

To live is Christ, To Die is Gain.

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[0 : 00] Good morning, folks. Let's just pray. We're going to be looking at the Bible, Philippians chapter 1. We'll talk about that more in a moment, but let's begin by praying. Father, we ask that the Holy Spirit would fall with fresh power upon me as I speak and everyone who is listening and or watching. Father, we ask that you would work in our lives so that we have a deep confidence and a deep joy with our confidence and joy rooted in Jesus and what he did for us on the cross. And this we ask in Jesus's name. Amen.

CBC on Wednesday had a very interesting piece about a different problem which has come up connected to COVID-19. And the problem that CBC documented was that there has been an increased demand for doctor-assisted suicide. And not only has there been a great, according to CBC, a great increase in demand for doctor-assisted suicide, but there's a shortage of supplies for it. There's problems with procedures and a shortage of supplies, and this is a problem that needs to be fixed. Part of the irony or the problem around the shortage of supplies is that some of the same drugs that are required to save people who have COVID-19 are the very same drugs that are needed for a doctor to kill a person. Like there's a real irony here. If you think about it for a second, imagine the situation where somebody is almost, they come and they're given an option. Well, listen, we have that limited number of this drug. We can use it to help you overcome COVID-19. We can use it to end your life. Or the irony of a person who goes and has treated for the COVID-19 in a hospital. They successfully get over it. And then like a week later, they go to the same doctor and they said they'd like to have suicide using the same drugs. Like there's a, like there's something about that picture, which is just odd, isn't there? If you think about it. You know, the Hippocratic oath about doctors not killing isn't something which was invented by Christians. It was invented by a pagan some 400 years before the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus. It was, it wasn't, he was an outlier. It wasn't actually, it didn't take hold in ancient Greece. There was also maybe a small number of doctors who would sort of adhere to it, but he was an outlier. This idea that if you came to see a doctor, they would only act to heal you or to try to heal you or try to make you better. But it was rediscovered in the 1500s by Jewish and Christians in Europe.

[2 : 54] And then in the 1700s by Christians and Jews in Europe, it was translated into English and started to become a very key part of how doctors understood their role. And from that basis spread to the medical community more or less throughout the world. We all know cases from totalitarian governments and fascist governments where medicine has been corrupted. But generally speaking, it's been the case that when you go to see a doctor, the doctor might be very competent or not as competent as they, as you wish he or she was. They might make a mistake. Doctors are human, they make mistakes, but you can go in the full confidence that the doctor will seek to make you as well as you possibly can be, that they're not going to make a separate decision to put you to death.

The fact of the matter is, and I'm not being alarmist about this, if you just go back and look at the different record of the different proposals that were being made when doctor-assisted suicide first came into Canada. And as you know, the government wants to change the laws concerning it. And if you were just to go and look at some of the expert testimony, in terms of the different directions that people want to go to change it, you'll see that the direction is to expand the power of doctors to be able to kill more people, not only those who request it, but those who don't necessarily request it. That's all part of it. I mean, this isn't me being alarmist. Just look at this. And these recommendations aren't coming from crackpots in the deep woods or, you know, some type of slobbering fool who lives in his basement and never sees the light of the day.

This is, you know, when there's no pandemic. I mean, these are elite commentators. People at the pinnacle of society are arguing for an extension of this. And it could actually create the type of, you

know, if you think about it, it could create the type of situation where literally you have to wonder when you go to the doctor, like if all of these things play out, if the door gets opened more and more and more, and all these things play out. If you go to see a doctor, like right now, I go to see a doctor and I know they're going to listen to me and try to do the best they can to make me better. But if this was to become, in fact, the case where more and more permission is granted to doctors and to the state, how do I know that when I go to the doctor, he's not sort of listening and thinking, you know, I know, I think George is a little bit depressed. I think really what he's doing is a bit of a cry for help that would be helped if I actually put him to death.

Or if they're making decisions from the state, because there's a limit, you might need far more drugs to save a person on COVID-19 than you would to put a person to death. So it's actually far more cost effective to actually kill a wide range of people. And there you could even make the case, this is a wonderful idea. Just look, you know, we're preserving the drugs to save people's lives, healthy people's lives. And, you know, if you just one other thing, if you look at it, don't look at the slogans, ignore the slogans, okay, because the slogans are always about how, you know, death, dignity, et cetera, et cetera. Ignore the slogans and look at what they actually want to do.

