

Acts 1:15-26: Jesus the Heart-Knower

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 17 September 2023

Preacher: Rev. George Sinclair

[0 : 00] Let's just bow our heads in prayer. Father, we thank you, Father, for your words, for the words of Scripture.

We ask, Father, that you help us to be ones who read your word, who memorize your word, who meditate upon your word. And Father, we invite and give you unconditional, unqualified permission for your word to speak at the very depths of our heart and form us.

And we ask this and offer this in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen. Please be seated. The first couple of years that I was in this church were very, very, very hard for me.

And some of you, not many of you here were here during that time period. You know that people didn't want me to be the minister. They let me know in direct words and indirect words.

I had public meetings where people said that my coming here had destroyed the moral tone and character of the congregation, and nobody defended me.

[1 : 13] It was a very, very hard couple of years, both on myself and my wife. And during that time period, that first couple of years, sort of towards the end of it, when I was having a very hard time, I got invited to this invitation-only event.

I don't know why I pointed that way. Actually, I think it was that way somewhere in Ottawa. And when I got invited to it, and I was going to go, I was really pleased to be invited to it. And I saw the list of speakers that one of the main speakers at the event was a very well-known at the time Anglican evangelical author, pastor, and evangelist.

Some of you might have heard of him. His name is Michael Green. If any of you have looked at some of the writings about who has really influenced Tim Keller's life, Michael Green was one of the people who profoundly influenced Tim Keller.

Anyway, I heard there was going to be an Ottawa. I thought it would just be really nice to meet him. Nothing else. I just thought it would be really nice to meet him. And so I knew somebody who knew everybody who was anybody in the entire Anglican world.

And that person passed on the message. And one day, about a week before Michael came, I got a phone call. He had a deep Oxbridge voice. Is Mr. George Sinclair here?

[2 : 25] Anyway, I can't imitate his deep voice. And anyway, I said, you're going to be in Ottawa. I live in Ottawa. Could I buy you lunch or supper or breakfast? You just name the meal, and I'll meet you and buy it.

And he said, oh, sure, why don't you, this particular night, why don't we meet and you can buy me supper. And we met at a diner on Elgin Street. His choice. I would have paid for more, but that was his choice.

Anyway, during the course, we talked, and Chad, he asked me a little bit about me. But, you know, I, you know, and I didn't unburden him about how hard I was finding it. But I just, you know, shared and everything.

I'm going to get a bit emotional. Didn't plan to. The next day when I was at the event, I was chatting with one of the other speakers. And, in fact, the other sort of principal speaker.

And as we were chatting, he said to me, you're the fellow that Michael was talking about with me last night and this morning. We prayed for you. He saw that you were having a really hard time.

[3 : 27] It was very moving. I still get emotional thinking. I didn't plan to get emotional. I'm sorry. But it was very emotional because he saw me like he saw me.

This famous guy that gets invited to big conferences and writes, you know, best-selling books. He saw me and he cared about me. He prayed for me. And he got another fellow without revealing my identity.

It was only when I shared, you know, where my church was and everything that the guy put two and two together. And it was very moving. Every human being has a deep need to be seen.

And not just to be seen, but to be seen with the eyes of love and heard. Every human being has that profound, deep need.

The Bible text we're going to look at today doesn't seem to address this issue. But in fact, it is all about this issue at a very deep level.

[4 : 29] It just tells you in the context of the narrative. And it's only... See, one of the things that's neat about stories is you remember the stories. And stories don't necessarily just explain themselves. But when you look at the story in the context of the things that go around it, you realize that this story is actually addressing this, talking about how Jesus in the gospel addresses this very deep need of our hearts.

So if you have your Bibles with you, it will be on the screen. But it's really good to have a Bible of your own and to be able to mark it and write it. And we're going to look at the story.

So here's how the story goes. Sorry, I'm moving my papers around so I can occasionally look at my notes and not get completely lost. Here's how the story goes.

It's Acts chapter 1. And we're looking at verses 15 and following right now. And just so you know what's happened, Luke has made the claim that this is an eyewitness-based biography of the early Christians.

It's his second book. His first book was an eyewitness account, while eyewitnesses were still alive, of what Jesus said and didn't teach. And he just reminds people that he'd written that first book.

[5 : 40] He's doing the same thing in the second book. And he gives you another example of what Jesus actually did rise from the dead. He has Jesus eating with his disciples. And then we have the story of Jesus ascending into heaven.

And then the people leave that because Jesus gives them a mission. But they go and he tells them to wait. One of the hardest things in the Christian life is learning how to wait on God, by the way.

That's a whole other topic of conversation. But the 120-ish of them, including Mary and Jesus' brothers and sisters, so we learn that they have obviously seen the risen Jesus.

They now believe in him and trust in him as their Lord and Savior. And they're meeting for prayer. And now this incident happens. And here's how it goes. Verse 15. In those days, Peter stood up among the brothers and sisters.

The company of persons was in all about 120. And he said, Brothers and sisters, the scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus.

[6 : 49] For he was numbered among us and allotted his share in this ministry. Now this man, Judas, acquired a field with the reward of his wickedness.

And falling headlong, he burst open in the middle. And all his bowels gushed out, his intestines. And it became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

So that, the field was called in their own language, akeldama. That is the field of blood. Now just sort of pause. And you might be saying, okay, George, that's very curious that somehow or another this story speaks about being seen and being understood.

Well, here's the thing. I don't want to give away the name in case there's some of you here who've never watched the Lord of the Ring movies or read the books. But in the Lord of the Ring movies and books, about midway through the first one, one of the characters that you think is going to be one of the most important characters in the entire book dies.

He dies. And I still remember very clearly the first time I read it how completely and utterly shocked I was that he died. And he dies.

[8 : 08] And he's dead for the rest of the book. He's dead for all of the second book. And then in the third book, it turns out that, in effect, it's a bit of like a Christ resurrection type of motif a little bit in the book of, in the Lord of the Rings.

But he's alive. And after, in the third book, he appears and people begin to know that he's alive. One of the running themes throughout the rest of the book is that everybody who knows that he's dead, they see him and they do like a double take.

You're dead. Like, what are you doing here? And it's like, it's a big shock to them. So what's happening here in the book of Acts isn't quite like that, but it's similar to that.

And that's this. What on earth is Peter and the disciples doing praying together with Jesus? Like, why is Peter different than Judas?

You see, Judas betrayed Jesus. No question about that. But who else betrayed Jesus? Who else denied Jesus publicly?

[9 : 15] Peter did. And not only did Peter deny Jesus publicly and the other 10 disciples, none of the 11 of them were around when Jesus was being crucified. They all hid.

They all denied him. They all fled from him. They all... I mean, Judas was a little bit worse, but there's not a huge difference between Judas and Peter and the other 10.

So what is Peter doing there? And why is Peter's fate so different than Judas' fate? And we see here, if you look at the two ancient stories, biographies, true biographies of the time, you'll see that what happened is that Judas, after he betrayed Jesus, he gets paid money.

And then he has remorse. He has great regret and sorrow over what he's done. And he goes and he brings the... and he gives the money back. And the religious leaders, being legalistic nitpickers, say, oh, we can't touch that money.

Like, that money was used to betray people. Like, we gave the money, but now you can't... Anyway, that's just a whole other sermon, right? And so they use the money to buy a field to bury foreigners in.

[10 : 26] And then obviously what happens is Judas discovers that he's still overcome with sorrow. The sorrow has now, and his grief and sadness, has now turned into despair. And it's a very, very, very tragic story.

Here's Judas, who had been one of the most trusted of all the disciples. They trusted him to keep the money. He was three years with Jesus. He saw Jesus. He knew Jesus. He was trusted by Jesus.

He knew Jesus' heart. He knew all of these things. But he's overcome with despair. He's overcome with sorrow. He goes and he actually commits suicide by hanging in the field that has been bought with his blood money.

And he dies. Not only does he die alone committing suicide, but there's no loved one to cut him down. Like, it's very tragic. Nobody cuts him down to the point that his whole body, through decomposition, falls off of the noose and falls on the ground.

And it very graphically describes in a non-family-friendly way his entire guts just burst out. And nobody cleans it up. Like, that's a horrible end.

[11 : 34] It's a horrible, horrible, alone end in despair. Why isn't Peter the same? In fact, actually, we know that Peter also was completely and utterly...

It wasn't like he's one of these guys that just sort of brazenly it out and says, I didn't do anything wrong. No. In fact, actually, it's really interesting. There's all of the four ancient biographies, eyewitness biographies of Jesus.

They all record Peter's betrayal, his denial. But Luke has a very interesting, unique picture. And if you go back and you look at the four of them, you'll see that Jesus, you know, he spent time with this guy.

And then they moved. They went and brought him here. And they brought him here. And there was a bit of a ping-pong going on with Jesus. And one of the things... And we all know that Jesus has warned Peter that Peter's going to deny him three times.

And Peter says, no, no, I'm not that guy. That's not going to happen to me. I'm too strong, too courageous, too brave. I know you. I love you too much. And he says all these things to Jesus. And then Peter is there.

[12 : 37] And after the third time that Peter denies Jesus, Luke adds this one other detail. The same guy who's writing the book of Acts. And that Jesus is obviously being taken from one of his appointments to another.

And as he's walking from one building to another, Jesus looks at Peter. And I guess the people that Peter's with, having denied Jesus, they're all looking over at Jesus.

And Peter looks over. And Jesus and Peter lock eyes. They lock eyes. And at that moment of locking eyes, Peter bursts into tears.

And is overwhelmed with sorrow. And grief and sadness. Because he realizes he's betrayed Jesus three times.

He's denied him three times. So what's different between the two? If you could put up the next scripture text. Usually you know that I just camp in one text all the time.

[13 : 39] But today I'm going to look actually at three other texts to help us understand the story a little bit better and more powerfully. And if you could put up the first text. It's from 2 Corinthians, hopefully, chapter 7, verse 10.

And if you get nothing else out of the sermon today other than a desire to memorize this passage of scripture, then God has been very kind to us. This is a very profound text of scripture.

And it says this. For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret. Whereas worldly grief produces death.

Say it again. For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret. Whereas worldly grief produces death.

Like there's a path set before us when we feel sadness and sorrow and grieve over the wrongs that we've done. And all of us probably have experienced either people who have wronged us or people whom we have wronged.

[14 : 45] Where the relationship is permanently ended. And not only is there a grief and a sorrow and a sadness over the wrong that you have done. That I have done.

But there is a grief and a sorrow and a sadness that the relationship is permanently broken. And the Bible here is saying that there's two types of grief.

There's two types of sorrow. There's two types of repentance. There's two types of sadness. One of them, when it says worldly, it's in a sense, you know, all despair is rooted in pride.

Pride. Pride. Pride. Pride. All despair is rooted in pride. And so in our pride, our sorrow and sadness and grief gets deeper and more extensive in our life.

And it just leads to death. That's Judas. Judas had that worldly grief. See, this is sort of how, you know, the story gives you, in a sense, like a type of architecture and furniture for the Christian faith.

[15 : 54] And then you read other texts like that and say, oh, that's Judas. That's what that text is illustrating. That's Judas. Peter represents, and the other ten disciples, they represent the godly sorrow.

Godly grief, godly sorrow, godly sadness produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret. And repentance always involves humility, humbling yourself like a little child.

And acknowledging wrongdoing. And asking for forgiveness. And one of the things which is so beautiful about this whole story is this whole story, remember, Luke says that he just wrote another book.

And this whole story is framed with the message of forgiveness. This is why we're going to look at two other texts of the Bible. I don't do this as much, but it's framed with the message of forgiveness.

So if you look, if you turn in your Bibles to Luke, you can't use these little booklets, obviously, for that, because it just has Acts. But if you turn to Luke chapter 24, verses 46 to 48, we have here one of the resurrection appearances of Jesus.

[17 : 10] And he's come to his disciples. And his disciples are all bent out of shape because the grave is empty. They're there with locked doors.

They're terrified. The doors are locked. The windows are closed. They're terrified. Jesus appears in their midst. He shows them he's alive. And he doesn't tell them, you dirty rats.

I never want to have anything to do with you again for the rest of your life. You are such betrayers. I'm getting rid of the 11 of you. I'm going to pick 11 people. No, he doesn't say I'm going to get. What does he say?

Well, he says several things. But here's one of the things he says. Verse 46, thus it is written. Actually, it's not on the screen. He opened their mind to understand the scriptures. And then he says, thus it is written that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead.

And that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to every people group on the planet. Beginning from Jerusalem.

[18 : 10] You are witnesses of these things. Jesus says, I died so you could be forgiven. And that's just how Luke ends.

And then look what happens in the story right after this. If you turn in your Bibles now to Acts chapter 2, verses 37 to 39.

Because what's going to happen after this story? We're going to look at it two weeks from now. But right after this story is the Pentecost. The Holy Spirit comes upon 120 or more of these people.

And then Peter preaches the very first Christian sermon. And at the end of that very, very first Christian sermon is this. Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart.

That's the crowd who'd come together because of the roar of the noise and the tongues of fire. And people speaking in the languages of all the known people groups of the earth. So verse 37, now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart.

[19 : 14] And said to Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Brothers, what shall we do? And Peter said to them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ.

For the forgiveness of your sins. And you'll receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise, this promise of forgiveness of sins.

And the Holy Spirit is for you and for your children. And for all who are far off. Everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.

I guess if this was a southern congregation, I'd have people saying amen. But if you're watching this, we're not in Alabama or Mississippi. We're in cold Ottawa.

Although it's going to be a really beautiful day today. You see, that's the thing. Which is the difference, you see. Is that Peter, to receive repentance involves humility.

[20 : 17] It involves trusting that Jesus actually died. That I might be forgiven. When Peter and the apostles hear this. And hear this message.

And it fits with what they understood of Jesus' heart. That he died. His death actually isn't a failure. He's risen from the dead. He's vindicated. And his death is this profound act of forgiveness.

If you could put up the first point. You see, here's the wonderful news of the gospel. In Jesus, God forgives your inexcusable sin.

Peter had no excuse. Peter, before the cock crows. A couple of times. You're going to deny me three times. And he goes and does it. What's Peter's excuse going to be?

Oh, Peter, Jesus should have warned me. Oh yeah, dang, you did warn me. Like, I don't know. See, here's the thing that's so powerful. That Jesus, in Jesus, God forgives your inexcusable sin.

[21 : 20] Now, in the Christian life, God is going to convict you of sin as you walk in him.

But his plan for you, his heart for you, isn't that you live constantly in regret and feeling inadequate and feeling weak and feeling guilty and feeling ashamed.

That's not his desire for you. His desire for you is that you would repent and believe the gospel and know that you have been forgiven. And in the power of that forgiveness to begin to call out to him for help, to amend your life, whatever's required.

Now, three things in the rest of the story help to bring this home. So, the first one is, if we go back to our text, which is Acts 1, 15 to 19.

I haven't read all of it. But the first one is this. The first one is to understand that what actually we're talking about happened. This isn't like me talking to you about Santa Claus. It's not talking about the great pumpkin.

[22 : 31] It's not talking about the Easter bunny. I'm talking about what actually happened. Jesus really did die on the cross. He really did rise from the dead. And if he really did die on the cross and rise from the dead, then what he says and who he is is vindicated.

It means that we should believe it. And it all happened in history. Actually, it's not going to be on the screen. If you look up at verse 15, when it says, in those days, to begin it, that's a very significant phrase.

It doesn't say, once upon a time. Once upon a time, there was a princess and she falls into a sleep. No, it doesn't say that. But it says, in those days, it's like, you know, a couple of us old guys saying, back in the day.

We used to do this, you know. Like, actually, I could have said, like, back in the day, when I wanted to get a hold of Michael Green, there weren't cell phones. So back in the day, you had to find their home number.

There were these things called phone books back in the day. That's what Luke is saying. Back in the day. And then, if you look at it as well in verse 19, when it says, it became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem what happened to Judas.

[23 : 37] That's one of the other things which is so powerful. It's why only the real resurrection of Jesus accounts for the birth of Christianity and the growth of Christianity.

Jesus died in a way that everybody knew that he had died. And everybody in Jerusalem would have known that the grave was empty. And everybody in Jerusalem would have known that they couldn't find the body.

And everybody in Jerusalem would have known, starting in a few days, that people had seen him alive. It was a public event in terms of what had happened.

So it's a true event. It helps us to understand that when God says that there is a way of coming to him, that we can experience sorrow over whatever we have done. But when it is combined with repentance, humility and repentance and trusting in the gospel, it leads to life, not death.

And the other second thing which this story shows, which helps bring us home, is that God himself is telling you this. It's not just George Sinclair. It's God telling you this.

[24 : 40] Look at what happens here in verse 16. Brothers and sisters, the scripture had to be fulfilled. Listen to this.

Which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas. See, that's the Christian message.

That when I read this book, I am reading the words that the Holy Spirit spoke to me through the mouth of these human authors.

I meant to do this, but I forgot. It's really like if I was to draw something on the screen, it would be the Bible, God's word written.

And then there's a thick line and everything else is underneath it. Human traditions, creeds, liturgies, prophetic utterances, speaking in tongues, human wisdom, theologians, C.S. Lewis, Michael Green.

[25 : 39] Everything is underneath the line and on one side of the line. And we need C.S. Lewis and all that other stuff. But there's that God's word, which is completely and utterly different. Nothing else in the Bible is described.

Tradition isn't described with this same very, very stark turn. And so, here's the thing.

I don't know where you all are. I know many of you love Jesus. I don't know where many of you are online. I know many of you love Jesus. But maybe there's some people here who've been deconstructing their fear.

They're in a bit of a doubting and deconstructing phase of their life. And they're not sure if they're going to continue on with the church. And maybe some of you are on a spiritual quest. But one of the things that I think most Canadians would be united in is that God, whoever God is, whatever God is, he, she, it, they, doesn't speak.

That would probably be one of the criteria that Canadians give. Well, if God exists, he, she, it, they, God doesn't speak. Some type of force or something like that. Ask yourself these questions.

[26 : 51] If you can speak, why can't God? And if you meet a creature or something or other that can't speak, you know it is less than you.

You know it is less than you. If so, why do you insist on or want a God that cannot speak?

Like, why is that part of Canadians' criteria? You can speak. Why can't God? And if you meet some type of being that can't even say a single word or understand a word, you know that it's less than you.

You know, in one level, a waterfall is more powerful than you, but another level, it's less than you. Does this reveal that you, in fact, average Canadian, want a God that is less than you so you can pretend you're God?

If that is at the heart of who you are, you are always prone to despair because it is an unacknowledged pride and all despair is rooted in pride.

[28 : 05] If you can speak and be heard and understood, why can't God? If you can speak and be remembered, why can't God?

And in fact, actually, if in your relationships you expect people to remember what you've said and you get upset if they don't remember what you've said, then why can't God? If you can, so if you can do this, shouldn't the true God, the one that you've been looking for, shouldn't he be able to do all of these things even better?

Shouldn't he be able to speak and have his words remembered and recorded and be public even better than a human being could? You see, the resurrection validates Jesus in his message, but it's also, in fact, as you think about it, that reason itself will also tell us that the God that he reveals is the God that, in fact, we are looking for.

And other gods aren't gods. And then it's even more, as you understand, well, this next bit, the third reason why God's heart for you is that you would experience a godly sorrow and sadness and grief over the wrongs that you've done.

Let's look at how the text concludes. Verse 20. So, you know, he just described what's happened to Judas. And then in verse 20, Peter goes on, So, or therefore, one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John the Baptist until the day when Jesus was taken up from us, one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection.

[30 : 05] And what they're saying is, in a sense, they know actually from, I'm not going to show you the text, but Jesus sort of said that there'd be 12 apostles. It's sort of what he's about to do in Acts 2 is, in a sense, there's to be a new Israel and a new mission to the world.

And we'll look at that over the next three weeks and then following. And so they know that there's a gap and they need to replace him. And so, verse 23, they put forward two candidates, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also called Justice, and Matthias.

And they prayed. That's the 120 of them. And they said, You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.

And they cast lots. I'll talk about that in a moment. They cast lots for them. And the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the 11 apostles. Now, here's the thing about the text.

If you go back and look at the prayer that they pray, beginning in verse 24, it's really interesting.

[31 : 22] Do you notice here? If one of your Islamic friends or a Jehovah Witness or a Baha'i tells you that the early Christians didn't worship Jesus and didn't believe that he was God, you can just point them to an eyewitness biography like this.

They pray to Jesus. They pray to Jesus. That's what they just did. You, Lord. They're praying to Jesus.

And then here, it's translated very well, who knows the hearts of all. Literally in the Greek, it says, You, Lord, heart knower. That's what it literally says.

You, Lord, heart knower. You see, this is one of the things which is so just profoundly beautiful about this text.

Peter, having denied Jesus three times, and then Jesus looks at him, and Peter looks at him in their eyes locked, and Peter's overcome with grief and sorrow and sadness.

[32 : 41] But then in the days that are to come, and with the resurrection, Peter comes to realize that Jesus is his heart knower.

Jesus sees him. Michael Green saw me, and he loved me in a very small way. But Jesus sees you, and he loves you.

And he sees your shame. He sees your sin. He sees the bits of crap in your life.

For those of us who are here, who are struggling with senses of profound failure, maybe his failure is in relationships, or as parents, or financially, or in job, or all of the above and ten others, Jesus is the heart knower who sees you.

