

God's Inerrant Authoritative Word

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[0 : 00] I'll be standing by your heads in prayer for a moment. Father, we ask that you would continue to show great kindness to us this morning by sending the Holy Spirit so that, Father, as we think about your Word, that we can think honestly about ourselves and honestly about your Word.

And so, Father, more deeply appreciate not only who Jesus is and what he has done for us on the cross, but also, Father, what you do for us through your Word, what you desire to do in our lives, your great kindness and your mercy that you desire us to know as we read your Word.

So, Father, we ask that you would do this wonderful work of your Holy Spirit in our lives this morning. And we ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen. Please be seated. So, if you're here this morning and you're sort of outside of the Christian faith or you're not sure, maybe you're in the process of having your Christian faith deconstructed and you're not quite sure what's going on, maybe if you're watching online and you're not sure about some of these things, it might catch you by surprise to know that a lot of Christians, in fact, all Christians at some times, but many Christians at many times actually are quite frightened by God's Word, that God's Word is a frightening thing to them, to us.

I was speaking yesterday at another church about a hot topic, and I was there to represent, in a sense, to understand that it actually is a hot topic, and the Bible is actually quite clear on it.

And it was very obvious to me as I was listening to these very, very lovely people who love Jesus, that there were these very significant parts of the Bible that they were just afraid of.

[1 : 56] They just really didn't like it. And that might be a surprise if you're outside the Christian faith to understand that that's something that Christians struggle with.

In fact, actually, it's a very common thing that there are large parts of God's Word, and even the idea of God having a Word, that we find very troubling. And the text that we're about to look at, we're going through the book of Ezra and Nehemiah, the text we're about to look at is almost like ground zero.

It's almost like if you wanted to have a mic drop moment for why you said, George, that's exactly why I don't like the idea of God having spoken in His Word.

It's almost perfectly articulated in the Bible itself. So it would be a great help for me and a great help for you if you open your Bibles to Nehemiah chapter 8.

And we're going to look at this story, Nehemiah chapter 8. It's in what Christians call the Old Testament and our Jewish friends call the Tanakh. And just in terms of we've been preaching through Ezra and Nehemiah, and what we've been looking at the last two weeks is some of the things going on while the wall was being built.

[3 : 08] And two weeks ago, the external threat. Last week, the problem of oppression within the community that could have undermined the wall rebuilding or building.

And then we skipped chapter 6 and 7 because just for a time constraint, we can't go through every chapter. But if you go back and read it, chapter 6 is about dealing with traitors in the midst.

But you also find out that the wall gets completed. And then chapter 7 is sort of a bit of a reminiscence of the original settlers that came 100 years earlier. And now the story continues, and here's how it begins.

Chapter 8, verse 1. And all the people gathered as one man, as one person, into the square before the water gate. So all of the people have gathered from the communities.

They've all gathered within the area now that there's walls around them. And they've gathered in the square before the water gate. And here's the bit. First, next bit. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses that the Lord had commanded Israel.

[4 : 16] They told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses that the Lord had commanded Israel. Now, let's just be very, very honest.

This touches on why many, many people in Canada would say the last place they would go. They'll consider Stoics. They'll consider Buddhists. They'll consider Wiccans.

They'll consider atheists. They'll consider everybody before they would consider the Bible. And it's all perfectly encapsulated here. First of all, it says law. And then secondly, it says commanded. Well, who likes that? Like maybe if it was love letters suggested or proposed, then maybe we'd want to read it. But it says law and command.

And inevitably, in our consciousness, we just think of a bully commanding us. Or, you know, we think of maybe some crazed terrorist coming into the room with their guns commanding us to do things.

[5 : 19] And who wants that? Who wants to have anything to do with something like that? And we just rebel against it. And we might say, George, yeah, there's the odd bit, you know, about love. And, oh, yeah, you know, the Lord is my shepherd.

And walking through the valley of Shadrach. That's all very comforting. But at the end of the day, George, other than picking and choosing a few little tidbits that we like, the whole idea that there's a law that God commands us.

