the rest of you, I try to remember to pray Galatians 5 and 6 every day. I say, Father, as I go through my day today, help me to walk by the Holy Spirit, live by the Holy Spirit, be led by the Holy Spirit, and keep in step by the Holy Spirit.

And that is a good prayer to pray. Where am I? Verse 12. I still have many things to say to you, Jesus says.

Verse 12. But you cannot bear them now. You can't carry them. He's talking right to the disciples. When the Spirit of Truth comes, that's how he talks now about the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth. He will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority or out of himself, but whatever he hears from the Father and the Son, he will speak and he will declare to you the things that are to come.

[35 : 14] I want to break this up into two things. If you could put up the next point, Andrew, here's the thing. As you go forward, always remember, always remember to believe the truth and nothing but the truth.

Be the BS detector in your office. Now, that might mean you want to chat with a really wise guy like Victor as to when you just publicly say to your boss that's BS or whether there's a more circumspect way to say it.

But be the BS detector. Like, the Bible, when it says here believe the truth, it means you need to listen well and study well and think well and inquire well and understand what people are saying and understand what's true and what's false in it.

But at the end of the day, when the Bible says that it's to your advantage that the Holy Spirit is going to come, it's to your advantage I give you the Holy Spirit. And who is the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. He will lead you into all truth.

Then the truth is your friend. And the cry of our heart in every meeting, in every class, and even when we read and when we watch TV should be, Lord, may the Holy Spirit help me to know what's

true and believe what's true and nothing but the truth.

[36 : 39] Continue on. The next verse. Verse 14. It's all part of the same idea but I wanted to divide it up. He will glorify me, that's the Holy Spirit, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

All that the Father has is mine, therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you. And actually, if you take verses 12 to 15 as a group, it's one of the reasons why Christians believe that you don't, every, that the, what I'm holding here in the New Testament, the New Testament is the apostolic testimony to Jesus.

And Jesus is saying here, I am going to work in you so the New Testament can be written. And so that whether or not, remember when I was in Angola, one of the things I was doing, some of the people I was meeting with in Angola were people who were giving a semi-nomadic tribe that had no written language, they were giving them a written language and they were translating the New Testament into that new language so they could read the apostolic testimony for themselves.

We have a man connected to our church who has gone to a people group in Asia that did not have a written language and he is giving them a written language and translating the New Testament into their language so that they can learn to read the language they speak and they can read the apostolic testimony to Jesus.

And that's the point if you could put it up. As you go forward, always remember to humbly learn from the scripture.

[38 : 18] As you go forward, always remember to humbly learn from the scripture. A little saying, you've heard me say it before, to many people in Christian circles, to ask what the Bible says is to reveal yourself as a narrow-minded, knuckle-dragging fundamentalist.

But the truth of the matter is that when you ask what does the Bible say, you're asking the Jesus question because Jesus asks that question all the time. What does the Bible say?

Search the scriptures. Let's continue on as we get through the rest of this text. Verse 16, famous text for some, a little while and you will see me no longer and again, a little while and you will see me.

So some of his disciples said to one another, what is this that he says to us a little while and you will not see me and again, a little while and you will see me and because I am going to the Father. So they were saying, what does he mean a little while?

There's a bit of a clue and interpretation that the same phrase is said lots of times. It probably means it's important. Okay? We do not know what he's talking about. Jesus, verse 9, knew that they wanted to ask him.

[39 : 29] So he said to them, is this what you are asking yourselves, what I meant by saying a little while and you will not see me and again a little while and you will see me? Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament but the world will rejoice.

You will be sorrowful but your sorrow will turn into joy. When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish for the joy that a human being has been born into the world.

So also, you have sorrow now but I will see you again and your hearts will rejoice and no one will take your joy from you. Now, Jesus is talking about two things at the same time.

On one level, he's talking very specifically in the original language. It's two things at the same time. On one hand, he's telling his disciples, I'm about to die and you're going to be crushed but on the third day I'm going to rise and your joy will be unspeakable.

And he's also speaking down the corridors of history to us and he's even speaking to the apostles after he ascends into heaven that there will be times we have lots of sorrow but if you could put up the next point, Andrew, as you go forward, always remember, always remember that Jesus will assuredly return as liberating Lord.

[40 : 58] He will assuredly return as liberating Lord. Verse 23, In that day you will ask nothing of me, right, when he returns. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you.

Until now you have asked for nothing in my name. Ask and you will receive that your joy may be full. I have said these things to you in figures of speech.

The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech but will tell you plainly about the Father. In that day you will ask in my name and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf for the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have

believed that I came from God.

I came from the Father and have come into the world and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father. Andrew, could you put up the next point? Please, as you go forward, always remember to pray like you were talking to your dad.

And some of you might say, George, if you knew my dad you would not say that. But then I would just add, even when we complain about how bad our dads are, it is because on one level we have an image of what a good dad would be like.

[42 : 14] for those of us who are Christian dads right here, texts like this are always a time that call us to get on our knees and ask the Father to help us to be a great dad to our kids and to repent of the way that we have been a bad dad.

but we all have this basic sense of what a good father would be like. And that's what Jesus is talking about. And so Jesus is saying as you go forward, always remember to pray like you were talking to your dad, a good dad who always listens to you and loves you.

And now we bring it to a close. Verse 29. His disciples said, Ah, now you are speaking plainly and not using figurative speech.

Now we know that you know all things and do not need anyone to question you. This is why we believe that you came from God. Jesus answered them and he answers them with love. Do you now believe? Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home and will leave me alone.

Yet I am not alone for the Father is with me. And then Andrew, could you put up the last, the first point again? Why don't we say this together, out loud?

[43 : 42] Can you say it with me? I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace. In the world you have trouble and suffering, but take courage.

I am victorious over the world. Please stand. If you have not yet called out to Jesus to be your Savior and Lord, there is no better time now than just to call out to him.

Say something like, I want to live in the real world and I know that I will not be victorious over death or even the evil in my life.

I ask, I thank you, Jesus, that your great victory can be for me and I reach out to you that I might share in your victory, that you might be my Savior and Lord.

There is no better time now than to pray that prayer. And for the rest of us, some maybe as dads have to pray a bit of prayer of repentance and prayer of longing, but for all of us, we can pray that the Lord will help us to leave this place today knowing the real world and living with courage under Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit in the real world.

[45 : 03] Let's pray. Father, we thank you for the different places that you have called us to. Father, we confess some of us wish we had a better job or lived in a better house or are looking forward to a new day and new opportunities and Father, we know that some of these are good things, that it's not a bad thing to have ambition.

It's not a bad thing to seek to maybe have that more responsible job or have more education. Father, it's not a bad thing.

But we ask, Father, that in all things, Father, that we might know that we live in the real world, that we might remember that you are God, that Jesus did die upon the cross, that he did rise from the dead, that he is risen, that he will return again and that the Holy Spirit has been given to us for our great advantage.

Father, pour into our heart the desire to walk with the Holy Spirit and live by the Holy Spirit and be led by the Holy Spirit and keep in step with the Holy Spirit and grant us, Father, the desire to turn from lies and to know the truth, to do the hard work and the humbling work of knowing the truth and believing in the truth in all things.

Father, we ask that you would do this wonderful and mighty work in our lives all for your great glory and we ask all of this in the name of Jesus and all God's people said, Amen.

[46 : 27] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.