

# Jesus and the gift of eternal life

*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: 01 April 2018

Preacher: Rev. George Sinclair

[ 0 : 00 ] Father, thank you for Jesus. Thank you that he came. Thank you that he lived amongst us a fully human life. Thank you that he died on the cross. Thank you that he tasted all there is to taste of death. Thank you that he rose again, defeating sin and death. And thank you, Father, that all who believe and trust in Jesus, that you will raise us up. You will give us eternal life and raise us up.

Father, thank you for this. May your Holy Spirit bring the words of the gospel deeply into our hearts and our minds and our lives. Help us, Father, to gnaw on them and inwardly digest them. And this we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. Please be seated. As you know, I sometimes criticize newspapers or make comments about newspapers and other things in the media. So it's important to give credit where credit is due. I don't know how many of you read the National Post editorial.

I might be the only person in the room who read the Saturday editorial in the National Post. But it must have been written by a devout Christian. I was really surprised. So kudos to them. And if you have a chance, go online and read the official editorial of the National Post yesterday. And one of the things which they said, which was very interesting, I didn't know that we we probably all are aware of that French police officer who traded himself for a woman.

Terrorists had killed some people, was had a hostage situation. The police officer willingly traded places with the woman. I don't know if you know this, but he was an adult convert to the Christian faith.

[ 1 : 41 ] He was in his early to mid-30s when he gave his life to Christ. And it was directly his widow, I was told, in the French press, it's been very public. They just make a bit of a hint at it in the National Post editorial.

But his widow on French media has been very outspoken that it was precisely because of his Christian faith that he took that stand. But it's quite dramatic, really, isn't it?

And the National Post editorial drew out the similarities between this police officer's story. I keep fading in and out. Do I? Or is it just my imagination?

So anyway, it's a very interesting story. There's a very, very clear, obviously, Eastern analogy between this man who traded places with the woman and as a result of him trading places with this woman, she lived and he died.

And there's a very obvious sort of parallel to the Christian story, the gospel. But, you know, the thing which, and many Christians struggle with this, and I know not only do many Christians struggle with this, but non-Christians struggle with it in a really, really big way.

[ 2 : 51 ] And they say, George, well, what's up with this? Okay, what's up with this? I get this sort of story, and it's very, very moving to hear about this police officer and his...

I know it's a story of courage. It's a story of heroism. But what's up? Like, Jesus just died. Like, he didn't live. Like, I mean, he just died.

I mean, we have to talk about the living part, obviously, with many non-Christians. But he just died. But I don't see how anything that could have happened 2,000 years ago, almost 2,000 years ago, like why his death back then means anything to me.

And sort of usually if somebody, a non-Christian, says something like this to us, after we get through our maybe deer-in-the-headlights look, we often do something like saying, well, part of the big difference is that Jesus was God.

And because Jesus is God, his death has this far greater power, has this far greater reach. It's just far more significant.

[ 3 : 52 ] And then often what happens, they might not say this to you, but they think it. And what they think is, what people think is this, well, what's up with that? Like, what's up with that?

Like, how can somebody with a birth certificate and an address say they're God, that they came down from heaven, right? Like, how can somebody who has a birth certificate and an address say that they came down from heaven, that they're God?

That's a pretty good question. Do you know that that exact question is asked in the Bible? In fact, I read an ancient biography of Jesus. And in that ancient biography of Jesus, it's in John's ancient biography.

And John tells us the story of the resurrection. But did you know that earlier in that gospel, John records somebody literally saying to Jesus, what's up with this?

Like, what's up with, I mean, you got a birth certificate and an address. I mean, that's a bit of a figure of speech. They didn't have birth certificates back then. But what's up with this? So if you'd be, it's a great help. If you turn back earlier in the gospel, Jesus actually answers this question.

[ 4 : 56 ] And it's in John chapter 6, verse 41. John chapter 6, verse 41, that they asked this question. I have all sorts of things going wrong. These aren't my normal glasses.

I left my glasses in my car. They're very lopsided. So if I look like a crazy professor, just pray harder for me. So not only is my voice is going in and out, but my glasses are all askew.

So really pray hard for me. Anyway, so back to this story. So what's happened up to now, because remember, it's a story, right? And so what's happened is just less than 24 hours before this, Jesus does his most public miracle.