Like who wants that? Who likes being told what to do? So, well, what do we say?

Well, let's just a couple of things. The first thing, just very, very brief. You could put up the first point. The first thing to understand is, before I explain what exactly is happening, that God caused the word to be written, and it's like a law, and it's, you know, commanded.

The first thing we have to understand is what Christians understand is that what the triune God reveals is truth. It's true truth. And this, by the way, is something that, for a lot of reasonable people in our culture, should all of a sudden perk our interest.

[6 : 30] Because we live in a very complicated time when there are lots of people who affirm completely crazy, kooky things, and they yell them and scream them, and we can't even have a discussion about it.

But just so you know, it's not that the Bible is going to teach us really crazy, kooky things. It's going to say some things which are a bit perplexing to us, some things which are threatening. But from beginning to end, all the Bible is concerned with, and they want human beings to be concerned with, is truth, like real truth, true truth.

In fact, actually, if you go through all the way through the Bible, we'll start to understand that our minds need food, and the food that our minds need is truth. And to live in a world that has just personal truths, and as if you can just affirm whatever you want, and you can't even, no, no, no. The end of the day, the Bible is on the side of those of us who just want to know what the real world is like, what's true, and that's what the Bible is going to reveal. And people might say, okay, well, okay, George, that's sort of interesting, but you know what? Like, it's a law, and it's commanding us. Like, who wants that? Well, let's consider something for a moment about that. Just think about what it's like for us, whether you're a Christian or a non-Christian, and you pray.

[7 : 51] And I know that, in fact, it wouldn't surprise me if I was to talk to lots of non-Christians to find out that they pray more than Christians do. And people outside the Christian faith, that many of them might actually be way better at praying than Christians are.

But often when people pray, they don't maybe just pray when things are going very well, but they'll often pray when they're in trouble. And how do we pray when we're in trouble?

Well, if you think about it for a moment, when you're in trouble, when I'm in trouble and I pray, often what I want is I want, all of a sudden, for God to reach down from heaven and connect little wires to people's jaws and to their arms and their legs, and all of a sudden I want God to make everybody into like marionettes or puppets.

And I want Him to be up there controlling the things, and I want Him to lead me over here, and then Him to move my mouth so I say the right thing, and I want Him to take the person and this person, whatever I'm in trouble with, and I want God to move them around, and I want Him to move their mouths so they say the right things.

And I want Him to completely and utterly control everything. And after He's controlled everything, within about 10 seconds of Him having controlled everything and rescued me, I want Him to go away. I want Him to leave me alone.

[9 : 07] And I know I want Him to leave me alone when I am challenged or tempted to maybe slander somebody or share a gossip that will hurt somebody, or I want to have some other type of sin.

And I sort of come up to it, and it's almost as if I have this opportunity to slander somebody, and it's almost, you know, we've all had this experience, and there's a little voice that says, you shouldn't do that, that's wrong.

And you sort of say to the little voice, shut up, little voice. Yeah, yeah, I hear you. But then you go ahead and you want it, because you really want to say the slander. You know, you really want to lie. You really want to share the true thing that's just going to ruin the person's reputation.

You just really, really want to do it, right? You want God to go away. And that's how we human beings are. And so part of the problem of thinking about God speaking is that we don't realize that we're unbalanced.

I'm unbalanced. I think the problem is God speaking, but the problem isn't so much that God's speaking, although maybe that's still a problem, but it's that I'm unbalanced about it.

[10 : 10] And I want to pick and choose. And, you know, that just doesn't happen. And if a person's real, you can't pick and choose what they're going to say. Like, if I'm going to have real kids, I can't choose.

Well, good luck if I get to try to control my kids about what they say. Like, good luck for that. Maybe it works when they're two. Probably doesn't even work when they're two. And good luck when they're teenagers, and then they become adults to try to control what they say.

They're going to say what they're going to say. And that's just what it's like to have a relationship with somebody who's real. And if God's real, you can't control what they say. The problem's you, not God. But just think about this a little bit more.

The fact of the matter is, and this is going to maybe be a shocking idea, at the end of the day, the Bible being God's Word written is what you long for.

