

# Jesus & Hell

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[ 0 : 00 ] Hi, my name is George Sinclair. I'm the lead pastor of Church of the Messiah.

It is wonderful that you would like to check out some of the sermons done by Church of the Messiah, either by myself or some of the others. Listen, just a couple of things. First of all, would you pray for us that we will open God's Word well to His glory and for the good of people like yourself? The second thing is, if you aren't connected to a church and if you are a Christian, we really, I would really like to encourage you to find a good local church where they believe the Bible, they preach the gospel, and if you have some trouble finding that, send us an email. We will do what we can to help connect you with a good local church wherever you are. And if you're a non-Christian checking us out, we're really, really, really glad you're doing that. Don't hesitate to send us questions. It helps me actually to know, as I'm preaching, how to deal with the types of things that you're really struggling with. So God bless.

Father, I ask that you would, Father, we're dealing with a passage of Scripture that many Christians in Canada, many of us maybe feel very uncomfortable with. And so Father, we ask that the Holy Spirit would come with gentle but deep power to bring us to Jesus. And as your Holy Spirit brings us to Jesus, that you, Father, will bring us to the words that Jesus speaks to us this morning.

And Father, help us to listen to him. And we ask that the Holy Spirit would bring the words of Jesus deep into who we are so that it will be his word that forms us. And we ask this in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen. Please be seated.

So let's just be frank about a couple of things. You've heard the text that I'm preaching through the Gospel of Mark. And we just had a text read which talks about hell. And for Canadians, hell is a repellent topic. In fact, actually, I think if our non-Christian friends, maybe it's one of you who are here this morning or maybe one of you who are here online and you're just sort of curious and you've been either watching this sermon downstream or you're participating in the service through online, you'd probably say to me, George, no one is frightened by hell in Canada. Like in Canada, no one at all is frightened by hell. And the fact is, George, that we will only think less of you if you mention hell. And we will only think less of Jesus and we will only think less of Christianity.

[ 3 : 15 ] If you persist and talk as if you actually believe it, we will mock you. And in fact, George, you might as well just accept the fact that in Canada, it is an unwinnable, unwinnable, I don't know if that's a word, it's an unwinnable thing to hold. Like you'll never convince us.

It's just ridiculous. And if you really believe it, we'll just think there's something evil about you. So that I think, I don't know, I think that's sort of a fair way to describe how much of our culture would think about this topic. In fact, if you think about it, you know, if you watch a Netflix or some other comedy special, if the person came bounding out all chipper and then said, I'm going to talk about hell, everybody would laugh, right? That's what they would do. They would just laugh.

That's the normal North American response to this. And this attitude seeps into us as Christians and makes us very uncomfortable with this doctrine. So what are we going to do? We're going to be looking at verses 30 to 50. But just before we go up to verse 30, let's just look once again at the words at the end, the words about hell. And if once again, if Claire could put it up, but if you have your Bibles, it's page 58. And we begin at verse 43. And here's what Jesus says.

And here's part of the problem about the text. It's not a problem from one point of view, but it is a problem from another point of view. The problem with the text is that this is the same just type of language that Jesus is going to use about, you know, feeding the poor and caring for the sick and loving people. And it's the same language. It's not as if all of a sudden, you know how sometimes when you're watching movies or something and all of a sudden it moves to a slightly different color or the color template or filter and maybe becomes a little bit fuzzy. And you know, it's like a dream sequence or a memory or something like that. In the original language, if you're reading along, it's the same type of language as he talks about the other things that we like. And here's what he says in verse 43, before we go back to verse 30 and look at it, it goes like this. And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell.

And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell. And here he quotes from Isaiah verse 48, where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.

[ 6 : 25 ] So a couple of things about this. Jesus is saying that hell is real. He's obviously using a little bit of symbolic language, but he's using some symbolic language to talk about something which is real. The other thing about it is that Jesus is talking about hell as if it will not be empty. And thirdly, he's talking about it as if human beings listening to him and all human beings are in danger of ending up in hell. That's what he's saying. He says hell three times.

And not only does he say it three times, he says it in a memorable way. At the eight o'clock service, there's a person who comes to the eight o'clock service who's involved in theater.

