Romans 13:8-14 "What is Money For? What are Women For? What are You For?"

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Preacher: Rev. George Sinclair

[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.

Now, I sort of have like a double introduction to the sermon. The first one is this. Some of you who've been coming to this church for a while know that we are not a church that does like a lot of stuff that other churches do. We don't give up our whole service to Mother's Day. We don't do a big Father's Day service. We don't do a Valentine's Day service. We don't do a Canada Day service, Remembrance Day service, New Year's Day service. There's lots of secular holidays that we actually will make a mention of it. You know, hey, moms, appreciate you. Let's pray for you. We prayed on Remembrance Day. Of course, we prayed for our armed forces, especially those in the past and former days who paid the supreme sacrifice. But we don't do a lot of stuff like that. And so you might be saying, oh, look at George. Here's going to talk about Romans chapter 13, verses 8 to 14.

And that's just George. That's just Church of the Messiah. They don't really get into all of that other stuff. But I want to tell you that is not true. Now, there will be a thing, a blog, put out, a little note from me about a thousand words long that will come out, I think, on Tuesday that will go to you. And I'll explain this a little bit more. But actually what we're doing is ancient advent as reformed by the gospel. But what I mean is this. If you went back in a time machine to 424, where if you went back in a time machine to 1549, we're doing an advent service like they did.

[2:46] Like that's a bit of a surprise to you. Somewhere along the line, probably since the 70s, advent became a day to prepare, a time to prepare for Christmas. But if you go back in the ancient texts and the ancient prayers, the ancients saw advent as the beginning of the Christian year.

And so advent was a time to rededicate your life to Christ and to recommit to living a godly life for the coming year. That's what they saw as advent. And that's what we're doing. That's why this week we're going to look at a text which gives you a very, very fundamental view about how you grow and become more godly. Next week, well, how are you going to become more godly? Well, you need to be able to read the Bible. We're going to have a text about the Bible. The week after that, to be godly, you should be connected to a local church. So there's going to be a text about that. And then the fourth Sunday is once again, another insight about what Christian godliness and holiness looks like. And that'll be the text because the focus is on living the entire year rededicated to Christ. So just so you know, you are right, we are not doing a 2024 advent service. We are doing a 424 advent service or 1549 because Cramner took a few things that the gospel got a little bit murky between 424 and 1549. So

Cramner cleaned some of that up to make sure the gospel was the center. That's what we're doing. So there you go. I sort of think that's cool, by the way. Anyway, here's the other thing. Last week I began, that's my first introduction. My second introduction is, last week I very helpfully began by

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telling you that God doesn't need you. But that's actually good news if you understand the gospel. And this week I get to give you a similar word of profound encouragement. You are in debt right now and you will be in debt till you die. Hallelujah! Now just so you know, I will explain why that's actually really good news to know that right now you're in debt and every day until you die or see Jesus, you will be in debt. Well, let's look. So if you take your Bibles, we're looking at the book of Romans chapter 13 verses 8 to 14. And just while you turn there, Romans chapter 13, 8 to 14. This is a very dense text. It's almost like creed-like. It would be one of those texts, if you wanted to highlight the important parts, you'd have to highlight the whole thing.
But the way the book of Romans is organized is there's a bit of introduction verses 1 to 15. Verse 16 and 17 in chapter 1 gives you sort of the theme or the prairie of the whole book.
And then for the rest of the book up until the end of chapter 11, it is all about what is the gospel? What is the good news? And then from chapter 12 to the end, it's about given that the gospel is true, how do you live? That's how the book is structured. So we're in the part, he's already talked about the gospel. Now, how is it you live if the gospel is true? And it begins like this, verse 8. [5:57] Owe no one anything except to love each other, for the one who loves, and that's for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. Now just sort of pause here. This little verse here, but first of all, it's not telling you that you can't take out a mortgage. Okay? That's not saying that. It's saying something else. If you could put up the first point, Claire, that would be very, very helpful.