And we talked about that last Sunday. He does his most public miracle. It just records that there were 5,000 men there. But that 5,000 men means it might have been 20,000 people. Maybe it was 25,000.

Let's just say 20,000 because it's an easy number. And so Jesus does his most public miracle. He, with five loaves and two fishes, he feeds 20,000 people.

[ 6 : 00 ] And the way the miracle is set up with everybody sitting down, it would have been very obvious to the 20,000 people that Jesus had performed an unbelievable, like a spectacular miracle. And then where the story is right now is that Jesus, because the people want to make him king, they realize that he's done this miracle.

So Jesus sort of goes up into the mountain to get away from them. And what people don't know, only the disciples know, is that in the middle of the night, Jesus does another miracle, but only 12 people know this.

And the 12 people are those who see Jesus walking on the water and then moving the whole boat in him four miles to the shore. But what happens is just before this, because they go looking for Jesus, they know there's no human explanation for how Jesus got from where he was to where he was.

But Jesus doesn't explain it to them. And that's part of this conversation. And as part of Jesus' conversation to them about what's up, because he's trying to get to the heart, he tells them, listen, don't spend your whole life just trying to get food.

I have something more to offer you. I am the bread of life that will give you eternal life. And that's what you should really be focusing on, not the fact that your bellies are full. And as part of that, that he's come down from heaven to bring them life, that brings it up to 41.

[ 7 : 19 ] And look what they say in verse 41. So the Jewish people grumble about him. And actually, those of you who use the old King James Version, the word they use there is murmur.

That's a great word, isn't it? Murr. What's going on here, right? You know, people murmur, you know. The person, the cash is going really slow and you murmur and you grumble.

So if you put murmur and grumble together, you get exactly what's going on. They're murmuring, they're grumbling, they're a bit bothered. So verse 41. So the Jews grumble, they murmur about Jesus because he said, I am the bread that came down from heaven.

They said, is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, I have come down from heaven? Right. So they've just said what I just, they said, listen, he has a birth certificate.

And on the birth certificate, it says Joseph and Mary. And he has an address. In fact, at this time he lived in Capernaum. So how can a guy, how can a guy who has a birth certificate and an address say he came down from heaven with a straight face?

[ 8 : 27 ] Now, many of us are saying, okay, now this is going to be really interesting. How's Jesus going to answer this question? Well, let me tell you, he's going to disappoint everybody in the room. He's going to disappoint all of us.

And this disappointment tells something about us. So how does Jesus answer? Look how he answers in verse 43. Jesus answered them, do not grumble among yourselves.

No one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the prophets and they will all be taught by God.

Well, everyone who has heard and learned from the father comes to me. Not that anyone has seen the father except he who is from God. He has seen the father. He's talking about himself. He's saying he's seen the father.

Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness. That's in the Exodus when the people of Israel were in the wilderness. [ 9 : 28 ] God did a miracle and provided a grain type substance for them every day so they wouldn't starve. That's the manna in the wilderness. Your fathers, verse 49, ate the manna in the wilderness and they died.

This is the bread, and he's probably pointing himself. This is the bread that comes down from heaven so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh. So isn't this a bit of a disappointing answer?

Look at how he says in verse 44, if you missed it. Verse 44, no one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.

Isn't that disappointing? Weren't you hoping either for something like the Athanasian Creed that talks about the two natures of Christ in one person? Weren't you maybe hoping for some argument from philosophy, some analogy from science or nature that would try to explain how it is that as God, he's lived forever, but as a human being, he was born of Mary.

[ 10 : 37 ] Aren't you maybe hoping he could explain a little bit about the incarnation? Aren't you hoping he could give some analogy from science or physics? Like this is a very disappointing answer if we're honest with ourselves, aren't we?

Isn't it? So what's going on? Well, here's the first thing. You have to understand, on one level, Jesus is giving a very profound answer.

On another level, he waits a year to give his real answer because his real answer is the resurrection. If you could put up the first point, Andrew, that would be great. His real answer is this. The real, true, literal, actual resurrection of Jesus changes everything. I'll say it again. The real, true, literal, actual resurrection of Jesus changes everything.

Jesus really dying. Jesus really decomposing in a tomb. Jesus really resurrecting.

[ 11 : 37 ] So the body is gone and he appears to his disciples. And he appears to lots of different people in many different ways. So they can't just take it as an hallucination.