[6 : 09] And you could see a time could come when you don't know whether the doctor is listening to you to make an evaluation to heal you or to kill you. Now, in an odd way, and doctors have these almost godlike powers, right? If you think about it, I mean, this is the thing that Hippocrates understood way back 400 years BC, that many of the things, same things that they would use to heal a person were the same things that they could use with a different dose to kill a person. And so doctors, in a sense, have this almost godlike power to either heal or to kill. And it's been a longstanding, you know, issue of doctors letting this type of power go to their head. It's well talked about. They're human. They're not worse than any other people. And they're not better than other people. They're human, fully human. And, you know, in an odd way, if that day ever comes where people are going to go to a doctor not knowing whether they're going to make a decision to harm you or to heal you, they will actually become how we view the gods. You see, because here's the thing about the gods, is the gods and all spirituality seem to demand at least diminishment or harm, but often death.

I mean, this is not a particularly novel thing. I mean, it's been made very publicized by guys like Christopher Hitchens, but you could go to once where you're able to go to a bar or a coffee shop again, you'll hear this idea expressed anywhere. You'll see it in op-ed pages, that there's something about religion, there's something about spirituality that seems to delight in human diminishment, and seems to delight even in death and causing religious wars and causing all sorts of foolish practices that lead to death. And so, and that's why many people in our culture, they do, and with religion, they do one of two things. They either decide to go straight into the religion, trying to curry favor, in a sense, with the god or the gods, in the hope that the god or the gods will help them or spare them, or as has increasingly happened in places like Canada, United States, people say, to heck with the gods. Like, all they do is diminish and cause death. We're way better without them. It seems as if there's only these two options which are available to people.

I'm talking about all of this because, in fact, the gospel presents a completely and utterly different option. It is definitely the case that much of Christianity forget, will often forget the gospel and slide into the same type of religion which either diminishes or seems to delight in death. But the heart of the Christian faith is the gospel, which is a very, very, very particular good news about who Jesus is and what he's accomplished for us on the cross. And if you don't understand this difference, then when we eventually come to look at the text, and we are going to look at the text, Philippians chapter 1 verses 19 to 26, it won't make any sense to you.

So here's the thing. Spiritualities and religion, spiritualities and religions require the diminishment and even the death of people. The good news is that the true and living God diminished himself and died for the good of people. Now, by the way, I have these little talking points. I think they're going to be on the little comment section on the side that you can look at. And if you're looking at this later on and you can't see the comment section, I think by the end of Monday afternoon or something, this is all going to be posted on the church webpage. You can see all the points if you're watching this later on. And we're going to be working over the next couple of weeks to be able to put the points on screen to make it a little bit easier for you to see it. Just give us a bit of patience as we sort that out. But here's the sort of the opening point that spiritualities and religions require the diminishment in even the death of people. This is something which the gospel tells us, by the way.

We don't have to learn this just from Christopher Hitchens. The Bible is the most profound critique of religion, way more profound than anything you'll find from the new atheists or your best buddy at the bar. The good news is that the true and living God diminished himself and died for the good of people. So, you know, I mean, if you see the movie, the Netflix TV series *Unorthodox*, it's a very, very powerful presentation of how the woman is completely and utterly diminished time and time and time and time again by the religion and how she seeks release and freedom in abandoning religion. And religions and spiritualities, they diminish, they change how you use your time, they change how you eat, they change your sexual practices, they change how you spend money, usually to diminish you in some type of way. And that's, and they do seem to contribute to vast religious wars. But the good news of the gospel is that it's the complete opposite of religion and of spirituality. Because you see, at the heart of the gospel is this idea that God, the Son of God, seeing the great need of ordinary human beings like you and me, empties himself of his appearance as God, his divine prerogatives, his powers as God, but remaining fully God diminishes himself to the point of becoming an ovum, a fertilized egg in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and diminishes himself to living a normal human life, having to earn his own living, and diminishes himself even to dying a death upon the cross, a death which is for us, which I'll talk about in a moment. And so all of this diminishment and even death, is God, the Son of God, doing this for ordinary people like you and me? Now some of you may say, whoa, George, okay, that sounds all good. I'm just going to ask you two questions, George. Do you tithe? Actually, I do. So that means, George, you give away or try to give away 10% of your income. Yes. George, isn't that diminishment? Well, I'm going to talk about that in a moment.

[12:20] And, you know, you could say, well, what about sex? What about a couple of other things? Like, you go to church, like, isn't that diminishing? Let me explain the profound difference that the gospel makes.