This is actually a very, very, very profound statement that reveals a profound and unique truth of the Bible. The triune God created human beings to have such a deep dignity and worth, so that each person is deserving of love from others. That's what the Bible teaches about human beings. That's what the Bible teaches about you, friend, brother, sister. That's what he teaches about me. That's what he teaches about little kids. That's what he teaches about handicapped, the elderly.
Does it matter the color or anything like that? God, the triune God created human beings to have such an awesome dignity and worth that it's not that he has to command us. I mean, maybe he has to because we're sinful, but he has to command us. But the fact of the matter is, if we really understood what a human being was and how God had created us to be, we would know that I actually owe Jono love. I owe Daniel love.
I owe Diane love. I actually owe them love. That's how God has designed human beings. It's actually very, very profound. I mean, you know, like in most systems of thought, human beings are tragic, either tragic accidents or something that's wrong that has to be fixed. Like in Hinduism, at the end of the end of the end of the end of the end, no human beings exist. It's just the one. Because in a sense, it's a type of tragedy that human beings exist.
And of course, in secular Canadian thought, at least at a very, if you take the science, the so-called science very seriously, human beings are just accidents. And I think it was Dawkins who said the universe is completely indifferent to us. We have no inherent worth or dignity that comes from the scientific account, the current scientific account of how human beings came to be. But Christians believe that God created all things, and he made every single human being to have such a deep dignity and worth that they are owed love. We are owed love. That's what it means to be human. [8:41] Now, it's also, if you think about it for a second, it means that actually how God intended human beings to exist was a type of never-ending, intricate dance of love.

We watched, okay, true, I'm going to confess a sin here. I watch guy movies, mainly, okay? Which means that I have never seen the movie Emma, any of the versions, ever, until last night. And we watched the most recent Emma. It was a really good movie. I really enjoyed it, to my surprise. Like, I was willing to do it, to watch it with my daughter and my wife, but I really enjoyed it. And it was probably even greater enjoyment, because since I had never read the book, didn't know anything about it, it was all a surprise to me. Like, there was nothing predictable about it to me. But here's the point.
It's set in the 1800s, and there's a scene, an extended scene, inside the movie where there's a dance, a ball. And if you watch the dance, it's very intricate. I said out loud, after I was watching it for a few minutes, it said, gosh, like, you have to actually take lessons to dance like that, you know, because they're coming in, and then they're coming out, and then they're doing moves, and then they're crossing, and then they're linking arms, and then they're twirling, and they're doing all this. It's very, very intricate. And in a sense, a ball like that is how God designed human existence to be. You see, on one hand, if the truth is that I actually owe Jono love, he owes me love. As do you. As do you. We owe each other love. And so, in a sense, and the type of love which is described here in

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the Bible is agape love. It's a type of love which almost was invented by Christianity. It's a love that is self-effacing, which means it's not look at me type of love.
It's a type of love that never says look at me. In fact, a type of love that actually is really, really glad if people even sort of don't even notice you. It's a self-effacing love, self-giving love that seeks the true good and beauty and flourishing of the other person. And that's the type of love which is being described. So, in a sense, the Bible's describing that God intended human existence to be like this intricate 1800s ball of this complicated movement of giving and exchanging of loves, which is just beautiful. And that's how God designed us to be. And that's, I just think that's, I think that's just so wonderful. And if you don't understand that, the next bit is going to sound sort of, well, it's just going to sound weird. And because it's going to have just a bit of a warning. It's going to talk about sex. And we all know that a lot of us Christians in 2024 in Canada are a bit hesitant to fully affirm and defend how the Bible describes sexuality. But we shouldn't. Remember that's the first bit. Listen to what goes. Let's turn to verse 8 again. And here's how it goes. Chapter 13, we'll read verse 8 again, down to verse 10.
[11:47] Oh, no one anything except to love each other. For the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. And here the law means, by the way, the moral law, not the Canadian law, but the moral law, the true moral law. For the commandments, referring now to the Ten Commandments, you shall not commit adultery.

And committed, I'll explain what that means in a moment. You shall not murder. That means you shall not take innocent life. You shall not steal. That is, don't take the money or possessions of other people.
You shall not covet, which is a type of envying, which can poison your whole life and create hatred. And any other commandment are summed up in this word. You shall love your neighbor as yourself.
Love does no wrong to a neighbor. Therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law. Now, brothers and sisters, well, here, if you could put up the second point, Claire, that would be really helpful.
The life which is true and good and beautiful is love-centered and ten-commandment-bounded. And I could actually put here biblical commandment-bounded. The life that is true and good and beautiful is love-centered. And it's not only centered, it's love-driven, love-walking, love at the end, and ten-commandment-bounded. Actually, Claire, I should have sent you a note about this. Could you throw up for a moment the final point, the fifth point? Or the fourth, the fifth point? Then I'm going to go back to the second. Here, in a sense, is the big idea of the whole text.
[13:19] To Christ, in Christ I live, on Christ I stand, by Christ I begin, with Christ I walk, to Christ I head. To go back to the second point, Claire, that would be really helpful. The life which is true and good and beautiful is love-centered and ten-commandment-bounded. So let's look at this. So the adultery text is, it says that, what it's saying just very, very clearly is that, we'll use me as an example, but it's the same for every human being, is that there is to be no sexual knowing or sexual stimulation for any human being unless it is connected to the person of the opposite biological sex to whom you are married. And that's a very strong for no. And so what that means for me is, I don't know how many human beings are on the planet. Let's say there's eight billion. And we're going to round this up a little bit just to make it work. I'm married to Louise, and that means the only sexual stimulation or sexual knowing that I should engage in, period, should be centered on her and with her.

And the other four billion women and the other four billion men in the planet, I'm not to relate that way to them. That's what the Bible's teaching. Now a lot of people in our culture think that's terrible, but look at what this text is saying. This text is absolutely brilliant. I have to tell you, there have been times this week where I just thought, I'm not going to be able to communicate this, how it's affected me emotionally. My wife and I and my daughter, a week ago, we watched the movie The Woman of the Hour. I'm not recommending you watch it. The acting is spectacular. The story is very well done. Everything about the movie is very good, but the movie is deeply, deeply, deeply disturbing.
It tells the story of a serial killer who might have killed over a hundred women, and it focuses, I think, on five women, some of whom will die, all of whom are traumatized, but some live. And because it's so well done, it is deeply disturbing and unsettling. And one of the things which is done in the movie is, believe it or not, this actually happened. This serial killer was so confident and arrogant that he actually appeared on one of the most popular national TV shows called The Dating Game as one of the contestants to date the young woman. He's so arrogant, so confident that he

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did that in front of national television. And one of the questions in it is that the contestant asks the three men is, what is a woman for? And actually, the movie is very, very interesting because it's actually true in a way that they don't understand it's true. The other two men give sort of jerky answers, okay? And the third man, the serial killer, who's an expert at manipulating woman, who's already boasted to the guys that he's going to win because he knows how to talk to women, he gives the answer that the person on the, that the contestant really wants. And you can see the audience, all the women, they almost want to clap because he says, well, women have to decide that for themselves. Now, obviously, there's a profound truth in there, but I think nobody realized that what they thought was a really wise thing to say was said by a man who manipulates and murders women.

Like, I don't think Anna Kendrick realized that that's what was going on in the movie. But you see, here's the thing which is so beautiful and powerful about this text. You see, if you look at the different things about stealing and coveting and whatever, what it's doing is it's actually setting guardrails around a very, very vast and beautiful land where many, many, many people live. And what it's saying is if you go across these guardrails, you will fall to your ruin. But within there, okay, well, I now know that for four billion women and four billion men, I'm not to have sexual thoughts or sexually know them. That's restricted to Louise. And if Louise predeceases me, which I hope is not the case, then there will be nobody. I mean, I have to live a chase life without that sexual knowing or stimulation. But gosh, there's eight, four, four billion women. How do I relate to them? You love them.

You love them with a self-effacing, self-giving love. You seek their flourishing. You seek their true good. You seek their beauty. You seek justice for them. You seek their growth. You seek their protection.

[18:40] That's how you relate to them. There's a guardrail and there's this huge propulsion about how you're to live. Think of it with the other thing. You shall not steal. What is that saying? They're saying that one of the guardrails in this very, very large and very, very beautiful world where eight billion people live. I don't know what the number is. I should have Googled it. Let's say it's eight billion. Maybe it's more, maybe it's less. And in this entire world, one of the guardrails is that when I see other people's money and other people's stuff, I'm not to take it from them.

To go over that guardrail is to fall to ruin. It doesn't matter if it's the government stealing. It doesn't mean it matter if it's one country stealing from another. It doesn't matter if it's a drug addict. It doesn't matter if it's a corporate executive or a cabinet minister or your neighbor.

However, you don't take other people's stuff. You don't take other people's money. It's a guardrail and to go over it is to ruin. Well, how do you live in a world where there's stuff and money? Well, you love. And what is love going to mean? Well, love means that, of course, you have to make sure that you're, you know, we need to have jobs and we need to have good labor practices and we need to have protections around investment and we need to have solid property rights. And you should be able to work and to be able to make money and to get a fair wage and you should be able to provide for yourself. And you shouldn't be only just seeking to make enough money to provide for yourself, but to have a type of, you know, to provide for if you have a family and loved ones or you have an elderly mom or an elderly dad. And there should be enough money that you can give money to the poor because you should be generous and you should be wanting to show hospitality and you should be making enough money so that you can show financial generosity for the church to spread the gospel and to bring the gospel to different parts of the world. And that's what money's for. That's what stuff is for.

For love. Like, isn't that beautiful? I don't know if I can communicate it. We should not be embarrassed about biblical teaching on set. We should say, listen, you're embarrassed about biblical. Look at Romans 8.

Isn't this wise? That's what women are for. That's what money's for. That's what life is for. For generosity. For towards the good, the true, the beautiful and flourishing. And don't fall off the guardrails to your ruin. I just think it's so beautiful. I really do. I don't know if I can communicate it. I hope I have to some small amount. But some will say, okay, George, that is very beautiful, but it's not real life. And by the way, the Bible says, amen. It isn't real life. That's not how we live. But the Bible's not naive. And it's not nihilistic and depressing, but it's not naive.

[21:36] It's very, very, very realistic. You can already see the realism here in the text about the fact that there's these guardrails that you can't transgress because it'll go to your ruin. And the next

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text, which gives you a different complementary image of what it means to have the gospel become real to your heart and live, actually doubles down on human realism. Let's read it. It's verses 11 to 14.

13. And he says, besides this, okay, so this is the big image. By the way, you can see how if you now look at this text as not preparing you for Christmas, but preparing you to live the rest of your life rededicated to Christ, doesn't it make a lot more sense? Right? It makes a lot of sense.
What a good text to begin your year. And now there's a second type of image besides this. Verse 11. You know the time that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep, for salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. The night is far gone. The day is at hand. So what this text, by the way, is saying, I'm not going to really go into depth about this, but basically what the Bible is saying, that every single one of us live between, every single person on the planet lives between the birth of Jesus, his life, death, resurrection, ascension, and that was God's fundamental act to save us. We all live between that and when he comes again. That's the real world.
The real world isn't that the second law of thermodynamics will eventually mean that all things cease to exist. The real world isn't that eventually all human beings merge into God.
The real world isn't that, you know, human, you know, it's just one dang thing after another and there's nothing, no type of direction or meaning to history. The real world is that between the death and resurrection of Jesus and his coming again, that's the world we live. And in some ways, part of that new, that future is already present in terms of the Holy Spirit in our lives. And in other ways, it, it, it, we still obviously live in a world where people are selfish. Uh, they, they steal, they, you know, government steal, corporation steal, individual steal. Uh, you know, we live in a culture which celebrates death, uh, not life as much. I mean, we, it's life and death.
[24:03] And that's obviously the world we live in and that's what it's tame. And then it moves into the second, we'll read verse 12 again. And then we move into this other, this other part, which I'm going to talk about more, which is this verse 12, the night is far gone. The day is at hand. So, so then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly as in the daytime, uh, not, uh, I'll just say these words and I'll explain what they mean in a moment, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy, but put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh. And here, the flesh means that part of our human nature, which is sinful to gratify its desires. Now, actually here, first, if we just, um, put up the third point, that would be very helpful. And I'm going to explain some of these terms and we'll get to the big point here. What the text is saying is that the real you cannot help, but do real wrong and turn from doing real good. Bible is profoundly realistic, but not with it, without, not with despair. The real you, the real you cannot help, but do real wrong and turn from doing real good. And, uh, and so we see, um, so flesh here is that part of our human nature that does wrong and wants to do wrong, that does wrong, even when it's going to hurt us.

Uh, and it's that part of us that turns from doing good things when we could easily do it, even if it got us compliments, but we just, you know, selfishly turned from doing good things. And, and the, the list of things here is just a very partial, partial one. The word, so the word orgies, if you go back and you look at like five or six different English translations, you'll see different words and orgies is one of the words that try to capture what the original word is.
But really what it means, uh, at a more deep level is, um, people going crazy together. It's, uh, a Panda Day celebration, uh, on steroids where the police decide to, to, to not have anything to do with it and just let people go crazy. It's, uh, let's just go crazy as a group. It's, it's riots. It's, it's parties that just spill over into the whole surrounding neighborhood and destroy property. Uh, and that's what it's being pointed to. Uh, the, the next word, which is drunkenness, means drunkenness or getting stoned. Uh, sexual immorality is what I just described earlier from a biblical point of view. Sensuality is where you start to see everything in the world in sexual terms. You sexualize everything. Canada 2024, right? Sexualize everything. Whether it's transing everything, gaying everything, whether it's making sure there's women in bikinis helping to sell your product or really buff looking men sell your product, it's sexualizing everything.
It's sexualizing all of your relationships. That's what sensuality means. Quirreling means just, uh, a type of person that you say, you know, it's, it's just, uh, I'm going to have, I'm going to fight about that. I, uh, even I'm going to fight. I'm going to disagree. Uh, I'm going to state my case. I'm, I'm going to do that even when I know I'm wrong because I want to get my way. I'm, I'm more interested in being, in proven right even than, than being right. Um, and, uh, jealousy and envy. We've talked

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about that before, you know, seeing other things that people have that we think that we should have and wanting to bring them down. And the very, very interesting image which is going on in here is this, um, which is that, um, these things are underneath George's surface.
And so maybe you could say, well, I don't do any of those things. There's nobody in this room that could say that I have done any of those things ever. But what are you like when nobody sees you? [28:06] How have you dealt with people who are weaker than you? What's going on in your thought life? And if you still say that none of these six things, and they're just suggestive, apply to you, with all due respect, you are vastly fooling yourself. And you don't know yourself.