And the body is never found. Like if this has happened, it changes everything. It changes how you think. It means you have to reconsider everything. It means you have to reconsider how he tells us to understand the Old Testament.

It means that we start now looking for analogies from physics or biology or biochemistry or genetics. It changes everything. But in the short run, this is actually what Jesus says by saying, listen, unless the Father draws you, you can't come to me.

It's actually a very profound answer. Why is that? Everyone here has probably had the experience where, I don't know, it could be something like somebody makes a comment about something about the first year of the senators.

Or they make a comment about how money works. Or they make a comment about history. Or they make a comment about science. And you happen to know a lot about that subject. And so you say to them, no, no, listen, look at the webpage.

[ 12 : 46 ] And look, this is who the senators play. And look at the statistics. Or you say, look, this is how money works. Or listen, don't blame the conservative government or the liberal government for this. Like, look at the actual bill.

This is what it actually says. And we've all had this experience of maybe spending 5, 10, 15, 20 minutes, maybe half an hour, an hour, like just actually showing the person why they're wrong and they won't change their mind.

And we go back and we say to our friends, good grief, that person, what do we say about them? They refuse to change their mind. They refuse to acknowledge their wrong.

They just refuse. Haven't we all had that experience? They just refuse. Well, what if that person is us? Like, you know, we can all remember instances where somebody, where we've done that, but we're probably not as quick to remember the instances where somebody spent an hour with us. And we just refuse to change our minds. We just refuse. And so what Jesus is saying here, think about how the book works, okay? It's a book.

[13:51] And so what's just happened is less than 24 hours earlier, Jesus has fed 20,000 people from five loaves and two fishes. And as I talked about last week, the way the miracle is set up, everybody's sitting down.

The men sit down. The women sit down. The children sit down. They're all sitting down. They're waiting for Jesus to do something. It's very obvious. He just has a basket like this. He just has a basket.

And he just sets it down. And he starts to break it and put it in another basket and break it and put another basket, break it and put another basket. The basket goes away. Ta-da. Ta-da. Ta-da. You can just imagine people's eyes like saucers.

What on earth is going on? And John records, and some of the other gospel writers record, it's the only miracle that's in all four of the gospels other than the resurrection. People all want to make him king after they see this.

And he has to actually go in and go up into the mountain to get away from them. And so what's just happened here that we're so disappointed about Jesus's answer, but what's just happened is Jesus is just saying to himself, if you think about it, one moment, these folks don't believe me.

[14:57] They don't trust me after I've just taken five loaves and two fishes and fed 20,000 people. What's the problem? They refuse to believe. They refuse to believe.

They just refuse. In fact, the part we looked at last week, people's response was, okay, Jesus, do something dramatic to show us that what you're saying is true.

And Jesus must have been going, good grief. Like, I just fed 20,000 people from five loaves, two fishes. They want me to do something better? Well, he's going to do something better. It's going to be the resurrection, which is going to change everything.

So, but some of you might say, okay, George, well, that explains things very, very well for me.

Thank you very much. That's very helpful. You know, it just is telling me that, like, if God wanted me to be a Christian, he'd make me a Christian.

Like, I'm off the hook. Isn't that what Jesus says, George? Isn't that what he says in verse 44? Isn't that what he says, George? You just read it. No one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him and I will raise him up on the last day.

[16:01] Well, I guess God just doesn't. So, what, Kalish? Is Jesus saying this to let people off the hook? No. Is he saying this to shame them? We all know who the people are who refuse to believe.

We can all look and shake. No, he's not. He's not doing this to shame people. Why does he say this? He says this, if you could put up the next point. He says this because our response should be to call out to the father and ask him to draw you into a saving faith in Jesus.

Like he's trying to prick your conscience. It's in a sense, remember, Jesus' words are constantly going to our heart, the command center of where we are, that place where our will, our emotions, our intellect, our ideas, our culture, our idols, they all, I'm not pointing at you, by the way, just going like this, and it's where all these things sort of come together.

And the hope is that by hearing something like this, our response is, is Jesus talking about me? Is that my problem? Is my problem just that I refuse to come?

And Father, if that's my problem, please help me. I want you to draw me to Jesus. I want to believe. Help my unbelief. Father, do whatever you have to do so I might come to faith in Jesus.

