

He must increase - but I must decrease

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[0:00] I'm going to break tradition tonight and not have a three point sermon. It's just a two point sermon.! It's very, very easy to remember, very short and to the point. John the Baptist is telling us two imperatives. There's an addition needed and a subtraction.

Two keys for a successful Christian life. Firstly, number one, he must increase. He must increase. If you're a Christian, the Lord Jesus is in you. He's in you.

You have that earthen vessel. Some of us are in better shape than others. But what matters most is that he is inside that vessel, that humble container of clay, of dust, that he resides there.

Christ is in you, the hope of glory. Colossians 1, 27 through 28. To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you.

Christ in you, the hope of glory. Whom we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

[1:42] Christ in you. And when I look at you, I see beyond the external and see that you are a container of God. You are a vessel of his honour. A vessel he fills.

The question is, how much of the Lord Jesus is in you, in your life, in my life? How can we increase the Jesus that is in us?

How can we see that increase? God wants our faith and our godliness to grow, to extend, to overflow, to increase.

The question is, how? How? How can we increase the Jesus factor, the Jesus component of our life?

That he fill us and overflow us. How can we achieve this spiritual growth? Now, naturally speaking, we can think, how can something grow?

[2:42] How does something grow? And one way we grow is obvious, isn't it? When you go down to Macca's or...

None of you would be so unspiritual as to go to such a place. But we know that food helps us to grow, doesn't it? Food. Naturally speaking. What we partake of has a result.

It has an outcome. Our food. When little Johnny pops out of his mother's womb, the first thing she does is feed him. Feed him.

And for you to grow, you need food. And we've had some... Thankfully, we've had some people trust the Lord that testified just this morning of what God has done in their lives and how they have trusted him.

They publicly confessed that this morning. That was a great blessing to see that. And as newborn babes, it says in 1 Peter 2, Desire the sincere milk, that pure milk of the word that you may grow thereby.

[3:44] If so be ye, I've tasted that the Lord is gracious. God's plan, God's will for we, for baby Christians, for older Christians, is that we all grow, that we don't stop growing.

We keep on growing. And he wants us to feed upon his word. It's the source of our spiritual sustenance, of our spiritual nourishment. And so, oughtn't we to develop an appetite for spiritual things?

Now, we've got appetites for all sorts of carnal things. Some, not necessarily wrong, but carnal as in the feeding of the flesh, the being able to eat.

But what about that spiritual hunger, that spiritual appetite for that which will feed our soul? To hunger and thirst after righteousness. This is our Lord's prayer for us, that we be such a people.

To be hungry to know more about the Lord Jesus. Food. You know, you see that sizzling fast food outlet advert on the telly.

[4:51] And it gets your taste buds going. And just, you know, sometimes it's just a picture of food. And sometimes when you're in a restaurant and they give you the menu, and you think, whoa, that one looks good.

All of that meat and veggie and, you know, all of that. Just the look of it gets your taste buds going. But what about our spiritual appetite? Do we cater for our spiritual hunger?

Do we care? Are we hungry for God? Do we care? In Luke 17, verse 5, we see that longing, that desire. When the apostles had said, they said unto him, unto the Lord.

Luke 17, verse 5. Increase our faith. That's a good prayer to pray, isn't it? Increase our faith. Nourish it.

Nurture it. Have a desire that your faith increase. Sometimes it's easy to coast, isn't it? Just coast along on the glory train and just kick back and sit back and enjoy the ride.

[5:56] And we can coast. But God wants us to have that kind of trajectory, doesn't he? He wants us to be upward and onward. To extend, to grow, to increase.

To abound. To have that desire. Increase our faith, Lord. Nurture it. Nourish it. Nurture it. Someone has said, feed your faith and you'll starve your doubts to death.

And sometimes we feed our doubts, don't we? The world feeds our doubts. The world feeds our substitutes for God in our lives.

And wants us to encroach on our spiritual life so much that we push it out, don't we? And it's so easy to get overwhelmed by, in this busy world we live, where time just evaporates and we think, oh, where was that time that I could have spent doing something more spiritual?

Something more beneficial for my soul. So feed your faith and you'll starve your doubts to death. So one way to grow, we know spiritually, sorry, physically, naturally speaking, it's obvious.

[7:08] You feed yourself and you grow. Of course, it's all muscle, as we know. But feed your faith and you'll starve your doubts.

What about spiritual muscles? Spiritual growth. That's what matters. Food. And secondly, focus. If you want something to be bigger, you've got to focus.

You've got to magnify. If you want to magnify, make something bigger, then you look through the right lens.

You need the right focus. It speaks of such in the word in 1 Corinthians 13, verse 12, where Paul relates how, for the moment, for now, we see through a glass, like a mirror, darkly.

It's like a smudgy, unclear image at the moment, as far as eternal truths. There's a kind of fuzzy picture of sorts, I suppose is what he's kind of relating here.

[8:15] For the moment, it's a kind of fuzzy picture. We see through a glass, darkly. It's not a clear image. But he says, but then, face to face, face to face we'll see him.

Now, Paul says, I know in part. But then shall I know, even as also I am known. So for the time being, we only have a cloudy picture.

Our understanding of spiritual things is limited. You know, we differ amongst ourselves, mostly on trivia. But there's that uncertainty of some matters where Christians see things somewhat differently.

But then we'll see face to face. It'll all be clear. As we grow in Christ, we'll see things more clearly. As we grow in Christ, we'll magnify our Lord.

As literally, praise does. It magnifies him. It makes him our focus and our attention. You know, there's scriptures that say, unto him, unto him.

[9:28] Does he well to get a concordance? Look up, unto him. Unto him be glory in his church. Unto him. They cry out in revelation. Unto him.

Worthy. Worthy. Is the Lamb. It's about getting that focus right, brothers and sisters, isn't it? To magnify him. That focus. What is it that we focus upon?

You know, set your affection. On things above. On things above. Not on things on the earth. That focus. That's got to shift.

Where he is our focus. He is the one who takes our attention. Our affection. Our love. That we want to magnify him.

Make him bigger. As if we could. Yet, it's about him having more of our lives, isn't it? Having more of us. And there's times where the scriptures tell us as we get together, there's that sense where we

magnify our God.

[10:32] How can that be? That he is so great and awesome. That, yeah, it's about giving him that space, that recognition, isn't it? In Psalm 34, 3, it says, Oh, magnify the Lord with me.

And let us exalt his name forever. Together, rather. Let us exalt his name together. There's that sense when we get together. Let us exalt his name. Oh, magnify the Lord with me.

Psalm 69, 30, it says, I will praise the name of God with a song. And will magnify him with thanksgiving. As we praise him. And you don't have to wait until you get to church to do that.

You can magnify him at home when no one's watching. Can't you? Amen? You can do that. You can magnify him. Magnify him when you drive me along and sing a song unto him.

Hum a tune for the glory of God. Praise the name of God with a song. Psalm 69, 30. And magnify him with thanksgiving. Give him thanks. Just like Mary did in Luke 1, 46, 3, 47.

[11:36] And Mary said, my soul doth magnify the Lord. And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. She needed a Saviour.

Mary did. She was not a co-mediatrix or whatever they use. She needed the Lord. And she magnified the Lord. She gave him the glory. Think of how we can put the focus on him.

How we can magnify our Lord. Now I'm going to quote some passage here. This will go for some time. But it really pictures it in very strong words. You might want to just dwell on this.

Just even meditate on some of the truths here in what this preacher has expressed as magnifying God.

I think there's some real moving truth here that we can take heart in as much as it's someone else's quote as I acknowledge. So this is what this preacher, Lockridge, put.

[12:39] How he put it. Maybe you might want to just tune out of everything else. Just concentrate on just some of the truths of what this preacher is saying here.

Think about your Lord and magnify him together. He's enduringly strong. He's entirely sincere. He's eternally steadfast.

He's immortally graceful. He's imperially powerful. He's impartially merciful. He's God's son. He's a sinner's saviour.

He's the centrepiece of civilisation. He stands alone in himself. He's unparalleled. He's unprecedented. He's supreme. He's preeminent.

He's preeminent. He's the loftiest idea in literature. He's the highest idea in philosophy. He's the fundamental truth of theology. He's the miracle of the age.

[13:36] He is the only one able to supply all of our needs simultaneously. He supplies strength for the weak. He's available for the tempted and the tried.

He sympathises and he saves. He guards and he guides. He heals the sick. He cleanses the lepers. He forgives sinners. He discharges debtors.

He delivers captives. He defends the feeble. He blesses the young. He serves the unfortunate. He regards the aged. He rewards the diligent. He beautifies the meek.

Do you know him? Well, my king is the king of knowledge. He's the wellspring of wisdom. He's the doorway of deliverance. He's the pathway of peace.

He's the roadway of righteousness. He's the highway of holiness. He's the gateway of glory. He's the master of the mighty. He's the captain of the conquerors. He's the head of the heroes.

[14:32] He's the leader of the legislators. He's the overseer of the overcomers. He's the governor of the governors. He's the prince of princes. He's the king of kings and the lord of lords.

His life is matchless. His goodness is limitless. His mercy is everlasting. His love never changes. His word is enough. His grace is sufficient.

His reign is righteous. His yoke is easy. And his burden is light. Well, I wish I could describe him to you. But he's indescribable.

Yes, he's incomprehensible. He's invincible. He's irresistible. I'm trying to tell you the heavens cannot contain him. Let alone a man explain him. You can't get him out of your mind.

You can't get him off of your hands. You can't outlive him. And you can't live without him. Well, the Pharisees couldn't stand him. But they found out they couldn't stop him.

[15:33] Pilate couldn't find any fault in him. Herod couldn't kill him. Death couldn't handle him. And the grave couldn't hold him. That's my king. He's always, he always has been.

And he always will be. I'm talking about he who had no predecessor. And he who has no successor. There was nobody before him.

And there will be nobody after him. You can't impeach him. And he's not going to resign. We try to get prestige and honour and glory to ourselves. But the glory is all he is.

Thine is the kingdom. And the power. And the glory. Forever. And ever. And ever. And ever. How long is that? And ever.

And ever. And ever. And ever. And when you get through with all of the forevers. Then, amen. Oh, I wish I could describe him to you.

[16:34] End of quote. What a blessed picture of our Lord. Magnify him. Magnify him. What is your life focus? What is it that you devote your time and energy to?

The commitment you make. To what? Philippians 1.9. Paul says this. I pray that your love may abound. Yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment.

Paul praying that you may abound. It's our Lord's will, isn't it? That we live life. Life more abundant. Abounding. As we grow in our love for God.

Let him be our focus. Our focus. It's about getting it right, isn't it? Getting that focus right. Home in. Zoom in on what really matters. And magnify God.

Make him bigger in your life. Grow in your service of God. Get busy serving the Lord. Find a job to do for God. And do it well. And use the gifts and talents that you have for the Lord's glory.

[17:43] For you to increase your skills. You go to school. You get a job. You put your knowledge in. And you put your knowledge into action. What gifts have you?

What knowledge? What are you doing about it? He must increase. He must increase. God's got a job for us.

So let's make ourselves available. Useful. For his service. In 2 Timothy 2.15 it says, Study. To show thyself approved unto God. A workman that needeth not.

To be ashamed. Rightly divining. The word of truth. Let's be such a workman. A labourer for God. A worker. And put our salvation. Our Christianity.

Into practice. Into action. To work at it. Work out. Your own salvation. It tells us in Ephesians 2.10. Not work for your salvation. But work it out. Let it be that natural overflow.

[18:41] Of the saved life that you live. That you work. The works of God. His workmanship. He's crafted this wonderful creature that is you.

You are his craftsmanship. He's designed you. He's shaped you. He's made you who you are. And he's created you. In Christ Jesus. Unto good works. Ephesians 2.10. Which God hath before ordained that we should walk in there.

It's what you've been created for. You've got a purpose. So let's give of our talents. Not bury them. Put them into action. Work at it. Now.

Do we go to the gym? Literally. It's what it says in 1 Timothy 4.7-8. Where Paul writes to young Timothy. He says. Refuse.

Old wise fables. And exercise thyself. Exercise thyself. Exercise. Thyself. Rather. Unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little.

[19:43] But godliness is profitable. Unto all things. Having promise of the life that now is. And. Of that which is to come. So. You know. You might be a fitness fanatic.

And. God bless you. Enjoy. But. But better still. Better still. Your spiritual muscles. That's what counts. You know.

Nothing wrong with exercising physically. I could do with some. Now and again. You know. When I get in the mood. Get in the zone. But. So. Now exercise thyself. Rather.

Rather. Rather. Unto godliness. Amen. Rather unto that. Because it's got promise of the life that now is. And it's. Of that which is to come. So. And this word exercise.

Is. That in the. The Greek. Text. Is. Gymnasio. It's. It's to do with going. It's. You could. You could picture it.

[20:39] Or. Kind of anglicize it. Of going to the gym. Going to the gym. Of godliness. You know. That picture. You know. You see these. These freaks. These. These people down at the gym.

As they're. You know. You go past the shop window. And they're there on all the. All the gadgets. That they're stretching. And pulling. And running. And pushing. And hurting themselves. Beyond belief. That.

They're pushing themselves. To the limit. They're exercising themselves. Unto the. Physical nature. But rather. Exercise their self. Rather. Do that. You can have the physical too.