And as I said to the two people who are involved in the theater, I mean, like live theater, and I said, this is the type of line that if you had it in a play, it would be memorable because of the rhythm, you know, of the hand, the foot, the eye. And they said, that's exactly right. A line like this is more memorable because of the type of rhythm and the other imagery that goes along with it.

So in other words, Jesus says it three times. He says it in a memorable way. And he says it in the same type of language as he talks about the types of things that we would like. In fact, actually, if you think about it for a second, what we'd like is life and the kingdom of God.

And he's not saying that if you cut off your hand, so you enter light. I mean, he's talking about people who are alive. He's talking about how there's basically two destinations. And even to say that is something which we Canadians, we balk at.

[ 8 : 15 ] There's only two ultimate endings. And one ending is described with hell, hell, hell, unquenchable fire, and always nibbling worms.

And the other end, the end we like, is described as life and life and the kingdom of God. And those are the ends.

So what do we do? Well, generally speaking, you look at context to see if that's going to help. And the context is profoundly, deeply, satisfyingly helpful, but not in the way that we Canadians want it to be helpful.

But we need to get over our being Canadians and listen to how what the context that Jesus puts it in is, in fact, deeply and profoundly helpful. So let's go back to verse 30, the beginning of our text for this week, and that's found on page 56.

And if later on, you decide to sort of catch up on the Gospel of Mark to see where we've come to in this ancient eyewitness biography of Jesus, written while eyewitnesses were still alive, that what we see that's just a little bit before this, Jesus, for the first time, prophesied or predicted that he was going to be crucified and die and rise again.

[ 9 : 47 ] And Peter responds to that by saying, no way, Jose, no way, Jesus, that's never going to happen to you. Jesus rebukes Peter and says, you're not thinking in terms of how I'm thinking, you're thinking in terms of how the devil thinks.

And then Jesus gives his teaching about how people who want to follow Jesus, they need to pick up their cross and follow him. And then the very next thing, which is just what we looked at last week, is about a week after that, Jesus takes Peter, James, and John up to a high mountain, and he's transfigured.

Before them, in a sense, it's a vision of heaven. And the new heaven and the new earth, Moses and Elijah are there. And then Jesus goes down the mountain, and he comes down the mountain, and he goes right into the normal type of mess that we as human beings sort of have to live with, of sickness and demonic oppression and arguments and religion and all of that.

And the disciples aren't able to cast the demon out of the young boy, but Jesus does. And that's what's just happened. And now the story continues, and here's how it goes in verse 30.

They went on from there. That's Jesus and the 12. They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And Jesus did not want anyone to know, for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, the Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him.

[ 11 : 14 ] And when he is killed, after three days he will rise. But they did not understand the saying and were afraid to ask him. Now we're going to camp in that just a little bit because it's a bit longer than we will for the other things because it's exceptionally, you know, important.

Just this past week I was watching and listening to something on YouTube, an interview by a fellow by the name of Sean McDowell with a person by the name of Andrew Clavin.

And it was a very interesting interview. Andrew Clavin grew up as a secular Jew in an artistic family, and at a very early age he recognized, and others recognized, that he was very creative.

And in fact, he had a very long career in that artistic community, that sort of upper type of artistic community.

As he says in the interview, he lived in either London, England, New York, or Los Angeles. And he's a successful thriller writer. He got into screenwriting, was very successful at that.

[ 12 : 24 ] And the circles he traveled in were these circles of very creative people, Hollywood people, literary people, and he was very at home in that.

He was raised as a secular Jew. But through a series of circumstances, and that's partially what the interview is all about, at the age of 50, he became a Christian. At the age of 50, he became a Christian.

And the interview, one of the things which is really interesting in the interview is he describes how his father, who was completely a non-practicing Jewish man, when Andrew was 15, he'd started to develop a huge love of the stories of Arthur, you know, the Knights of the Round Table and all of that.

He developed a huge interest in it. And so he's reading all of these old things about it, and he realizes there's all this Christian symbolism in it. So he thinks to himself, well, I don't know anything at all about Christian symbolism.