[17:29] That's why Jesus says this. But now some of you might be saying, okay, George, what's up with the cannibalism stuff?

Like, what's up? Like, come on, George. Like, is Jesus saying, take my finger, gnaw on it for a while. Like, here's my fingernail clippings, eat them.

I'm going to cut myself, suck my blood. Like, come on, George. Like, what's going on with this? Didn't he just say, like, you got to eat and drink me? Like, come on. What's up? Well, as some of you know who are Christians for a long time, this next part is something that's divided Christians for a long time.

And I'm going to, I talked in my blog last Sunday a little bit about it. And that's sort of the, I'm going to sail over the debate, okay? I'm going to sail over the debate. So how does Jesus respond to the cannibalism claim?

Well, let's look. Verse 52, that's where they ask the question. Because you see, once again, people who are there, they ask the cannibalism question. It's not just us most smart, postmodern, urban, hip, postmodern who figure out this is a bit of an objection.

[18:46] Like, just always remember when you read old books, just because they didn't use flush toilets doesn't mean they were dumb, okay? People who don't use flush toilets can be way smarter than you and me.

And so they understand. So look at verse 52. Then the Jews then disputed amongst themselves. They've gone from grumbling to arguing. And they say, verse 52, how can this man give us his flesh to eat?

So how's Jesus going to answer it? Well, let's look what he says. So then Jesus said to them, truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.

So he makes it worse, right? But then he's going to do something which isn't as obvious in English, although this version of the Bible that I'm reading from, one of the translation values of the ESV is that when the same Greek word is used in a text, they keep the same English word if they can. And when the Greek word changes, they change the English word. It's a translation. Every version of your Bible has translation values. And they're just different.

[19:57] Some are better for certain situations and some are better for others. And so the ESV, I happen to know this, that's a translation value. So in fact, the original word changes here.

So they change the English word to give you a bit of a clue that something's going on. So I'll read verse 53 again, and then I'll read verse 54. So Jesus said to them, truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.

Yuck, really, right? But then he goes on, whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink.

Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. Notice there's this type of abiding. In verse 57, as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me.

This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever. So, what's going on?

[21:09] Well, the English word, the Greek word, which is there for most of the verse, which is translated here as feeds, it can be translated in several different ways. It has several different meanings attached to it.

One of the meanings is like ongoing consumption, which is what they've chosen here to translate as feeds. It's that whatever's going on, whatever Jesus means by this, we're to, in a sense, consume it daily, day by day.

But the other two meanings are very interesting. One of them is gnaw. You know how like a dog gnaws on a bone? You know how when you get, I don't know, you bought that really, really, sorry vegetarians, you brought this really, really, really delicious barbecue chicken, you know, from a grocery store, and you eat part of it one day, and you eat the rest of it the next day, and boy, you sort of ate over half of it yourself the day one, and you're still hungry, so you sort of gnaw and suck on the bones, and you gnaw on it, right?

You spend some time gnawing on it. That's the word here. The other word that can also be translated is chew on it. I'm chewing gum right now. You can chew on it, you know?

And it's a very, very interesting, in fact, if you could put up the point, Andrew, here's what Jesus is doing. He's saying gnaw on the gospel. Inwardly digest it day by day.

[22:37] The Lord will raise you up on the last day. I almost put it beforehand because it's sort of the basic idea. I don't know if you noticed, but in this Bible text, with this you wouldn't know it because it's in 39 and 40, just before I read, but four times in this text, Jesus says, and I will raise him up, and I will raise him up, and I will raise him up, and I will raise him up.

I will raise him up, I will raise him up, I will raise him up, I will raise him up. Four times. And in 54, it's the fourth time in just 15 verses that Jesus says this. So he's emphasizing, I'm going to raise you

up.

What do I want to do? What do you want to do? Well, I'm going to raise you up, but what do you need to do? You need to gnaw on the gospel. You need to inwardly digest the gospel day by day because you see, Jesus is doing several things here with this very, very gruesome type.

What it is? It's not so much it's a gruesome analogy, it's a very, very physical analogy. And here's one of the things that we know because we've read the end of the story. And if you've read the end of the story, Jesus rises from the dead.