It's what you desire to actually be real. Well, every human being unrecognizably wants the Bible to actually be real and true, to have it actually be something that God caused to be written so we would hear him speak.

[11 : 20] And you say, George, that's completely and utterly crazy. It's the last thing in the world I want. But you think about it for a second. And what is one of the times that many of us feel something like transcendence, something like awe, something like beauty, something like glory.

And we sort of feel almost it's when we see the mountains. Like the first time I was driving close to the Rockies, it's an overwhelming experience. Those times when you're just in a forest and you can feel the silence and the stillness.

Or maybe the wonderful, you know, you're looking out on a scene of the water or the ocean, and there's a breeze and it's a beautiful sunny day. And you see the white caps and you see the things glittering.

And it's just beautiful. And you're feeling healthy and just feel at one with the world. And you sort of feel like it's about to speak to you and you want it to speak to you. And every human being has that experience. And the Bible tells you, you don't get to hear the sea and the rocks speak to you, but you get to hear the one who created all things speak to you.

Wouldn't that be even better than having a forest speak to you? Is to have the one who created the forest and sustains it actually speak to you? Well, that's what the Bible says is happening when you listen to the Bible.

[12 : 27] You're hearing the Creator speak to you. One of the most common and popular themes in movies when they're dealing with time travel is you have, you know, some group of people, you know, in 2053, 30 years from now, they come back in time to now to get us to go into the future to help them solve some problem.

And we go off into the future. And while we're in the future solving that problem, we discover something about our past. And we discover that, you know, we're wondering, well, what ended up happening to me?

How could, you know, what's happening? And you discover that you've been a complete jerk, that you've ruined your marriage, you've ruined your family, you've ruined your job. You've just been a complete and utter ruin.

And you learn about it in the future. And what are movies like? They like it when you can come back from the future into today. And now knowing the future, you change your life. Well, that's what the Bible is telling you.

That's what the Bible does. The Bible tells you there's two different destinies. And if you don't become aware of it and you don't sort out your life, there's a destiny that's going to completely and utterly be ruinous.

[13 : 32] And God wants you to know the future now. And he wants you to know the future now if the end is good, so you have hope. And if the future is bad for you, he wants you to know, so you change your ways and have a good future and have hope.

That's what the Bible is. Or maybe you're situating with somebody. There was a time many, many years ago, there was a person giving me some advice on my comments on my sermons and some other things.

And every week this person would speak to me later on. And it was just cutting me to the soul. And it led me to a period of depression. And then, not depression, just really hardness. I was troubled all the time.

And then I discovered that actually this person hated evangelical Protestants. Didn't like me at all. Well, what do we want?

We want somebody who's going to give us comments. We don't like to be corrected. But, you know, at the end of the day, what we really want is if this person who corrects us, there's somebody who loves us deeply. And that's what the Bible is.

[14 : 29] It's a word from God who loves us, who sent his son to die for us. For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son to the end that whoever believe in him will not perish, but have everlasting life, have eternal life.

When we're hearing the words of the Bible, we're hearing God who deeply loves us, speak to us, even when it corrects us, even when it says things that we feel threatening. It's coming from the words of love.

There was another time in my life where I was having some real problems in the church, and I got to meet a very, very famous Christian, and I got to pour out my heart to him. His name's Michael Green. He's now with the Lord.

And the next day, I was at something, and this, one of the traveling companions of Michael, and I told him that he could share it. He prayed for me. It was very encouraging just to have him pray for me.

It was a very important moment. And then the next day, one of the guys who's one of his prayer partners talked a little bit about what Michael had shared. And the thing about it is, you know, that was so wonderful.

[15 : 30] I'm tearing up. Michael understood me and spoke into my life, and he understood me. And isn't that what we want?

Somebody who understands you to speak into your life, but when you read the Bible, that's what you're reading. God understands you. He understands you in your loneliness. He understands you in your sin.

He understands you in your shame and your suffering. He understands you in your excellency and your beauty. He understands you, and that's the one who's speaking to you through his word. You see, that's why we want there to be something like the Bible.