In fact, if you could put up the point, Claire, Jesus is the heart knower who sees you, and died for you, so you can be forgiven and be free. That's who Jesus is.

[33 : 45] That's who died on the cross for you. The one who died on the cross for you is your heart knower, who sees you. And when you know that you've been seen and understood, and still the person so loves you and cares for you, Michael Green just prayed for me.

Jesus died for me. That I might be forgiven. He died for you, that you might be forgiven. Some of you might say, just in closing, George, you know, you said all about this, and it sounds all good, and then they go ahead and they cast lots to make a decision.

Like, that just sounds like something out of paganism, or something just completely and utterly crazy. Actually, it's not, and I don't want to take a long time to answer the question, but you'll see in the rest of the Bible that they never cast lots again.

What they want is they want God's direction. If you could put up the final point, Claire, that would be very helpful while I just briefly explain it. If you look at what happens in the text, they do the same things that we are called to do as Christians today, which is, the Bible makes us aware of something that we need to think about.

And then they use wisdom to try to figure out a little bit about what that might look like. But then they know that God cares about even the small and big details of your life.

[35 : 19] So they pray, knowing that the heart-knower cares about the things that you have to do in life. And they want him to guide them.

And so you have this very final, last bit of the Old Testament, one of the ways that God would answer those types of things. The very next verse in the story is going to describe about how all Christians are different because the Holy Spirit comes.

But the process is just the same. You have a heart-knower who loves you. And you need his witness about who to marry, whether to go to school, how to remain single, how to raise good grief.

You know, I made a comment about Matt Usherwood and his ordination. I complimented Matt's mom. And the only thing, she thanked me for saying that little thing I said about her, but she said, the only thing I wish is that when Matt came, when Matt was born, that he came with an instruction manual.

Because I would have made my life so much easier if I'd had the instruction manual. But, you know, God cares about those details of your life. And so you see, the Lord Jesus cares for you.

[36 : 30] And so humbly grow in a Holy Spirit-led, Bible-informed, prayerful wisdom. That's his heart for you. We have his own dear presence to be with us to comfort and to guide.

Please stand. Please stand in closing. Just if any of you here, and maybe your faith is going through a period of great doubt or deconstruction, or if you're watching this online, and you might think, well, that's all right.

I'm George. As soon as I hear that, you know, I just know that I'm Judas, not Peter. Let me tell you, if you think that, that means that God is knocking at your heart. That means God is knocking at your heart.

And you need to just say, shut up, devil. Jesus, I want Peter. I want the Peter experience. I want the repentance, the godly sorrow, not the worldly sorrow.

And I don't know how to get there. That's fine. You don't have to know how to get there. Call out to him. It's his job. That's the wonderful news.

[37 : 42] It's not a technique. It's not like, how on earth is this stupid phone supposed to work? No. I mean, it's not the phone's job to tell me. It's his job to do all that. That's the wonderful thing about the gospel. He knows your heart.

And there's no time better than now to call out to Jesus and say, Jesus, I want to be yours. And he'll never turn you away. He knows your heart and he died for you. Let's pray.

Father, we ask, we thank you so much for this profound story. And Father, you know how some of us get very beaten up. Some of us have voices of profound accusation in our ears that are telling us that we're terrible Christians, we're terrible people, we're complete failures, we're ugly, we're too skinny, we're too fat, we're too muscular, we're not muscular enough, too much money, not enough money, too general, and all that stuff.

Father, you know that there's those voices of accusation that go on in our ears and you know that we can struggle with sadness and sorrow over failures and everything. And Lord, we ask that you bring the truth of this story and the truth of 2 Corinthians 7, 10 deeply into our heart, Father.

And we call out to you that you would help us to know that godly sorrow and sadness, that you would help us to repent, that we might live without that accusatory regret, but know that Jesus is our hope of glory, our heart-knower who is also our hope of glory.

[39 : 14] And we ask, Father, that you bring those truths very profoundly and deeply into our lives. And Father, we know that we have to ask again and again, not because you don't listen and hear, but just because that's just the way we are.

We're frail. And so we thank you, Father, for these opportunities to gather with our brothers and sisters in Christ, to stand equally before the cross and call out to you and just be so thankful, Father, for Jesus, our heart-knower who died for us so we might be forgiven.

So, Father, we say and remember and ask all these things in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. And all God's people said, Amen.