Jesus rises from the dead and we're waiting for him to come a second time. Hallelujah. And so what's going on here is that Jesus is speaking not just to his hearers, he's also looking down the corridors of history and he sees you and me here in the room today.

[ 24 : 00 ] And the big problem that you and I have today is to think that these are just ideas. They're just stories. They're just spiritual things.

They're just myths. In lots of liberal religious circles, the New Testament would just be sort of a repository of symbols that we use to think about God.

And our tribe, the Anglican tribe, we use our symbols out of the repository of the Bible. We pick the symbols we like because it helps us to think about God.

And it's a very, very common problem. And Jesus wants to say, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no. This is all about flesh. This is going to be about, in fact, you know, if you think, I've used this analogy many times, sorry for those who come to the church a lot.

You know, it might very well be that when Jesus is speaking to these people, he has pita bread and a little bit of parsley in his beard. He didn't have a wife to come and sort of do this.

[ 25 : 09 ] Jesus, you're speaking to people. You got bread in your beard. Let me clean it up for you. He didn't have a wife or a girlfriend to help him with that. So he might very well have been standing there, talking away, flecks of parsley from his tabbouleh, little bits of pita bread stuck in his beard.

I'm the bread of heaven that comes down to save the life of the world. And it's going to all be, like he's talking about flesh, isn't talking about the incarnation.

It's all part of this, that John's gospel presents that there's this, in a sense, one motion, one swooping motion of God, the Son of God, coming down, taking, and the word became, in the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.

He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him, nothing was made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And then a few verses later, and the word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only begotten Son of the Father.

And there's this one movement of God, the Son of God, to come and take on flesh, and live amongst us, and die on the cross, and physically rise from the dead, and ascend into heaven.

[ 26 : 24 ] It's just this one movement, and Jesus is saying to these guys, listen, don't just think this is about ideas. Don't just think this is about symbol. This is about flesh and blood. This is about time.

This is about history. This is about somebody with a birth certificate, and an address. And this is going to eventually be about whips tearing flesh. And it's going to be about walking and falling, and the splinters from the cross, getting in my open wounds in my back, and dust from the ground, getting into the cuts in my back, and infecting.

And it's going to be about blood dripping down my forehead. And it's going to be about soldiers cursing and swearing as they try to manage and manhandle three of us up onto crosses. And it's going to be about them gambling and laughing and mocking and doing all the sort of thing that rough and ready soldiers would do, especially just to mock and insult a captive people, to maybe swear and curse and do all sorts of things to offend.

And it's going to be gory. And it's going to culminate in a body and a grave that decomposes. That's what it's about. It's about real stuff happening.

And what you need to do is you need to gnaw on this. You need to think about the fact that, yes, there's things that happen in real space and time that affect eternity, that connect us to God, the creator of all things, the sustainer of all things.

[ 27 : 54 ] It's connecting us to a new heaven and a new earth. These things came down and walked amongst us and what it takes for you to be made right with me is going to be my flesh broken, dead on a cross.

It's real. It's historical. It's true. It's actual. It's not make-believe. It's not made up. It is completely and utterly true. And you need to remember this.

And you need to inwardly think about this and digest it deep into who you are. And you need to gnaw on it. And one of the things which is so wonderful about this, this happened this morning. I made a bit of a joke about it. But at the 11 o'clock service, we don't have a mic. I mean, mic, this is a mic. That's a mic as well. We don't have somebody standing by the door. And so I'm here and I'm doing my sermon and two street people come in and they disappear out of my sight.

So part of our using this place, part of the lease, is we're not allowed to let people wander around in the building. So I actually had to stop my sermon and go over and try to figure out where they were.

[ 29 : 10 ] Like, I wasn't sure if they'd gone, taken that first door, which would allow them to get back there and get up into the cage and the sound room and break doors and sort of maybe sneak around and get to the alcohol cap.

Like, I didn't know, right? So I had to go see where they were and they wanted to go into the washroom. And let me tell you, it was very distracting for me. For the next three or four minutes, first of all, I lost all ten people at the service.

I half lost them because something was gnawing on them. What's gnawing on them? There's two street people wandering around. It gnaws on them.

They're not really listening. So finally, a person from the congregation, after three or four minutes, he could sense it was bothering everybody. So he came up and went and sat right there and he just, he gave up listening to the rest of the service.