And, you know, to understand what diminishment means, I'm not making an end run. You'll see what I mean. It's connected to what a human being is, and the world we live in, and our final end. So here's the next point. Try to understand why it is that the gospel is an entry into life because of the life which is given by Jesus. So here's the second thing. Every human being is fearfully and wonderfully made and bears an unsurpassed dignity and worth. Every human being, I'm not saying every person, I'm saying every human being, is fearfully and wonderfully made and bears an unsurpassed dignity of and worth. And that means everything it means to be a human being. And human beings have only one way of being human. We begin as a fertilized egg attached to the membrane of our mother's womb, and we proceed until death. And every human being at every stage is fearfully and wonderfully made and bears an unsurpassed dignity and worth, at least in the created order. Obviously, God is of greater worth. But in the created order, this is the Christian teaching. That's how God originally created human beings to be. And if you think about it, this is the only really solid ground for all human rights. It's the protection of the individual versus the state, because the state, the country, the nation, CBC, Apple, they do not have that dignity. They are not fearfully and wonderfully made and bear an unsurpassed dignity and worth. But the lowest human being, the poorest human being, the most handicapped human being bears that. It's why it's wrong for a man to force himself upon a woman sexually. It's why slavery is wrong. It is the most remarkable and marvelous truth in the world that will transform human relationships and government. And it is only to the herd of society and personal relationships when it is lost. But you can push back and say, George, there's way more to human beings than this, isn't there? Like, look at the killing fields of Cambodia. Look at, just look at some of the horrendous things that are going on in the world today. Look at ethnic cleansing and genocide.

George, look at those things. Well, that's why there's this next point, point number three. In seeking to become like God, with the true God under us, humans became bent, and death became the doom of every human being. This teaching isn't that humans are, I mean, what it really is saying is that now every human being is fearfully and wonderfully made and bears an unsurpassed dignity and worth and is bent, and death is our doom. You see, the humans attempt to be over God, to be like God, but you can't just be like God because if you're like God, you're not really God because he's equal to you, so he has to be underneath you. And that desire bent us in every aspect of who we are. It doesn't mean that we're evil. It doesn't mean that everything we do is evil. Everything we do is wrong. God in his common grace maintains this fearfully and wonderfully made and this unsurpassed dignity and value and worth.

But everything is bent. You see, if you think about it for a second, only this double Christian teaching can explain what human beings are really like. Because the fact of the matter is, is that there is something God-like almost in the greatness of human beings. Something marvelous. You see Usain Bolt with his speed. You see a brilliant human being. You see a wonderful dancer. You see a musical performer. You see government when it's really working well. You see a community when it's really working well. And there's something just almost God-like and wonderful about it.

[16 : 35] But at the same time, there's a monstrosity to human beings. We do monstrous and terrible things to each other. And only the Christian story puts those two things together and makes sense. Because the fact of the matter is, is that the message of the gospel is that every human being, no matter how you feel today, no matter how broken or lonely you feel, you are vastly more important and vastly greater than you can even imagine. But you are vastly more broken and more in need of salvation than you can even experience in your worst dreams and nightmares about yourself. And this is all seen in the gospel.

That because we're bent, we can't save or deliver ourselves. So God acts to deliver, to save. And he does it for you. And he does it by him experiencing the diminishment and death, which is needed so that diminishment and death does not have to be the final word about you. You see, here's the point.

Jesus is the triune God's provision. Jesus is the triune God's provision for ordinary human beings. Jesus is the triune God's provision for ordinary human beings. And he does it by his grace. Life itself took flesh and lived and died so that the sin that dooms you to death and your life itself would be swallowed by eternal life. That's the good news of the gospel. That's the good news of the gospel, that God provides what we need. He does it out of his unmerited kindness and grace towards us.

And he does it by life itself. Life itself. Taking flesh. Walking among us in history.

[18 : 29] The fact that Jesus existed cannot be denied. The fact that he died upon the cross cannot be denied. It all happens in history. And the evidence of his real defeat, triumph over death and the sin that causes death is very, very historic. There's lots of good historical reasons and others to believe it.

This vindication of the message, this wonderful good news that the sin that dooms you to death and your life itself will be swallowed up by eternal life. This is the news at the heart of the good. This is the good news. And this, you see, the Christian faith is not about good advice, good rituals, good poetry, good philosophy, good yoga, good techniques, good diets, good figures. I don't know what's talking about any of those things. It's good news. And everything flows from being gripped and receiving this good news.