Because, by the way, if you were to say with a straight face to people, you know that, boy, none of these things go on in my life. They'd say, huh, yep. Yeah, sure. Think whatever you want, dude. Legend in your own mind. Not what's going on. And so the images of these things that are within, and they bubble up. And what the image is, that is, is that, in a sense, by the help of the gospel, that I'm to be reaching in and taking them and throwing them away. Throwing them away.
As they cling to me, and they're very obvious that I'm caught up with it, to throw it away. And as I know that there, I know it's in there, I know it's in here, and to reach in and throw it away.
And the image is, in a sense, of Christ somehow settling and descending upon us. And he descends upon us in such a way that when he descends upon us, he descends into us. It's like a patch that delivers medicine. And remember what I said at the beginning, that God designed us to love, that in such a way that I owe love to other people, and other people owe love to me.
And so what it is, it really is, that underneath the things that I do that are wrong, there is this health, this ultimate health of a deeper nature that was God built. And so the coming, Christ coming upon me, it activates and makes healthy that, and helps me to throw away the things that are inside, that only lead to my ruin. If you could put up the fourth point, that would be helpful.
[30:19] Jesus put on himself the evil that you do, and the evil of failing to do the good you should have done, and offers to put on you his perfect fulfillment of the true, the good, and the beautiful.

Jesus put on himself the evil that you do, and the evil of failing to do the good you should have done. By the way, this is a really important point of Christian morality. It might very well be that some of these six things aren't things that describe you, but then we can go back up to those commandments. Oh yeah, okay, so you're really generous? If I just look at your finances for the last year, well, I see that you've given away lots and lots of your money. Oh, you didn't do that.
Well, that's actually not. It's just a failure to do. Right? And offers to put on you his perfect fulfillment of the true, the good, and the beautiful, which is like a bigger way to understand what all the commandments are about. You see, that's the wonderful thing in the gospel, is I, you know, people, if somebody was, if I was to share this with somebody who's outside of the Christian faith, and they say, well, George, do you do those things? And I say, friend, I don't. Friend, I can't. Friend, you can't. But I am so grateful that I am in the one who did what I could not do, and offers what he did, and the destiny he deserves, he offers to me, and the doom that I deserve, he took upon himself. See, the big point of the whole sermon is in Christ I live. I live in Christ because of what he has done for me. On Christ I stand.
That's this, as the story and the person of Christ and what he's accomplished for me in the gospel, as that becomes more real to my heart, that's the reality on which I can stand, so that I can be honest about the crap inside of me, the failures inside of me. By Christ I begin.
It's as the gospel becomes more real to my heart that I can begin to deal with these things, that I can begin. I can tell you, my wife and I didn't tithe for many, many years, and when finally we both finally got convicted to tithe, it was very, very hard. The devil tells you, how can you give away any of your money? Just like for those of you who are addicted to porn, the devil tells you, how can you live without porn? Well, you can. You'll live better. Generous living is way better than greedy living.
[33:02] If you make money your idol, well, it destroys you. You know, and I don't know what it was, like, okay, $20. Okay, and the sky didn't fall in. Okay, well, how about $40? No, the sky doesn't fall in.

Like, actually, we still ate this week. We still have clothes, like, and you give more, right? And we're timid and slow and started by it, but, you know, it's because the gospel becomes more real to you that you can begin. You can begin to treat people better. You can begin towards hospitality or generosity or or a beautiful life of relating to people the way that you should. In, with Christ I walk. To Christ I'm going.

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And, and, and, and all of it, it's the finished work of Christ. You see, the, the, the first John 4, 10 says, this is love. Not that, not that we love God, but that he loved us and sent his son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. So another way to say that the Christian life, the beautiful life, is to be love-centered and 10 commandment-bounded is also to say to be Christ-centered and 10 commandment-bounded, because Christ is love. There is no better story of self-effacing, self-giving for the good of the other love. And it's not just that some dude who happened to accomplish this, and he's like a, the, the, he's like the Usain Bolt of, of runners, but he's done it in the moral life. No, this is God, the son of God, the second person of the Trinity coming down and taking into himself our human nature and living the life that we were designed to live but could not, and dying the death that we deserve, but it would unmake us, and him dying in our place, it is the second person of the Trinity doing that for us.
It is solid, rock solid. That's, that's how I fulfill the law.
You know, just before we have this final point, on one level, don't you, I'll just say two more things, just I'm wrapping it up. I, I, I was listening this week to a, a story of a, a woman telling how she, she, an Australian woman, and grow up in a secular household, that, were they just, like her father was a university professor, she just, like everybody in her circle, just assumed that smart people believe that God doesn't exist.
[35:27] They don't believe it, they just know. Smart people know that God doesn't exist. And she just grew up in that, and through a series of circumstances, after she got her PhD at Cambridge, and while she was teaching at Oxford, and then, and then some other things happened, and eventually she came to the point where she actually went to church for the first time. She'd been to church for services for other things.