He gnawed on what they were doing so we could gnaw on something different. And you know what? Isn't that part of our life? Don't we gnaw on things? We gnaw on wounds. We gnaw on lack of forgiveness.

[ 30 : 13 ] We gnaw on bills. We gnaw on, and don't we digest things all the time? We inwardly digest things from Netflix and we inwardly digest people who've wronged us or how we're going to wrong them.

Like we, these are very, this is what Jesus is talking about. This isn't, like this isn't space language or astrophysics. It's how we live, isn't it?

And so Jesus is saying, listen, this really happened. And he's saying to these people that really, at the end of the day, what's really going to prove to you that I am the bread that came down from heaven is when I do die on the cross and you know I die on the cross and you know where the grave is and you know my body was put in the grave and you know there's soldiers there and you know the soldiers, Roman soldiers, they guard that tomb and it's probably the same soldiers who stuck the spear in my side that know I'm dead.

They're going to be the same ones guarding the tomb and you know that, you're going to know that the grave is empty and that nobody stole it and you can't account for it and I'm going to appear to people and it's going to go throughout the whole community that I rose from the dead and you're going to see that it's actual, that's going to be the final proof but it's real, it's true and we need to understand that we need to gnaw on the gospel that Jesus gives his flesh for the life of the world.

He gives himself, he dies himself and that's what we need to, we need to remember all the blood and all the gore, we need to remember all of it and its reality, we need to understand the symbolism and the meaning and how it, it just, it blows your mind but we need to gnaw on it.

[ 32 : 00 ] Now, you know, for many, many people in our culture, the idea, you know, it's really funny, in our culture, on one hand, we have a love-hate relationship with religion and spirituality.

I saw a poll this week that how many people still believe in real devil and a real hell? It's really quite astounding how many Canadians still believe in demons in hell.

And you know that in Saudi Arabia, they have a special branch of their police force to go after witches. True, they do. They still kill people for witchcraft in Saudi Arabia.

Very, these ideas haven't gone away. But, you know, we'd be very comfortable, like, it wouldn't excite that much controversy to say that there's a, you know what, like if I was to say that when you die, you go to a better place.

Everybody in Canada just yawns at that. It's just a yawn. But George, a body, a man, who actually dies, and then he rises from the dead.

[ 33 : 18 ] And you're saying that his death, he dies, is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, that this is not just a human being dying, but in some way which is hard for us to understand, it's God dying as well for human beings.

It's the word that made all flesh dying for all flesh that all who put their trust in him might have eternal life. It's a pretty hard idea.

Well, that's exactly how a lot of people at Jesus' time responded to that. Did you know that? Let's see what happens. It's in verse 60. I have to watch my time.

When many of Jesus' disciples, this isn't the 12, at this time there's a broader group of disciples, when they hear it, they said, this is a hard saying, who can listen to it?

But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling, murmuring about this, said to them, do you take offense of this? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before?

[ 34 : 23 ] And just pause. You see, in John's Gospel, you have to know what's gone on before this. How does Jesus ascend? What's in the way before he ascends? The cross.

His ascent begins with his death upon the cross. So if you're having a hard time with this, guys, wait till you see the soldiers cursing and swearing as they hammer in the nails to my wrists and my ankles and as they place the cross in the ground and lift it up.

If you're having a hard time with this, wait till you see that. Wait till you see the sword piercing to my side. Wait till you see me being embalmed and then the empty tomb and then there is the ascension.

Then he says something, verse 63, is the spirit who gives life. The flesh is of no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life, but there are some of you who do not believe. I mean, here's the same type of idea of the father drawing him. It's an invitation for us to call out to the Holy Spirit to make the words of Jesus come alive in us. Father, help me.

[ 35 : 40 ] But isn't that interesting? But there are some of you who do not believe. For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe and who it was who would betray him.

Like, what's up with that? What's up with this idea that Jesus knew that Judas was going to betray him? Like, what's up with that? Why didn't Jesus kick him out?

Like, that's what we would do, wouldn't it? If you knew right now that one of your friends in a couple of months was going to betray you in such a way that it would threaten your life, how many of you would still be friends with them?

I mean, let's be honest, some of you would slug them right now, wouldn't you? If you really knew they were going to betray you. So what's up with this with Jesus? Well, let's continue to see.

verse 65, and he said, this is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father. After this, many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with Jesus.