Like, I know zero about it. And so he decided he'd find a New Testament. And he did, and he brought it home, and he's lying in his bed at night reading the Gospel of Luke, because he'd somehow figured out that Luke had the Christmas story, and he thought he'd start with that.

[ 13 : 31 ] And as he's reading the Gospel of Luke, not because he's even remotely interested in Christianity, he just really wants to try to understand the Arthurian legends better. His dad comes into the room, sees him reading the New Testament, and his dad says to him, how dare you bring that book into our house?

That is the book of the enemy. It is the book of the people who've killed millions of Jewish people in the Holocaust. It is the book of people who have been prejudiced against our people for 2,000 years.

How dare you bring that book into our house? And it is the book of the enemy. So one of the questions that came to Andrew was, like, how did you overcome that to become a Christian?

Like, how did you get your mind around that? And Andrew said, that actually was one of the harder barriers for me to become a Christian. The long history of people saying that it was the Jews that killed Jesus and that we are a hateful group.

But then as I'm thinking about it, and he's been reading the New Testament over and over and over again as part of his religious quest, which will culminate in him as he puts it, one day he's driving in Los Angeles and it's as if God speaks to him.

[ 14 : 59 ] But it's not God. He says, just this has overwhelming sense that he's become a Christian. He needs to get baptized. I need to get baptized. And he said, I came to realize that Christians who said that it's Jesus who killed, that Jews killed Jesus were wrong.

that ultimately it is human beings, the human race that killed Jesus. Now, in the interview, he didn't say anything about Bible verses, but the verse that we have before us is actually exactly what Andrew Clavin just said.

If you look at the key verse, the prophecy in verse 31, Jesus was teaching his disciples, saying to them, the son of man is going to be delivered into the hands of men and they will kill him.

And when he is killed, after three days, he will rise. In the first prophecy, he says it's going to be the Jewish leaders that he's handed to. But in this text, it's very specifically all human beings.

He's being handed over to human beings and human beings will kill him. That's exactly what this text is talking about. In fact, it adds something to it that, I mean, maybe Andrew would know this.

[ 16 : 11 ] It wasn't part of the interview, is that the word delivered is a very, very good word. Notice that the son of man is going to be delivered. It's a very, very good word.

But what you don't get in English is that in Greek, there's a tense called the divine passive. It's a tense which is used when it's God who does something. And that's the tense for the word delivered.

So what Jesus is saying here is the son of man is going to be delivered by God the Father into the hands of human beings, that's you and me, and we will kill him.

Some of you, I think most of you, maybe all of you know the distinction between got to and get to. The way to read this, you see, if you think about it for a second, if Jesus knows that this is what, that he's going to be crucified, he could have done things to get out of it.

Or he could have this prophecy that he's delivered hanging over him a little bit like a curse. Sort of like those of you who know a little bit about, you know, Greek mythology, I think it's the Oedipus who's cursed to kill his father or something.

[ 17 : 25 ] I think it's the Oedipus curse that there's a prophecy that he'll kill his father and he tries to avoid it and he ends up killing his father anyway. And it could read it as if that's what Jesus is saying here, as if it's some type of a fate which has been put on him that he doesn't want.

But the way to understand it is not that I've got to do this, but that I get to do this. I get to do this. I get to be the means by which human beings who are destined to hell can be delivered from that fate into something they don't deserve, into something we don't deserve, which is the kingdom of God and which is life.

The other thing here which is sort of very important for us to understand about the text is why on earth is it that in the year 2022, in post-modern, post-truth Ottawa, there's even a couple of us who are reading this ancient eyewitness biography of Jesus.

Now, this, by the way, is something that, you know, that generally skeptics don't really actually give their mind much attention to.

But the fact is the only reason that we're reading this is because the person of Jesus who really did live really did make such predictions.

[ 19 : 03 ] In fact, including, if you look at all of the eyewitness biographies, details of his death, which he could not possibly have managed himself, namely that the Romans would decide to crucify him.

And he really did die on the cross. And he really did, on the third day, rise from the dead and appear to many people who recognized him and saw that he wasn't a person who had just barely, by the skin of his teeth, survived a harrowing experience of flogging and the nailing of the wrists and the nailing of the feet and the dehydration and the spear piercing.

And somehow or another was able to hobble along, having had all of that happen, is the evidence of all of the different people and sometimes pairs, sometimes groups, sometimes individuals, sometimes large groups, is that he was alive.

And that's the only explanation as to why it is that we are still reading this. Do you know, this is a true fact. There is only one religion that was started in the time of the Roman Empire that still exists.

It's Christianity. Only religion. But of all the ones that started during the time of the Roman Empire. And, you know, I know that there's no technical, logical, that it doesn't sort of logically or rationally follow, but gosh, it follows.

[ 20 : 44 ] You see, if Jesus says, I've come to die on a cross, I get to do this, and I'm going to die on the cross, and I'm going to rise from the dead, that, at a technically literal, like, logic level, doesn't vindicate that he is who he said he is, and he's going to accomplish what he says he's going to accomplish.

But if that doesn't vindicate him, what on earth will? I mean, that clearly vindicates him. Good grief. Defeating death? Rising from the dead? If that doesn't vindicate his words?

Well, I just, I, it's, if we think about it seriously, that has to vindicate him. And not just vindicate that he wasn't a bad man who died because he was a bad person, because that wouldn't be the case of defeating death and defeating sin, but it vindicates him that he is, in fact, God, the Son of God, that he is, in fact, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world, that that vindicates that that is who he is.

And it's after he makes this prediction, and it's only because this prediction came true that Mark writes his eyewitness biography, which will end, spoiler alert, with Jesus, the tomb being empty, and Jesus being alive.

That also means that we need to listen to his warnings about hell very seriously. Now, I'm not going to spend that much time on the next bits.

[ 22 : 15 ] They're all very, very important. I'll make a few comments about them, but it's very interesting about how the text goes and moves towards this part of the teaching about hell. And it's especially hard because it's especially interesting because it brings home, psychologically, a better understanding of what hell is.

Look at what happens very next, verse 33. And they, oh, by the way, verse 32, but they didn't understand the saying and were afraid to ask him. See, even that little tiny bit is very significant.

Why are you afraid to ask a question often? Well, you don't want to look stupid. Well, why don't you want to look stupid? Because you're proud. Because you're proud.

Because I'm proud. Verse 33, verse 33, and they came to Capernaum, and when he was in the house, he asked them, what were you discussing on the way?

But they kept silent, verse, page 58, verse 34, for on the way, they had argued with one another about who was the greatest. And he sat down and called the 12, and he said to them, he said, if anyone would, if anyone, if anyone would be first, he must be last and servant of all.

[ 23 : 36 ] And he took a child and put him in the midst of them, and taking him in his arms, he said to them, whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me receives not me, but him who sent me.

In other words, God the Father. This other language that God the Father has sent Jesus to die. Now, here's another thing. You know, it's very interesting.

I was reading a 19th century commentary as part of my preparation for this. And one of the things a person in the 19th century, you know, it's just so interesting when you read something which is like 150 some odd years old, and all the disciples were all lower working class.

And the person writing the commentary wouldn't have been from a lower working class background. He was from a bit of a better background. And he just sort of makes the comment, imagine lower working class people thinking they're the greatest.

But the fact of the matter is, how uncomfortable would every one of us be if God could reveal our fantasies?

[ 24 : 45 ] How many of us think we're the greatest? It might be in Bible study, it might be singing, it might be cooking, it might be holiness, it might be prayer.

How many of us wouldn't be, well, how many of us if God was just to reveal some fantasy about how we thought we were the greatest and all of a sudden he put it on the screen and it was obvious that it came from me or it came from one of you, every single one of us, God would find something.

And gosh, if it was me, two things would happen. I would get so red and there wouldn't be a crack small enough for me to cringe into.

Some of us might not be as obvious about our our personal fantasies about greatness, but then the second illustration is very, very telling.

Verse 38, John said to him, that's John, the disciple, teacher, we saw someone, verse 38, we saw someone casting out demons in your name and we tried to stop him because he was not following us.

[ 26 : 05 ] But Jesus said, do not stop him for no one who does a mighty work, and by the way, mighty work is literal, but it's a little bit misleading. It's referring to a miracle.

So no one who does a miracle in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. For the one who is not against us is for us. For truly I say to you, whoever gives a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ will by no means lose his reward.

Now, here's the thing which is not as obvious. It's there in English, but it's not as obvious in English as it is in the original language, is if we were to try to actually make it more accurate, but it would look weird, in verse 38, because he was not following us.

That's the issue. And not necessarily Jesus. It's us 12. He's not with us 12 because we're the greatest. And it's so funny because if you go back, the story, which is just part of the same chapter, is the fact that they weren't able to cast a demon out.

And so here's a guy doing what they couldn't do. But they still think they're greater than him. And so they want him to stop because of us.

[ 27 : 29 ] Well, isn't that very true as well? I mean, right now, by the way, and this is not, if John Charest had won, the John Charest people would all be feeling very good. If the Lesley and Lewis had won, they'd all been feeling really good.

But right now, it's the Pierre-Paul-Lavere people because it's us. We're the ones. Right? It's us because we're the anti-charismatics. It's us because we are the charismatics.

It's us because we have the big church. It's us because we have the small church. It's us because just you fill in the blank. And there's a type of, in a sense of a group pride.

And you see the thing, I mean, here it is. What, you know, Jesus has just described the very nature. If what Jesus has said is true, then the very, very heart of God is not about him having his glory so completely and utterly and obviously seen that we just cower.

but he wants us to see his glory and he wants us to see his beauty but the way he most fully reveals himself is by, is by God, the Son of God taking him to himself human nature and coming and walking amongst us so that he would die on a cross.

[ 28 : 47 ] Like love. Taking the lowest place. the opposite of pride. And here we've had the two proud to ask a question.

They think they're the greatest. They think we're the greatest. And it's in this context that he's going to say a couple of things about hell. And notice first verse 42.

Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea.

Now, little ones just mean simple Christians. In fact, it's another way to describe a Christian. We're little ones. I'm a little one.

And so are you. You're not the greatest. I am a little one. And it's a very, very, I think, a very, very significant placement.

[ 29 : 50 ] And it's not as if, because in fact it is, God looks down the ages and says, you know, George, well, you're not as clever as you think you are.

But, you don't have to be very clever to try to do, well, it could be this, it could be that, it could be this, it could be that, and hell is just a symbolic thing and it's a metaphor and, by the way, let me tell you about the history of Gehenna and the valley and do all of that and what I end up doing is I end up, by the end of it, thinking, oh, well, good grief, there's sin, hell doesn't even exist or if it does exist, it doesn't really matter.

It's just a metaphor, you know, for some type of psychological distress and if I could, I could do that and if I was to teach that and then it was to encourage people like you or people watching to say, well, I don't have to even think about hell.

Jesus is saying, George, if you do something like that, it would be better for you if a millstone was hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea. If the Sunday school teachers do that, it would be better if the men's group, the women's ministry, if they were to do that, if the small group leaders were to do that, it would be better if God, if you just took a millstone around you and throw you into the depths of the sea, that would be better for you.

And if your hand causes you, verse 43, to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire.

[ 31 : 27 ] And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out.

It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.

I believe Jesus rose from the dead. I believe that he is the Savior and the Lord.

And because he has told me, I believe that hell exists. If you look at it, it's sort of there in English.

It's also more obvious in the original language, but it's there in the English. If you look at verse 43 again, it says at the end of verse 43, it is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell.

[ 32 : 41 ] The other two images, verse 46, thrown into hell and verse 47, thrown into hell. I mean, sorry, verse 45 and verse 47, thrown into hell. this is, this beautifully captures the fact that there's sort of two things that happen.

The first thing is that I, the person going to hell willingly goes. They choose to go. And at the same time, it's also understood as something that God sends you to, without any contradiction between the two.

You see, one of the things, and it takes longer than I have, I'm just going to throw this out, it's, the doctrine of hell is not a bug that needs to be fixed in Christianity.

It's a design feature. No, no religion, no spirituality, no philosophy or theology, greater values, human freedom and autonomy than the Christian faith and hell is the testimony to that.

God doesn't force you. Demons force you. God, the true and living God, the triune God doesn't force you. You choose to go.

[ 34 : 16 ] You want to go. God at the end, the end, the end of the end which is the beginning of the true beginning says, child, you don't like me calling you child, you'd rather that I called you God.

you find my existence, my existence only makes you angry.

My love only makes you cringe. my truth only makes you furious. My beauty only makes you gag.

And you would rather have your own way and your own conceits and your own little rule than be in my presence.

you would choose anything other than to be in my presence, healed and unveiled. And that is what you choose right till the end and that is where you will go.

[ 35 : 26 ] And I'm, obviously, it's a metaphor and I can't say that I'm making a doctrinal statement here. But if you were locked up for all eternity with your pride and your anger and your envy and your greed and your lust and your resentments and not only locked up by yourself but with others, it would be your very own anger and fantasies and hatreds and rivalries and lusts that would be the fire that would consume you and the worms that would eat you.

and what the gospel is all about is not that George is so good that he's going to go to heaven but that God in his grace has provided a means by which the end of the end of the end of George and the beginning of the beginning of the beginning of life after death for George is not hell but that when I'm in a sense stop running from Christ and allow him to catch me and take me he takes me and transfers me from a fate of hell and he transfers me to be his child by adoption and grace and clothe me in such a way that I will be fit for eternity and this is not of my doing it's not of my work

I can only allow Christ to do that for me and in me he died the death that I deserved he entered into all of the there is of death whatever that means which I could not do but to remain there and be in hell he offers me his perfect obedience to the father to clothe me with his righteousness which I could I could never have and he transfers me from the kingdom of darkness that ends in death and hell into the kingdom of light and life and truth and goodness and beauty which ends in the kingdom of God and life after life after life after life and it is all his doing not mine I receive it as an act of grace it says we're gripped with this that we begin to understand anew the wonder of the gospel when the bible talks about how you were lost and you have to be saved that's what it means you were lost and you need to be transferred by Christ and what he's done on the cross you need to be taken from there into his kingdom that's what being saved means that's what Christ has done for us and it's only as these truths grip us that we can be really just you know one of the things about it you know one of the things that Andrew Clavin said that one of the things that kept him from the Christian faith is and I hope

I pronounce this right he called it the banal optimism of so many Christians that if you just you know you read a bible verse and your day will be successful and he just knew that couldn't possibly be true it was sort of just this weird optimism he certainly knew it couldn't be true because no fiction character portrayed like that is actually believable and so you know here's the thing as Christians if you give your life to Christ you will have many many hard things that are going to happen to you in life many hard things will happen to you you'll discover hard things about yourself and Christ will ask you to do hard things but it's a very very different thing to do these hard things when you know that the end of the end of the end of the end is entering into life that's the end you will enter into life and that is unstoppable when you put your faith and trust in Christ it is unstoppable and so texts like this help us to understand the wonder of the gospel and also the need to pray for the lost

I just want to say if there are any here or any who are watching I know you're not frightened by hell but it exists and it real and there is this wonderful Savior who died for you and to know him is to know life you might have very very hard times right now and you might have very hard times in the days to come some people here who are here today are going through very very difficult and hard times but when you put your faith and trust in Christ the end of the story for you is life and that life begins to be a life that you experience now even if there's things going wrong with your body and your finances and your mind and all of those other types of things that seed of life is something that will only grow and will end with you seeing God face to face and you being like Christ and so there's no better time than now to call out to Jesus and ask that he would be your Savior and your Lord let's stand bow our heads in prayer

[ 41 : 14 ] Father we ask that you help us to be mindful of the things the true things the spiritual things the things which Christ talks us to about about our destinies Father we all know that human beings die and we all somehow blithely or just arrogantly think that we will all go to a better place just because we're us and Christ has issued a wake up call to us that just as we've lived our lives many of us in rebellion against you if Christ does not save us that will be the final word about us but we thank you Father that that is not the final word about those who put their faith and trust in Christ and so we ask Lord that you renew within us an appreciation of the wonder of the gospel and of what Jesus has done for us and grant us Father a heart to pray for those who are around us that they will come to a saving faith in Jesus and grant us

Father the courage to bear witness to Jesus and we ask all of these things in the name of Jesus your Son and our Savior Amen you Thank you.