We want it to be true and exist. Like, what's holding you back? Well, somebody might say, George, that's...

But, George, okay, at the end of the day, you know, I mean, little kids love the idea of Santa Claus and Christmas, but it's just not true. Like, why on earth do you think it's true? Well, I don't know how my Jewish friends would answer it, because Nehemiah 8 is an Old Testament text.

[16 : 42] It's also a Christian text. But what if I was to say to you that there is a book, and this book changed the world.

This book was the book that taught human beings that human beings have value in and of themselves. That there is a book that taught that human beings are fundamentally equal.

If there was a book that taught the human race the importance of human rights. If there was a book that taught the human race the importance of compassion. If there was a book that taught the human race the importance of having people give consent for sexual knowing.

That it isn't just the place of the powerful to get what they want. If there was a book that would encourage universal education. If there was a book that changed the world because it became the basis of science.

If there was a book that changed the world because it taught the importance of freedom. If there was a book that taught you the whole world the importance of progress. And if in that book there was a promise that one day there would be a man who would come from God to be the deliverer. [17:54] And that that man would die on the cross and then rise from the dead. And then there's a man who comes and says I am that man. And I am going to die upon the cross. And he talks about things that he can't possibly arrange.

And then he dies. And then he rises from the dead. And it's completely and utterly true. Well then we know that the Bible is true because I've just described the Bible.

Jesus fulfills the Bible. And let me tell you there's been a variety of people. There's been Frank Morrison in earlier generations. There's Jay Warner Wallace.

And in more recent days. And then I'm going to I forget the other guy I was going to mention. Lee Strobel. Who've gone to try to look historically at whether or not there's any evidence for the resurrection of Jesus.

Thinking to disprove to their foolish wife. Why they shouldn't be Christians. And they end up becoming Christians because the evidence is very very strong. That there was a man who did live. [18:52] Who died upon the cross. And the third day the grave was empty because he rose from the dead. And he appeared alive. And his name is Jesus. And that's why we can believe.

It vindicates him. And Jesus. What I'm describing about the Bible is what Jesus says is what the Bible is. If you could put up the second point. The triune God desired his words to be written. Recognized. Preserved. And it was so. You see what we see. When I read. You know. That they told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses.

That the Lord had commanded Israel. That's what we're seeing. If you go back to Genesis 1. You'll see that the true triune God that exists. He just wants it.

And it is. He just thinks. There should be a universe. And there is. There should be stars. And there is. There should be human beings. And there is.

[19:54] And he makes the decision. I would like my words to be known by human beings. And it is. And he uses human beings. He used many, many human beings over a thousand years.

And you can capture that. It's not that everything that Moses says is somehow inspired by God. But out of all of the things that Moses said. God somehow or another uses Moses. So that by the time that Moses is finished writing.

God says. That's what I commanded into existence. And he not only commands it into existence. But he commands Israel. And it's saying. And I not only commanded it into existence.

I made sure that it's recognized. I made sure that it's preserved. I want people to know truth. I understand them.

I love them. I want to warn them. I want them to know that I am God. I want them to know that I am their father in heaven who loves them. I want them to know that there is a savior who's died for them.

[20:53] I want them to know that there is a holy spirit. Who speaks and moves and brings my words deep into their heart. I want them to know that. And so I decided. And it is.

I decided. And it is. Just one thing before we get into the beauty of the text. If you could put up the next point. Since these are the words that the triune God speaks.

They are inerrant. And authoritative. Since these are the words that the triune God speaks. They are inerrant. They are authoritative.

And I wanted to add a whole lot of other words. They're trustworthy. They're beautiful. They're true. That's inerrant. And we need to hear them and listen to them.

And so when we hear God's. When we hear the Bible. We are hearing God speak. And as you see the rest of this text.

[22:00] You see the beauty. Of what God is doing. And you see his heart. For human beings. When we read the rest of the story. We see the beauty. Of what it is that God does when he speaks.

So let's go back to the text. So I'll just read verse 1 again. And we'll go back to the rest of the text. And you see as the text is unfolded. That there.