[ 36 : 44 ] So Jesus said to the twelve, do you want to go away as well? And Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? This is such a wonderful phrase, isn't it? To whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life and we have believed and have come to know that you are the Holy One of God. Jesus answered them, did I choose you, the twelve?

One of you is the devil. He spoke of Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray him. I sort of missed a point. If you could put the point up, Andrew, the final point, but I sort of missed it.

You can just sort of read it. But actually, it fits with this too. The real God offers a real gospel because he really loves you as you really are.

You know, one of the wonderful things about this, you know, it says, Jesus loves me, this I know for the Bible tells me so. John 3, 16, for God so loved the world. I shared this with somebody in the coffee shop about two weeks ago.

[ 37 : 42 ] In fact, it was very humbling. On the same day, there were two people who bore witness to Jesus. Me to this person in this coffee shop and then I was there later on in the afternoon and a mentally ill guy to another mentally ill guy.

Me and the mentally ill guy working on the same team. If you're proud, that's very insulting. But you know what? I have done nothing to deserve eternal life.

I am a donkey. I am Balaam's ass. God speaks through me. The Holy Spirit doesn't move in our midst. Everything I say is like onion, those little bits of the onion skin that just everybody throws out that just blow away.

Unless the Holy Spirit moves, I say, my words are worth nothing. And it's a great honor that I would share with a barista on his break and that later on a mentally ill guy would share the gospel with a mentally ill guy.

And I said to the barista, for God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son to the end that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. And I said, that's you.

[ 38 : 52 ] That's you. So what's with Judas? You know what? If Jesus was like you and me and you and I know that there's going to be one of our friends or one of our family are going to be a Judas that are going to get me in trouble with the law and maybe get me killed and we'd boot them out.

In fact, we might boot them in their butt before we boot them out of our friendship. Well, then they could just go away and say, well, that's just George. He doesn't even give me a chance.

Like, who does he think he is? You know what? Judas can't say that Jesus ever stopped loving him. Can he? Jesus never stopped loving Judas.

Jesus' love is unending. Judas' problem wasn't that Jesus stopped loving him. Judas' problem was that he refused to repent and believe.

He refused. the unending love of Jesus. Friends, if anyone is here and they feel they are far from God, Jesus' love towards you is unending.

[ 40 : 12 ] He will not cast you out. He will not kick you away. but he respects your freedom.

You know, there's a very old Christian saying that the door to hell is locked from the inside. Not the outside, but the inside.

The theme song of hell is, I did it my way. That's what the theme song of hell is. Frank Sinatra, I did it my way.

But Jesus doesn't cast us out. He died for you. He died for me. He died. He really died. And he really loves you.

And his heart is that for every one of us here that we would call out to him to be our savior, to be our bread of life. And the promise of the Bible is that when we call out to him that he will be our bread of life, that he will be our savior and Lord, the promise of the gospel is and I will raise him up.

[ 41 : 18 ] I will raise him up. I will raise him up. I will raise him up. Brethren and sister, if you are in Christ, you might be feeling weak. You might be feeling lonely. Jesus will not let you go.

The father brought you to Jesus. Jesus will never let you go. You have believed in him and trusted in him. You already have, in a sense, your passport and your ticket for the new heaven and the new earth.

And Jesus will never take it back from you. He will never take it back from you. He will raise you up. He will raise you up. Let's stand.

Bow our heads in prayer. Father, thank you for Jesus.

Thank you that he really did live amongst us, that he really did live a sinless life, that he really did die upon the cross, that he really did die as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, that he really did taste all there is to taste of sin and death, that he really did defeat death and that which causes death, which is our sin, that he really did defeat that in his resurrection.

[ 42 : 26 ] And so, Father, unlike the police officer, as brave and courageous as he was, who could only offer his life, Father, for another human being, that that other human being might live while he died.

Father, we thank you for Jesus, that he not only died upon the cross, that he was resurrected. And so, as the resurrected Savior and Lord, Father, we thank you that he can offer us his death to stand for us and he can offer us that, he can really give us, Father, life that will never end.

Father, pour out the Holy Spirit upon us. Help us to gnaw on the gospel, who Jesus is and what he did for us. Help us to inwardly digest day by day who Jesus is and what he did for us.

And, Father, we thank you that you will raise us up. All this we ask and thank in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen.