

# Extreme Christianity

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[ 0 : 00 ] Matthew 5 from verse 38 it says, And from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away.

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them, that curse you, do good to them, that hate you and pray for them, which despitefully use you and persecute you.

That's extreme, isn't it? Isn't that extreme? Maybe you've heard of extreme sports.

Who's ever heard of extreme sports? You see these sportsmen and women go nuts, doing crazy things. They just almost risk their lives for a bit of entertainment and fun.

Extreme sports. This is extreme Christianity. Extreme Christianity. Now people sometimes criticise when someone gets saved, gloriously saved.

[ 1 : 41 ] They sometimes say things like, He's gone a bit extreme. She's gone a bit extreme.

Talking about some extremes this morning.

Some X's. Some extremes. We see here, verse 41. An extra mile. Verse 41. Someone compels you to go a mile?

Go within twain. Go to the extra mile. Imagine living in Israel back then. An occupied country. It had the custom there where a Roman soldier could come and grab you, take you off the street, and make you run a message or carry a load for them.

And they used people like their servants to run their errands. And when you got called on, you were expected to take the load for at least one mile.

That was what was demanded of you. That was the custom. That was the expectation. And it might have been really inconvenient. Imagine if you were going somewhere on an appointment, running an errand for yourself, and suddenly you just get hauled away by some Roman soldier, and you say, go in the opposite direction and carry my pack for me.

[ 3 : 02 ] It would have been really unfair, wouldn't it? But it was the law of the land. So that was the least that you had to do. You had to do it. And this is what happened when they made Simon of Cyrene carry the cross for Christ on the way to his execution.

Matthew 27, verse 32. They just grabbed him off the street and said, here, carry this cross. The Lord Jesus shows us how to manage it when people make demands of us.

Who's ever had that? People making demands of you. Maybe unreasonable demands. He says, don't complain. He says, be patient. Go further than they asked of you.

Go an extra mile. You know, when the citizens of Israel were asked to take this detour for the Roman soldier and carry their pack or whatever, they would kind of measure it out and work it out. Okay, oh, I've got to one mile. They just throw the pack on the ground and leave them to it because they had fulfilled what was the custom, the law of the land.

[ 4 : 11 ] But Jesus says, no, go an extra mile. Go beyond. Go further. And he shows people how to do so. To give more than are asked of us.

To go beyond the call. It's what the Good Samaritan did. The Good Samaritan. Look what he did.

He put himself out. When this bleeding and bashed man was on the pavement, he stopped what he was doing and he lent a hand.

He took the time, the trouble, the care to load him on his own beast, to take him to the inn for accommodation, to rest, to recover.

He put the treatment that he had, poured him the oil and the wine. He gave the treatment that he had to care for the man practically and then, furthermore, to pay for his accommodation and an extra night.

He went beyond. He gave more than was expected. And friends, what about you and me? When we face difficulties, when we face demands from others, it's easy to think, oh, I'm just going to do the least that I can do.

[ 5 : 28 ] I'm just going to do the minimum. I'm just going to do what's expected of me and leave it at that. But the Lord Jesus says, in effect, when we face difficulty and demands, he says, meet them with meekness, with strength of character, with gentleness and long-suffering.

Be Jesus to them. It's extreme, isn't it? It's just counter-cultural, isn't it? It's counter-intuitive. It's counter-everything that our culture would really say.

I would put to you that, you know, no worries, mate. She'll be right.

Yeah, just laid-back Aussie culture, you know. But it's common to man. I think it's not just common to Aussies.

So, let's learn to be patient with people that are in our lives, to be forgiving of others, even when people insult us. You know, you feel like someone's bag that they beat up, you know, like a punching bag.

[ 6 : 38 ] You know, you might feel like that sometimes. There's people that might attack you unreasonably and without cause. And you think, what is going on? Who can identify with that?

How can we be forgiving with people like that when you know they're in the wrong, when people insult you, when they take from you at your expense, when you're the centre of their jokes, when they hurt you?

It says, give to them. It's extreme, isn't it? Extreme Christianity. It's about character, isn't it? It's about being a second mile Christian.

An extra mile. To walk the extra mile with people. To go beyond, above and beyond what's expected of us.

To be more for God. than just the minimum. Just the bare minimum. To go further for the Lord. Maybe we need to get saved all over again.