This is something beautiful. And this is something that we desperately need. And that we'd want to be true. Let's listen to what happened. Verse 1 again. And all the people gathered as one. Into the square before the water gate.

And he told Ezra the scribe. To bring the book of the law of Moses. That the Lord had commanded Israel. Verse 2. So Ezra the priest brought the law.

Before the assembly. Both men and women. And all who could understand. What they heard. On the first day. Of the seventh month. And this is something which is just.

[22 : 56] Isn't that so beautiful? God speaks. So that men and women. And children. As soon as a child gets old. To understand. God wants them to understand.

His word. You know there's. There's parents here. And parents. It's important that you tell. Your children. The stories of the Bible. You teach them how to pray. God wants children to understand. That's his heart. That we understand. Now it doesn't mean. That everything's going to be. Just as palatable. As you know. Like the simple instruction. On a you know.

A banking machine. And sometimes we have to think about it. And you know. There's proverbs. And there's psalms. And that means there's poetry. And there's narrative. And there's. And there's. Cries of the heart.

And there's like. Philosophical. And theological things. There's different ways. That he speaks. And we need to listen to them. In different ways. But he wants us to understand. And look what happens next.

[23 : 51] It's something which is. Even more important. That it's not just. When I say. You see. This is why I'm saying. That what he wants to communicate to us. Is true truth. Of not just sort of religious truth. Or spiritual truth. Or emotional truth.

Or personal truth. That I can somehow assert. In a meaningless world. But look. Look at the beauty. Of what happens in verse 3. And it's already there earlier.

But look at verse 3. And he read from it. That's the book of the law. The word of God. He read from it. Facing the square. Before the water gate. From early morning.

Until midday. In the presence of the men. And the women. And those who could understand. Notice that. It says it twice. He wants to emphasize. That God wants people. To understand his word. And the ears of all the people.

Were attentive to the book of the law. Well what's so wonderful about that? Well it's not being read in the temple. It's not being read. In some type of special. Spiritual place. And we can go and hear these somehow.

[24 : 48] Esoteric. Religious. Spiritual truths. But then we go out into the real world. We go into the real world. Where we have trades people. And we have tax collectors. And we have government officials.

And we have. You know. Trades people. No. No. The text is read. In the most busy public square of the city. The water gate. That's where.

The gate where people go to the main water source. Outside the walls. To get their water. Water. So that's where. That's where business is being done. That's where trades people are advertising. That's where government business is done. And the Bible is read. Right where people live. Their day-to-day lives. Their economic lives. Their political life. Their cultural life. Their home life.

Right where people live their lives. The word of God is read. And he wants people to understand. Because he wants us to understand. What it means to be. A free human being.

[25 : 42] And what it means to long for freedom. And what it means to think of poetry. And dance. And start businesses. And have more just laws. And care for the poor.

And he wants us to understand. In that context. And this next bit. It's so beautiful. It's.

I know that a lot of people. A lot of. Probably most people in this. I mean. I wasn't raised Anglican. There were so many things. I thought were weird. When I first came to an Anglican church. Like maybe at coffee. We could share weird things.

We think about Anglicans. When we came from outside of the Anglican church. We all have. Laugh about it a little bit. But one of the things that. That you see. You see where Anglicans. Get some things from.

In this next bit. And it's. It's really beautiful. When you understand it. And you see that it's biblical. And you realize. Yeah there should be more of that. Look what happens. Verse four. And Ezra the scribe.

[26 : 36] Stood on a wooden platform. That they. That's the community. Had made for the purpose. In other words. The purpose of him reading. And beside him stood. And I'm not going to try to pronounce it. Go online later on.

Victory did a spectacular job. The point of those. All those names. Is this is a very solemn time. It's a very solemn exercise. Of reading the Bible. And it's important.

Not just for the religious people. But these are the business people. And the leaders of the community. You know. This is for. This is for the whole community to hear. Verse five.

And Ezra opened the book. In the sight of all the people. He opens the book. In the sight of all the people. For he was above all the people. And as he opened it.