Here's the point. By faith in Christ, the triune God invites you to Christ and you become regenerate, a new creation. I think I'm missing part of it there. I probably didn't copy it all down, right?

It's probably better in your notes. When you put your faith and trust in Christ, the triune God unites you. That's the word. I can't read my printing. The triune God unites you to Christ and you become regenerate. You become a new creation. In a sense, you reach out with your mind, with your heart. You say to God, you know, I'm bent. I can't fix myself. I'm doomed to death.

I don't want to just follow religion and spirituality. That will just lead to more death and more diminishment. And so I thank you, Father. I thank you, God, for what you provide in the person of Jesus and what he did for me. He lived the life I could not live. He dies the death I could not die. He is life itself entering history so that the real me, when I put my faith and trust in him, he and all that he's accomplished enters me and I enter into that and you, you give me a second birth. You see, at the heart of Christianity is two births. You have to understand the significance of the first birth, that you are fearfully and wonderfully made and that you, that you bear an unsurpassed dignity and worth. But because you're bent, because death is now part of who you are, you need this second birth, which only God can do. He can make you regenerate, a new creation when you put your faith and trust in Jesus and you are united to him. And you see, that's all leading us up to my next point, which is if you turn in your Bibles to Philippians chapter 1, verses 19 to 26, you're going to see verse 21. We're going to start at verse 21. And verse 21, this very, very powerful maxim, if you haven't memorized it, memorize it. And this, along with what's happening in Philippians 2, 5 to 11, which we're going to spend two weeks on beginning next Sunday, this is the key to understanding everything in the book of Philippians and it's a key part to understanding the good news of the

gospel and what it means to live a gospel-shaped, gospel-gripped life. And look what it says in verse 21, for to me to live is Christ and to die is gain. For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain. [22 : 10] This central Christian maxim, this central maxim of the gospel, that to live is Christ because there is this new life for Christ which is in you and to die is gain. For a Christian, to die is to be swallowed by eternal life. You see, when you put your faith and trust in Jesus, when you put your faith and trust in Jesus, you actually become a new creation. Like the eternal life that will eventually swallow you completely is now at the very center of who you are and will never leave you because God has put it there when you put your faith and trust in Jesus. And so what happens in death for a Christian is that that eternal life which is already present in you while you live in this created order, it swallows you. Like eternal life swallows you. The second birth is connected to the new creation.

So let's look at this. And so this goes back to, remember you're asking me, George, do you tithe? And I said, yes, I do. Does that mean I have less money than before? It does. Could I afford a better car? Yeah. Could I afford a lot of other things? I could. So George, isn't the gospel leading you to diminishment? No. Think about it for a second. Look at this line. It's a very, very telling line.

Evaluate every philosophy by it. To live is Christ, to die is gain. If you watch the movie Unorthodox, the series Unorthodox, which is very well written, you'll see that the choice is between living this unbelievably religious rule-bound thing where you have to touch an object going in and all these rules. And the opposite of it is to have, in a sense, sexual and artistic liberation. That's the choice. But use this as a bit of a way to try to understand it. Say to yourself, to live is sex. To die is losing everything. To live is art. To die is to lose everything. To live is power.

To die is to lose everything. To live is choice. To die is to lose everything. To live is identity. To die is to lose everything. To live for the sake of your party or ideology. To die is to lose everything. There's this missionary who died trying to bring the gospel, the good news of eternal life to a people group that were very violent. And in his journal before he died, his name is Jim Elliott, he wrote this, he is no fool to give what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose.

[25 : 11] Right? To live is money. You die, you lose it all. But to live, for to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

And you think about it for a second, at a very, very simple level. Just imagine for a moment that it's sort of like a Christmas carol, and you're able to go and overhear people at your funeral. What would you rather hear them say? Would you rather hear them say, the problem with George is he was way too generous. He gave away his money. Or would you rather have them say, you know, the problem with George is he was so cheap, he wouldn't even buy you a coffee. Would you rather have somebody about, say something about, you know, the thing about, about that, Bob, we'll call him Bob, or the thing about Sue, Bob or Sue, do you think, you know, the thing about Bob or Sue is, you know, they weren't controlled by money. They had a type of freedom around it. Or you rather say, you know, the thing about Bob and Sue is they were so driven by money, or they were so driven by looks, or they were so driven by power, or they were so driven by having their own way. Like, what would you rather have?