[ 7 : 52 ] Get extreme again. I can think of some people in my own family, they're just, I've got to be reverent to my elders here. They just go, they just, their lives would turn upside down.

I can remember when my mum and dad were different from what they are now. And, I can remember my dad having a, and, and she'll be right, mate.

You know. He's different now. He's a different man. Praise God. We're an extreme. People, some, some people are extreme Christians.

Praise God for that. They go above and beyond. And, you know, sometimes, some of the people in our lives, they, they just need a little bit of extra care.

Don't they? And, we're meant to be second mile Christians, extra mile Christians. Just give a little bit more of yourself. A bit more time.

[ 8 : 59 ] A bit more love. A bit more heart. No matter what, I'd appreciate it. You may not get patted on the back for it. It'll cost you that much extra. But, it could make a world of difference.

Think of some of the people in your lives, in mine. There's people in your lives that you can go the extra mile with. Amen? Now, sometimes we get impatient with people, don't we?

And, and we discount people. We brush them aside. But, take that extra time, that extra attention, that extra care, that extra heart, and learn that extra mile principle in your relationships.

You know, those people, what about those people who can't give back to you? Some people only give when they can get something. Don't they? to be a bit more selfless and loving.

Instead of worrying about ourselves, to think about the needs of others. We all know how to walk the first mile. To do what's expected.

[ 10 : 09 ] To do the minimum. To do what's, what people would expect of us. what we have to do. Sometimes we do only what is expected and nothing more.

Just do the minimum you can. The Lord Jesus says, there's a better way. Do more. Do more than the minimum. As believers, let's be in the pursuit of excellence.

It means taking up a cross. The extra mile. It turns the ordinary into the extraordinary. People say, did you see what she just did?

Did you hear what he just did? They've done the unexpected. They've walked the extra mile with someone. And they've done it with a smile.

They've prepared a meal with a special touch. They've made a call. They've put themselves out.

They've given someone a lift. They've done this. They've done that. The extra mile. The extra care.

[ 11 : 13 ] The extra attention. When you're walking that extra mile, your attitude shifts from, I have to to, I want to.

I want to bless people. I want to be an encouragement. I want to serve the Lord by doing more than it's expected of me. And how can we do that?

Practically, you might be better gifted than me in different ways and different opportunities present to you. Peter says in 1 Peter 4 verse 9, use hospitality one to another.

There's a hospitality. There's a generosity when we open our home, when we open our eyes to people and to go that extra mile, to take that extra moment of care, to take that extra time for people.

And you may not get appreciated for it. Your reward may not be down here. You might give and give and bless and put yourself out and see nothing tangible for it.

[12:27] Not even a thank you. But you've learnt to be like Jesus. You've learnt to go the extra mile. You've learnt to, I have to, to, I want to. I want to do this.

I want to bless. I want to be like Jesus. And when he was reviled, he reviled not again. We see it in the everyday, don't we? We take thank you and you're welcome for granted.

And we, like, it's almost like we only do things when we get patted on the back for it. But Paul urges us to go beyond, to be kind, to be forbearing.

Forbearance is a character trait, that Paul commands, to forbear one another in love. That means love people that you find it hard to love, doesn't it?

Forbear. Those people that, some really gifted Christians, they're sandpaper Christians. They just rub everybody else up the wrong way.

[13:31] They keep us humble, don't they? People like that, they rub off all our rough edges and we need that. It's iron sharpening iron, isn't it?

We can bless each other by some of those things, hopefully in a kind way. So, we go the extra mile for others, to be kind, to give.

Are we prepared to go the extra mile? Or are we just like that Israeli citizen that just throw the pack down when the soldier has reached that one mile mark and we just do what's expected and that's it?

Not going to give anymore, not going to be anymore, not going to do anymore. Or when we have that attitude, I want to, I want to do it because it's blessing God, I'm obeying God, I'm serving God, I'll do what hurts to do, what's hard to do, what's beyond my own limits.

I'm going to do beyond, go the extra mile. What an attitude to have in service, yet plenty of people will just do the minimum, enough to get by.

[14:38] Why should we go the extra mile? Think of the extremity that God went for us, the Lord Jesus, the extremity, that was extreme, the cross, that's the extremity, isn't it, that God went to.

The extra distance that he went to rescue you, to leave heaven's throne, to come to this dirt, and to be as one of us, yet without sin, to rescue his creation.

While every other religion in the world is trying to give man a boost from beneath, the Lord Jesus offers a birth from above. It's totally different, it's extreme.

So let's go beyond what's expected. If you are asked to walk a mile, walk two. Go the extra mile, I know some people have done that. They've blessed some people to get some furniture shifted.

They went a few miles to shift that furniture. Bless you for that. That's going the extra mile, isn't it? Just putting yourself out. People might have said, I'm a bit too busy for that.

[15:49] Oh, I can't afford the time, the petrol, the inconvenience. Let's go the extra. That's what we need to do. Go extra. Impact people in your life.

Father Christ's example. Put aside your own will and your own comfort and serve another.

Help selflessly, selflessly serve. So go the extra mile with your love. Find opportunities to love those who are hard to love. Now sometimes we're a bit selective with our love, aren't we?

where we might think they smell a bit or I can't think of how to put it in a kind way but people categorise people.

They put them in a box and say I'm not going to talk to them. But for the grace of God we would be in the same boat.

[17:03] I know there's a Christian brother who tells graphically how he was literally spewing drunk in the gutter and Christ has transformed him.

But some would discount such a person, wouldn't they? They wouldn't even talk to them or reach out a hand to them or say a word to them.

Brother, sister, we must not do that. Go the extra mile. We've got to reach out while we can because every soul matters.

Love is Jesus' love. That's radical, isn't it? It's being an extra mile Christian to go beyond the minimum, to be outrageous, the extra mile. It's when you've done something good, and you keep on going.

You don't stop. It's unstoppable. It's unlimited. You go on and you keep on going. You keep on going out of your way to add something even better, to do something more.

[18:08] Maybe you even surprise yourself. What's possible? Now think of the youth ministry, the children's ministry, those moments of time, those words, those smiles, that care, that putting yourself out, those hours where you're preparing your materials, you're preparing for that little moment of time.

You want to make that count, you want to make that count for eternity, for those precious souls. calls, and you'll do something more than what is expected.

You'll go the extra mile to make that call, to encourage, to get them there, so they can hear the gospel. You'll take on that extra assignment, and you'll surprise someone with a kindness they never could have imagined.

And some people are even really extreme. They do it anonymously. wow, that's extreme. They don't even get a thank you for what they've done.

That's a blessing, isn't it? Wow, that's extreme, isn't it? To give anonymously, so there's no reward down here.

[19:26] That's the extra mile. And so, think about yourself, your generosity, your enthusiasm. Is it limited?

I'll go so far, but no further. Or are we really walking in the footsteps of our Lord? He gave and he kept on giving.

The Lord Jesus will walk the extra mile with you. That's extreme. Extreme Christianity, it goes the extra mile. Here's another X. X. Extreme Christianity involves excess.

excess. Extreme Christianity, it means excess. What do I mean? The Lord Jesus said unto us, to the disciples gathered, Matthew 5, verse 20, he says, unless your righteousness exceed, except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

this extreme, isn't it? The Pharisees and Sadducees, for all their faults, their doctrine was pretty good. They were pretty straight down the line.

[20:52] They had all the P's and Q's and the I's dotted and the T's crossed. They had it all together. The letter of the law, they knew it all. They had it all straight, straight as a die.

Pharisees, the word Pharisee, I believe, means separatist. They were separated. That's a good thing. Amen? It's good to be separated. A separated people, to separate from sin, to separate from falsehood.

But they had it such that they were like that. They were so harsh. They had the letter right, but they had the spirit missing.

And so, the Lord Jesus is saying, I believe here, that our righteousness should exceed that man-made standard to a God-made standard.

To have the righteousness that is from above, that is from God. It's His robe of righteousness. It's His. It's Christ in you. Christ is our righteousness. That's extreme.

[21:58] It's excess. Such that our righteousness is not a man-made, rule-bound thing. It's a God-given thing. It's a God-granted thing. So let's exceed.

Let's abound. Let's overflow. To be beyond measure, more than expected. Think of God. The Lord God. Our Lord Jesus. He's excessive. He's exceeding.

God is exceeding in His character. You see this word exceeding. You might like to look it up later. Or like words. Ephesians 1.19 it says, And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power?

Paul says that you may know this, the exceeding greatness of His power to those who believe. And Ephesians 3.20 He prays.

Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us. Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end.

[ 23 : 08 ] Amen. He's able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. exceeding. God is exceeding. He exceeds what we even pray for.

What we even think to pray for. Paul says, 1 Thessalonians 3.10 Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith.

Paul says I'm exceeding in my praying. Night and day exceeding. Praying. 1 Peter 4.13 It tells how we're partakers of Christ's offerings that when His glory shall be revealed you may be glad also with exceeding joy.

When are we going to get the exceeding joy? In as much as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings. Wow! That's extreme. The exceeding joy comes when we get the trouble on this planet.

In as much as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings rejoice, he says, in as much as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

[ 24 : 17 ] And 2 Peter 1.4 I love this one. Wherefore, whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises.

Exceeding that ye might be partakers of the divine nature having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. Exceeding prayer, exceeding joy, exceeding great and precious promises.

Wow! God's excessive, isn't he? And so should we be. We should believe it and act upon it.

Extreme. Extreme Christianity. It's marked by the extra mile that you're going to go.

And you're going to want to. Not because you have to. You're going to want to go the extra mile. We see exceeding. Exceeding prayer, exceeding joy, exceeding great and precious promises.

Another X. Excellence. Excellence. And we could do with a bit of that in this church. When we keep starting our services late and everything's, there's a lot of rough edges here.

[ 25 : 23 ] Especially in this man. Excellence. I'd like to be more excellent, wouldn't you? To be more excellent at serving God. Or do we just satisfy, are we just satisfied with second rate?

We just settle for half measures. Or do we aim for excellence? Let that be our aim, our goal.

Excellence. A righteousness that exceeds.

An excessive Christianity. Exceeding joy. Exceeding prayer. Daniel had a more excellent spirit. I love how it says that of him.

A more excellent spirit. And others around him. Something that just stood head and shoulders over the others. There's some people in our church that stand head and shoulders over the other people. Physically. Daniel did that spiritually. He was head and shoulders above. A more excellent spirit was in this man. He was a man of faith. A man of prayer.

[ 26 : 24 ] And his spirit excelled. His personality was dominated by God's righteousness. And he believed God even, even, in the den of lions. Even there.

It was more excellent. What about the difference between good and great? Good? We want to be a good church, don't we? I pray that we will aspire to at least that.

To be a good church. What about being a great church? You know, I mean even the worldly companies use this distinction between good and great. light. It's just something that's more excellent.

There's good churches in Adelaide. We could be more like those good churches. To be more excellent. I pray that we will be. You know, there's a big difference that's been said between 99 degrees and 100 degrees Celsius.

One degree. At 99, the water is hot. At 100, it's boiling. It creates steam and energy and power.

[ 27 : 32 ] There's a one degree difference between good and great. One degree. It makes all the difference. But sometimes we limit God, don't we?

We limit God as a church. We go so far and no further. It's like we get to the mile mark and we say, oh, I'm just going to stop there. But we don't go beyond. The extra.

The extra. To get extreme. To get excessive. We stop short of being God's best. And we can do that individually, spiritually, can't we?

Oh, I'll just do the token. The minimum. The least. We stop short. If we'd just gone that one degree, perhaps God could use us more for His glory.

Perhaps God could do great things in me, in you, in us, if we just go beyond the one degree. But we fall short of excellence so often. Run the race with patience.

[ 28 : 36 ] Perseverance. Run and keep on running. Go beyond. Don't fall short. Don't stop. Let nothing stop you. Let nothing deter you in the Christian walk, the Christian race.

Pursue. Pursue it. Follow on. It's got that sense of that vigorous chasing after. Run after Him.

Run the race. Extreme Christianity. You might say, Preacher, you're getting a bit extreme this morning. Please, let's get more of it.

Let's be a bit more extreme. Extreme Christianity is Bible Christianity. It's where we're meant to be. Isn't it? What about another X word here?

Exploits. Exploits. Daniel 11.32. Daniel 11.32. It says, The people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits.

[ 29 : 40 ] They shall be strong and do exploits. Are you doing exploits for God? Your exploits might be different from mine. We've all got different capacities.

We've all got different callings. What's an exploit? Here's how someone defined it. An act or deed, especially a brilliant or heroic one. A deed, an act, heroic, brilliant.

Be an achiever. Do something that's noble. Now, those things that are noble and brilliant and heroic might be unseen.

There's some unseen heroes, unsung heroes, there's some quiet achievers, brother, sister. You can do it. You can be a hero for God.

To be an extra miler, to strive to attain, to be more like Jesus, to go beyond mediocre, beyond average, to go beyond the 99, to boiling hot for God.

[ 30 : 47 ] or will we just settle for easy believism? Will we just be those who are just coasting where it's easy, where it's comfortable?

Or will we be learning, growing, going for God, reaching out with selflessness, with sacrifice? Extreme.

Are you an extreme believer? Here's another X word. We could go on and talk about being an example, an example, an example.

You are one, whether you like it or not. You know? There's some bad examples in here, isn't there? There's some bad examples in here, how not to be, but there's some good examples too. Let's be one of those. An example, it's a model. Now when we say the word model, some think of a cheap plastic imitation kind of thing.

[ 32 : 04 ] We're not talking about that kind of model. Not a fake, not a pretend, but the real deal, a full-on Christian, a model for others. And younger people are watching us, older people are watching us.

We're setting an example, good or bad. Philippians 3, 17, Paul says, brethren, be ye followers of me, followers together of me, and mark them which walk.

So as you have us for an example, the sum you mark and avoid, he says, follow me. He says, follow me even as I follow Christ. Titus 2, Paul tells Titus, in all things showing thyself a pattern, an example, a pattern, something you cut the cloth to, to make the shape, that sets the dimension, be a pattern of good works, in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity.

Paul tells Timothy, 1 Timothy 4, 12, let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

Extreme Christianity means you're an example. Fathers, wow, I know, I'm an example. I'd like to think my children are following me.

[ 33 : 33 ] I pray they will, more so. Mothers, wow, be an example, be an example.

You might say, oh, this all sounds very theoretical, and it all sounds like a good little sermon, sermonette, and I'll just go home and file it in my memory banks, and it'll fade away, and I'll do nothing with it.

Brother, sister, apply it. Apply it. You might say, I'm nothing, I'm a nobody, I'm just, I'm just an average Christian.

God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound, to put to shame the things that are mighty. There's no one discounted, there's no one weak in God's eyes, maybe weak in the eyes of the world, but God has chosen ordinary people to do extraordinary things, to do exploits.

If you're committed to Christ, he has called you, and he's commissioned you, and he's equipped you. You might say, I'm nothing, I've no gifts at all, I fail all the time, I'm a hopeless Christian, I'm a bad example, and I'm just, my testimony is weak, and I'm, I just don't know what to do for God.

[ 35 : 00 ] I just, maybe you're just like Moses. Moses said, he was shy, hesitant, inarticulate, he said, get Aaron to do it.

God used Moses to lead Israel to freedom. He used the keepers of flocks and herds, just average people.

He used fishermen and farmers to accomplish his work. A simple carpenter and a peasant girl to raise his son.

And so don't discount yourself. It's still the way God works. He still uses the average. He still uses the ordinary.

Nowadays we've got mega methods, mass media, we've got super churches, mega churches, but it's ordinary people that get the job done. It's ordinary people to do God's extraordinary work.

[ 36 : 16 ] It's those grandmothers praying for their grandchildren. It's that office worker witnessing to their colleagues. It's that Christian taking a meal to an unbelieving neighbour when they know they're doing it hard and assuring them of their prayers.

It's those weak, in the eyes of the world people, that God uses still. Those foolish, that others would think little of, that God chooses.

And so, the weak things of the world, he uses to put to shame the things that are mighty. 1 Corinthians 1, 27. Think of it, in the word of God.

God's been using ordinary people right from the beginning, right through, ordinary people. I like to think sometimes, if we were back in those days, in the first century time or earlier, we were amongst them.

They were just flesh like we, just like us, once and all, as we know, and yet extravagant, weren't they, for God?

[ 37 : 27 ] Why do we just stop and not go the extra? Just go the extra. Go the extra for God.

Just one more X, just to wrap up here. Extreme Christianity.

Extravagance. Extravagance. Now, sometimes it's okay, I'm quoting a bit here, this is lifted from somewhere, sometimes it's okay to be extravagant.