All the people stood. When I asked. I was going to read the gospel. I had you all stand. Oh. Good grief. You mean. Maybe that's sort of like a biblical type of idea.

[27 : 31] It's a sign of respect. It's a sign of anticipation. And then Ezra blessed the Lord. The great God.

And I'll say. Something like. You know. The holy gospel is found in the good news. According to. And earlier. Before we even come to read the Bible.

We've been blessing God. And then the time comes. And people stand. And Ezra blesses the God. And how do people respond? You know. We respond. You know. This is the word of the Lord. We respond.

Praise be to the old Christ. There's this response. And maybe there should be more. But they respond. Amen. Amen. Amen. These aren't just ordinary words.

These aren't instructions about how to install an app on your phone. These are words from God. And it's very beautiful.

[28 : 34] And then the next thing here is we show the point of all of this. You know. There's just recently a thing in the news about that crazy guy in France.

Who started stabbing children and infants and grandparents. And I can't remember his name. But there's that. I think it was just a 24-year-old guy with a couple of backpacks.

And rather than running away, he ran towards them. And he fought the guy off with his backpack. He fought the guy off with his back. Saved people's lives. And you can just imagine how relieved the people were.

And joyous that they were alive. That some of the people who stabbed are going to be able to be eventually right. Because police come and subdue them. And now everybody wants to talk to that guy.

I mean. On one level, there's curiosity about what the man who did the evil did. And there's a bit of a perverse fascination with it. And of course, some people want to see if it's terrorist. Or if it's just, I mean, terrorist demonic.

[29 : 45] Or just evil demonic. But really what they want to hear is the guy who was the rescuer. See, that's another way to understand the Bible. The Bible tells us of the one who came to fight our great enemy of sin and death and the devil.

And at great cost to himself. Rescued us. And after the rescue, there'd just be a sense of relief and of joy and of excitement and of talking.

And that's what would happen. And that's what would continue to happen. And people just moved by the guy's heroism as we should be moved at the heroism of Christ for us. But listen how this text unfolds it.

Verse 9. And Nehemiah, who was the governor. So they've been reading the Bible. And Nehemiah, verse 9, who was the governor. And Ezra the priest and the scribe and the Levites, who taught the people, said to all the people.

This day is holy to the Lord your God. Do not mourn or weep. Then he said to them, go your way.

[30 : 55] Eat the fat. Eat the fat. Drink sweet wine. And send portions to anyone who has nothing ready.

For this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved. For the joy of the Lord is your strength.

There's a brilliant passage in 2 Corinthians 7.10 that talks about the difference between worldly grief.

That's a grief that doesn't know the triune God and the grace that comes in Jesus. And godly grief. And, you know, God is going to convict you and me of sin. We're going to confess our sins later on in the service.

But we confess our sins after hearing God's word and remembering what Jesus has done for us on the cross. And remembering God's great love for us. And the point of the confession isn't that we then leave this place and have long faces and feel depressed forever.

But God wants us to confess our sin and get right with him so we will know his joy. So you will know his joy. So I will know his joy. That's what he desires.

[32 : 02] The new heaven and the new earth is not going to be a long time of toil and sorrow and tears.

It's going to be the place where toil has come to an end. Then sorrow has come to an end. When God has dried the tears on our eyes. He's dried the tears on your eyes.

He's turned your mourning into dancing. That's what God's desire is for you. Brothers and sisters, for friends. That is his heart and desire for you. Verse 11.

So the Levites calmed all the people, saying, Be quiet, for this day is holy. Do not be grieved. And all the people went their way to eat and drink and send portions and to make great rejoicing.

Because why? Because they had understood the words that were declared to them. I'm going to wrap it up with just two Bible passages as my two final points.

[33 : 03] I was going to try to do the points. I realized, you know what? The Bible says it better.

And it's the Bible. You should hear what God says as the final two points. And what happens if you read the rest of it, it's one of the things they discover from the Bible is that God wants them to celebrate a time in their history where God had delivered them from evil and slavery and provided for them.