What is it more like to be more fully human than to be known for forgiveness, to be known for patience, to be known for generosity, to be known for self-giving? And it's not a matter of me telling you to do this so people will think well of you when you die. It's a matter of when you unite yourself to Christ, and he makes you a new creation. And the means by which he became a new creation was the diminishment and death of him for the sake of you. When that new life enters into you, the generosity of God, the love of God, the mercy of God, the forgiveness of God, the beauty of God, the care for creation of God, the concern for justice of God becomes part of that new creation for you. And it is not that you instantly become changed because I am a fallen human being as well, but that this becomes your story.

Sorry. You know, one of the hard things about doing this is a little bit of an aside. There's four people in the room. And if they, if you watch anything about how to do these talks, I'm not supposed to look at them, but they're here. I'm supposed to look at you or occasionally stare off in the distance as a thoughtful person because it's overbearing if I spend the entire time staring at you. And sometimes they do things around here. Like you can't see them, but they do things. Anyway, we're live. That's why you watch it live. You get right in on the moment.

Anyway, where was I in my point? I've sort of forgotten. So remember about money, all of these things. It's not, it's, but you understand not just for your life, but for everything. He is no fool to give up, to give what he cannot keep my life, my money, my identity to gain that, which I cannot lose

because death is being swallowed up by life.

[28 : 28] So mindful of that, just let's look at the whole text and you'll see how the entire text pops out at you. If you just, for the rest of the time you go back and you read the Philippians from the beginning to the end, do that. It doesn't take that long. It's only four short chapters and read it always in mind of the maxim for me to live as Christ and to die as gain. And you'll see how that, the things it pops up. It's not talking about religion.

For to me to live as Christ and to die as gain. Let's look at verse 19, just a few verses before it. Yes, and I will rejoice. For I know that through your prayers, and in my version it says the help. And help's a fine word, but the better word is supply. It's actually the more literal word here. There's a reason why the word help is there rather than supply. I won't bore you with it.

For I know that, excuse me, verse 19 again, for I know that through your prayers and the help of the sword and the supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ, this will turn out for my deliverance.

That's him being in chains, in house arrest in Rome. I'll read it again. Just remember, he's in house arrest in Rome. Why is he in house arrest in Rome? He is proclaiming this outrageous idea that a man named Jesus died by crucifixion, as he predicted, and rose from the dead as he predicted, and that this vindicates that he is God's provision to save human beings, that the possibility of new life and new creation through union with Christ has entered into this world.

That's why he's in chains. So read it again, verse 19. For I know that through your prayers and the supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ, this will turn out for my deliverance, as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always, Christ will be honored in my flesh, in my body, whether by life or death. For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain. And we'll just pause there. Two really interesting things that fit with this notion. All to live is Christ, of union with Christ, and through union with Christ of being this new creation. And here's the first one, because Paul says here he's going to be delivered, right?

[30 : 47] And some of your versions will say saved, and both words are very, very, they're both the right word. Usually the word is translated as saved, but it can also be used as delivered. It intentionally has two meanings, which is probably why Paul used it. But here's what he's saying. You will be delivered naturally, supernaturally, or eternally. You will be delivered naturally, supernaturally, or eternally.

This is for Christians. Now all Christians will eventually be delivered eternally, but in the here and now, this is what Paul's confidence is. He said people are praying for my release, and it might very well be that the Roman authorities release me. That's naturally. Or it might be, as has happened to me in the past, as it happened in Philippi, when I first came to Europe, and I shared the gospel, and I was thrown in jail, that I was delivered supernaturally. But you know what? Even if I die, well, if I die, I'm delivered eternally. How can I lose? How can I lose? It's the same thing when we're praying for people who are sick. Some other time, I can tell you about a man that I came to pray for. They wanted me to give him the last rites, and I prayed for his healing, and he woke up.

True story. He woke up and thanked me. He lived another couple of years. And many Christians can tell you stories like that. But here's the thing. When I pray for a person who's sick, it's the same type of thing. I pray that they will get better. And for a Christian that I'm praying that for, they could either get better naturally through drugs and the care of the doctors, etc., or supernaturally by a divine healing. Or if they die, well, they're healed eternally, aren't they?

If you're in Christ. Because death means to be swallowed up by life if you are in Christ. And notice this other wonderful thing here in verse 19. It says, For I know that through your prayers and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, this will turn out for my deliverance. The other thing here is this word supply of the Holy Spirit.