She goes to a church service for the very, very first time, as a person inquiring as to whether it might possibly be the case that Christianity is true. She's a historian, and it comes time towards the end of the service, they have the Lord's Supper.
And she said, she had this profound feeling well up within her. She was in a room with people who were doing something that had been done continuously for 2,000 years.
When we received communion this morning, that's been happening unbroken for 2,000 years. And it rehearses salvation for us, and tells us that we need to get the gospel in tight of us, and feed on Christ spiritually, feed on his person, feed on his work, feed on his words, feed on his presence in person, to feed on him.
And we are part of a community of people unworthy as we are. 2,000 years. Isn't that cool? It's so neat what you learn from listening to people who become Christians from outsiders.
[36:57] It's just so wonderful. It's going to change probably for the rest of my life how I view communion. 2,000 years of continuity. We are a community of memory and depth, rooted ultimately in the triune God.

You know, and it's true. It's not like just telling people about Santa Claus, and people would like Santa Claus to be true. You know, if you're outside the Christian faith, don't you want this to be true?
Don't you wish that there was, in fact, a universe where human beings have that worth and dignity? Don't you wish you lived in a university, a universe that had such understanding of guardrails that lead to ruin, and have this positive vision about how you can grow and flourish?
And it's not just that you have to wish that it's true. It actually is true. Like, if you're outside the faith, I encourage you to go on a quest. I mean, this letter itself is written some 25 years, some 20 years or so, after the death and resurrection of Jesus.
It's written by a man who knew that the grave was empty, and knew they never found the body of Jesus, and actually saw Jesus resurrected. And this same man who writes this letter in about 10 years' time, he's going to die a violent, gruesome death, because he's going to say it actually happened.
[38:08] And so I encourage you to go on to the quest. There's good reasons to believe that this is true, not like 2 plus 2 equals 4, but the hints and the learning, there's good evidence that this is a true story, a true story of the universe.

And then if you receive it, if you enter into it, if you could put up the final point, Claire, that would be so helpful. And this should be like our mantra.
Forget all those mantras they tell you. This should be our mantra. In Christ I live. On Christ I stand. By Christ I begin.

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With Christ I walk. To Christ I head. Amen. Let's stand. In Christ I live.
On Christ I stand. By Christ I begin. With Christ I walk. To Christ I head. Let's pray. Father, your word, at first it seems like it's a bit awkward, like that awkward, angular uncle who says things that everybody's a bit embarrassed about.
[39:14] And Father, sometimes in Canada we feel like your word is like that awkward aunt or awkward uncle. But Father, when we look at Jesus and now look at your word, it is wise, it is beautiful, it is good, it is true.

And so Father, we thank you for Jesus. We thank you that we can be in him, that he gives us life, that he fulfilled the law for us, that you see the real us with the things that go on within us that bubble up and ruin our lives.
And we give you thanks and praise that he died for us. And so Father, we ask that you would make this true, that you would help us be centered in Christ, trusting in Christ, walking with him and heading towards him with these really good boundaries, and that you would help us to help others flourish in the true and the good and the beautiful, that you would help us to help our city and our country flourish in that which is truly good and beautiful.
And so Father, we ask that you do this wonderful work in us and make Christ, make the gospel more and more precious and real to us. And we ask these things in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior.
Amen. Amen.

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