Now, this is precisely the story, the gospel of Mark. The Lord Jesus on the way to the cross, a few days before Passover, the chief priests and scribes are plotting against him, and Judas is about ready to betray him, to hand him over, to get some cash for the Christ.

The crucifixion is just around the corner, and the Lord Jesus is here at Bethany with his disciples. It's just a few days before the Lord Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead in Bethany, and now as they come, they're having dinner, and a woman comes to Christ and does a beautiful but extravagant thing for our Lord.

[ 38 : 56 ] And the gospel of John tells how this woman, Mary, says to Samantha and Lazarus, Mary brings an alabaster jar, this jar, this container, this vessel of very expensive ointment, and she breaks open the jar and calls that costly perfume upon Jesus' head, and she anoints his head with oil.

Why did she do that? Some say it was an act of gratitude for raising her brother Lazarus from the dead, an act of consecration, as it were to encourage him to go to the cross, or a foreshadowing, an act of preparation, as she was anointing the body for the burial.

But all would say it was an act of love. It was worship, extravagant. Judas said, what a waste! What a waste! And if you live with the Judas mindset, this is the quote here, you would have no spire on the church, no flowers on the altar, no art on the wall, not that we really want such things anyway, but no robes for the choir, no fine organ, no beautiful weddings.

Your daughter would come to you and say, I'm in love and I'm so happy, I want to get married. And you would say, well why don't you just do it? It's much cheaper. It would be wasteful to have a wedding.

[ 40 : 34 ] What an outlay, what a cost. But the Mary mindset says, sometimes in the name of love and kindness and gratefulness, it's okay, it's beautiful to be extravagant.

Isn't that true? Extreme, extreme. Preacher, you be extreme here. I just want to be average. People of God, be encouraged.

Be encouraged. You can go the extra mile. You can do it. Commit to that. To go the extra mile with people in your life. To go the extra mile with those people that you find it hard to go with. Because Jesus is there. Jesus is in the extra mile. And he's with you there. Excess. To be exceeding like God.

Exceeding joy. So you can jump for joy when you're getting persecuted. That's extreme. It's excessive. Exceeding in prayer.

[ 41 : 37 ] Exceeding joy. What about excellence? Sometimes we just stop short. 99 degrees. Go beyond. Excellence.

Aspire for it like Daniel did. exploits. That God can use me. That God can use us. You and me. Mere, ordinary folk. With all our failings. Yes, he can. And he wants to. Extravagance. People say, what a waste.

You could have been down the beach this morning. What a lovely day it is. You could have do this, do that with your time. What a waste.

Some people say that. You're wasting your life being a Christian. Just go and party. Just get blotto and paralytic like the rest of them. It's extravagant.

[ 42 : 44 ] It's extreme. Brother, sister, life more abundant, isn't it? And let's go back to that time we were saved.

Gloriously saved. We wanted to tell everybody. Do something. Brother, sister, let's not lose that enthusiasm. That excitement. There's another X.

Extreme. Amen. Praise God. Be encouraged today. Let's just come to a time of prayer. I've been preaching this morning really to Christians to encourage a deeper walk with God, to go beyond the average.

You may not be a Christian here today. Your journey's not begun. God. The Bible says that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

It says that the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Christianity begins with the gift.

[ 43 : 56 ] it begins with the cross where Christ paid it all, the death penalty for our sin, and the reception of that eternal life gift that he offers in exchange for our sin, as you trust him and let go of your sin and trust him to save you.

I pray each one here would know that gift today, to what it means to know that gift, and if you've yet to trust him, you can simply cry out, Lord Jesus, thank you for dying on the cross for my sin, for paying the penalty, the price of it, to take away my sin.

I receive your gift of eternal life by trusting in your grace, your kindness to save me, and I receive that now. Lord, we pray for each one, each believer.

We know Monday morning awaits us, and there's battles ahead, there's challenges, there's people that are hard to get on with, help us, Lord, to go the extra mile with them, to be an example, to be godly, to go beyond what's expected, to go beyond the average, to aspire to excellence in our Christian lives, to be such that we can do exploits for you, Lord, that we'll have, we'll be active Christians that put our Christianity into practice, Lord, and Lord, let it be that in all of it, you get all the glory, that we won't claim any of it for ourselves, but give it all to you.

In Jesus' name, Amen. Amen. Amen.