You see, when you put your faith and trust in Jesus, and you're united to him, and you're given this, you made this new creation. And the Bible also talks about how the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit themselves, through the Spirit, actually indwell you. But it's not inert. You see, here's the point. The Holy Spirit now flows in and through you for your good, the spread of the gospel, the good of people, and the glory of the triune God. The Holy Spirit now flows in and through you for your good, for the spread of the gospel, for the good of people, and the glory of the triune God. See, that's why you can pray for more of the Holy Spirit. You can pray for the Holy Spirit to fall and to move. Because it's not as if you sort of just have this, like, I don't know, like an inoculation. It's the Holy Spirit inoculation, and it's just sort of static and just sort of sits there. It's dynamic. It's dynamic, and you can pray for it. Pray for it. Pray for me as I open the word that the Holy Spirit will flow

through me more and more and more and flow into you more and more and more. Just one more thing as we're trying to draw it to a close.

[34 : 02] Let's read the rest of the text. Begin at verse 21 again, because some people have used this text to say that Paul is recommending or considering suicide, and he's not at all. He's not at all.

Look what it says, 21 to 26. For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which shall I choose? I cannot tell. I am hard-pressed between the two, to live is Christ and to die is gain. Those are the two that he's hard-pressed for.

My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy in the faith. Right? He desires for them to progress in their joy in the faith.

Verse 26, so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus because of my coming to you again. His desire is that they will progress and grow. Here's the final point. With new creation life, you can always go farther up and further in. With new creation life, you can always go farther up and further in. Both on this side of the grave and the rest of eternal life. Read the last battle in the Narnia Chronicles. Those of you who've read that, you can pick up farther up and further in, farther up and further in, farther up and further in. And the deeper in, it's like, you know, like, you know, in the incarnation, what was inside the womb of Mary was bigger than the universe.

When Jesus was born in the stable, what was inside the stable was bigger than the entire universe. And when you enter into the new creation, and as you enter into God, the further in you go to God, the bigger it gets. The further in you go into the new heaven and the new earth, the bigger it gets.

[36 : 01] Just wrap this up. You know, some of you might have been a bit struck by my talk about what it means to be a human being, my talk about assisted suicide. I hope you get from my manner, what we're talking about here is not condemnation, but invitation. What we're talking about here is not condemnation, but invitation. I urge you, even now, say to Jesus, Jesus, please be my savior and my Lord. Thank you for what you did for me on the cross. Thank you that even though I can't save myself, you've done what needed to be done for me to be delivered. Thank you that you know everything there is about me now, all the things that are shameful, all the things that are strong, and that you would actually want to unite yourself to me in such a way that I am a new creation, a new birth, a second birth that will survive death and go farther up and further in. And, you know, in terms of it, aspire to verse 21. For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain. You know, some of us have lots of extra time with this pandemic. And, you know, here's the wonderful thing about the gospel. I wish, I hope that this could become more and more my identity, for me to live is Christ and to die is gain. You know what I suggest for you who are in Christ? Spend some time meditating upon that and say, Lord, make this the maxim that shapes and governs my life. And help me to live out of this. And spend a couple of minutes a day or longer meditating upon that and saying, Lord, help me to live out of this is my identity. For me to live is Christ and to die is gain. And then have a little pad with you and note what the Holy Spirit prompts you to do. Because when you make that your focus, it might then be he get this prompt. You know what? Send an email to that person that you need to ask forgiveness for. Or why don't you go and drop a friendly note in your neighbor's things? Or why don't you send this? Or why don't you start this? Or why don't you do this? Or why don't you stop that? But you don't begin there. You begin by this as your new identity. And here's the final thing in light of my opening thing about the

CBC. I just want to make a pledge to you. If those of you who don't know, we are in the process of starting a second congregation in Kanata. Please pray for that. If you live in Kanata and you don't have a church home, contact us. We'd love to have you included in our hope that in the year 2021 that we will, God is raising up a second Messiah congregation in Kanata. So I'm speaking about this. I'm speaking about Messiah Kanata. And if by the grace of God we start a church in Orleans or some other place, wherever it is, I make this commitment to you. And I know that everyone in my council and all of the staff would agree and the congregation agrees. In a world where there is increased desire for death, Messiah will be an island of life. In Ottawa, we will be an island of life. In Ontario and Quebec, we will be an island of life. In Canada, we will be an island of life. In this world, we will be an island of life. Let's pray.

Father, please grip us with this truth, to live as Christ and to die as game. Grip us with this truth. Grip us with the gospel. And so gripped, help us to live for the good of people and for your great glory.

And we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[39 : 54] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.