And that's the celebration that happens afterwards. But here's a couple of things for us. The first one is if you could put up the fourth point, Claire, that would be wonderful. And the first thing is just to listen to how the New Testament summarizes all of these things.

In 2 Timothy 3, verses 15b to the end. And listen to what the Bible says. You have been acquainted with the sacred writings.

It actually begins, in this case, it's talking to Timothy from a very young child. It's like maybe talking to, well, Deborah's children or Matt's children, how from a very early age they've known these sacred writings.

And you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

[34 : 19] Do you want to be complete?

Do you want to be formed to do good things, to do good work? And we need the Bible. But we need the Bible. You see, the gospel is good news.

It's the good news that God has provided for your great need and sent a Savior. And that when you put your trust in Him, He makes you right with God.

He sends the Holy Spirit to be within you. You were born again and given new life. You become God the Father's adopted child. And that's the good news.

And He's inviting you. And we learn it from the Bible. And then when we hear the gospel in light of the Bible, and we read the Bible in light of the gospel, it will rebuke us.

[35 : 29] It will teach us. It will encourage us. But it's all for the purpose of making you and me complete, to live a good life. And it's also so that we would know the truth of Psalm 16, verse 11.

If you could put up the last thing. This is such a wonderful text. It's a really good text to memorize. Just like this last text was a good memorize, 2 Timothy 3. Let's just look at this.

You make known to me the path of life. That's what God's Word is. It's making known to you and me the path of life. You make known to me the path of life.

In your presence, there is fullness of joy. In the original language, there's a double Hebrew word. So it should really say the fullness of the fullness of the fullness of the fullness of joy. Like add a whole pile of fullnesses. And at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

[36 : 29] God's Word is making known to you and me the path of life. And the end of that path of life is to be with God in the new creation, with other redeemed sinners, and to be in the presence of the fullness and the fullness and the fullness of joy.

And to be with the one in whom there is a pleasure that if he was to even give us the tiniest sliver of that future pleasure right now, it would unmake us.

And that is your destiny in Christ. And knowing your destiny in Christ, that is why you should read his Word.

And that is why even when his Word seems very hard, we need to hear it. Because at the end of the day, it's for life.

It's for joy. It's for him. I invite you to stand. Just as we're standing, if you've never given your life to Christ, there's no time better now, like, the Bible is what you're looking for.

[37 : 54] Christ is what you're looking for. There's no better time now than just to say, Jesus, I don't know where I am with you, but I want to be yours. Please be my Savior and my Lord.

Please take me into your life. Be in my life. Please be my Savior and Lord. Don't worry about the words. Just say what I just said. There's no better time now.

If you feel a tug in your heart, that's Jesus knocking at your door because he wants you to pray that. And if he, it doesn't matter how much a ruination your life is. It doesn't matter how successful you are.

It doesn't matter how rich you are. It doesn't matter how bad or poor you are. If you pray that heart to Christ, he will say, welcome. The Father will say, welcome.

The Holy Spirit will come in. And if you're not sure, if you've been far from God and maybe been not, there's no better time than just to recommit and say, Father, thank you so much that your word is reminding me about Jesus and what my end is in Christ.

[38 : 55] We might be walking through a time of great difficulty, but in Christ, your end is a fullness of joy. And nothing in the world, no demonic power, no sickness, no government can take that from you.

Nothing can take that from you when you are in Christ. Let's pray. Father, thank you for Jesus.

Thank you that you love us. Thank you that he is the one who rescued us from our great enemies of sin and of death and of hostile spiritual powers.

Thank you that he defeated them for us. Thank you that he died for us, that he died for me. Make who Jesus is and what he did for me more and more real to my heart.

And Father, as he becomes more real to my heart, help me to have a hunger to know your word and to read your word and to not be afraid of your word and to puzzle over your word so that your word will form us.

And we thank you, Father, that Jesus, your word, it is all so that we will walk on the path of life and know that fullness of the fullness of the fullness of the fullness of joy, which you have for all who become your children by adoption and grace, by putting their faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

[40 : 12] And we ask all these things in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. And all God's people said, Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.