But rather. Unto godliness. And so. It's got the sense of. Train yourself. Of increase your fitness. Risk service. Work it out. We need a workout. We need to work out.

Go to the gym. So you can be. Trend taught. And terrific. You know. You can be. Developing those spiritual muscles. Which really matter. Because god wants. Athletes. Champions. It takes training.

[21:35] And here's our teacher. And our subject. And we know that life itself. Is one long. Training course. Isn't it? It's one long. Training course. Our graduation ceremony.

It's not yet. You know. We don't get to wear the. The hat. And the gown. Just yet. But one day. One day. Amen. One day we'll graduate. And on the other side of the river. But for the meantime.

How is our focus? Do we have that intensity. That zeal. That fervent. Number one. He must increase. Spiritual food. Spiritual focus.

Magnify the Lord. Number one. He must increase. Number two. So I'm halfway through now. And you can breathe a sigh of relief. I must decrease.

That's number two. That's the part two of the equation. Of living the Christian life. With success. And victory. I must decrease.

[22:35] It's part two of the equation. Is that of reduction. This key aspect of spiritual growth. God wants for us. Is a reducing. Of our attention. On the things of self.

The things of self. And the things of the world. Colossians 3. 1 to 3. 3. If ye then be risen with Christ. Seek those things which are above.

Where Christ sitteth on the right hand. Of God. Set your affection. On things above. Not on things. On the earth. For ye are dead. And your life is here.

With Christ in God. Set your affection. It says. Set your affection. Where? Set there. Set your love. On that. Which is lasting and eternal. God's desire is that.

There be more of him. And less of us. In our lives. And sometimes we get selfish. Can't we? I can. I can be very selfish. And I can get in the way of God.

[23:35] Working. In my life. And heart. And we can get in the way of God. Working in our lives. Now. There was a. A great artist.

Called Michelangelo. You might have heard of him. He fastened a little lantern to his headpiece. So that the shadow. His shadow. Wouldn't fall on the marble.

On which he was working. When self becomes obtrusive. It casts a shadow. On all that we do. And Michelangelo. Had to get himself out of the picture.

His shadow out of the way. So he would focus. And. He wouldn't be seen. It's a picture for us. Isn't it? How we can. Be obtrusive.

So we can cast a shadow. On what we do. And it's even true in prayer. It takes a deliberate choice. To. Get out of the way. Of God. Don't we need to?

[24:29] Get out of the way. Of God. I know. Some people like to pray. You know. Hide the preaching. Behind the cross. We don't want to see. The preaching. We want to hear Jesus. We want to know Jesus.

We want Jesus to be glorified. We're not here to hear a man. We're here to hear from God. Amen. And it's about. Me getting out of the way. And God being glorified.

And that's for all of us. So. And we can get in the way. Of God working. You know. Some people go to the gym. To gain weight. As in muscle. Others go to lose weight.

We need a weight loss program. In terms of losing that. Which is unhealthy for us. That must decrease. Some point us here to help in that choice.

How do we decrease ourselves? Here's some thoughts on that theme. Crucify yourself. You know. Crucify yourself.

[25:28] It hurts. We need to. Crucify ourselves. So. It's that sense of. The flesh. The old man. The old nature. The old Andrew Craig.

Has to be killed off. Daily. Day. After day. After day. Crucify yourself.

Wow. How do I do that? Determine. Determine. To substitute. The things of God. For the things of the world. To replace the love of the world. With the love of the saviour.

To take up your cross. How often? Daily. Daily. Die to the world. Die to self. Daily. Galatians 6.

14. Paul says. But God forbid that I should glory. Save in the cross. Of our Lord Jesus Christ. By him the world is crucified unto me. And I unto the world.

[26:24] Galatians 5. 24. And they that are Christ have crucified the flesh. With the affections and lusts. Wow. To get to that place.

To get to that place. To get to that place. To get to that place. A preacher said this. We consent to abide all our days. Just outside. The holy of holies.

And never enter at all. To look upon God. We fail to draw near. Because there is a veil in our hearts. Our sinful nature.

Our self. Our self sins. Our self righteousness. Self pity. Self confidence. Self sufficiency. Self admiration.

Self love. And others. Self is the opaque veil. That hides the face of God from us. It can be removed only. In spiritual experience. The cross. Must kill our self.

[27:21] To set us free. Think of those things. We can get so. Self centered. Can't we? Can't we? Let's be honest.

Self pity. Oh. Woe is me. Nobody cares. You kick the can down the road. Have a pity party. All to myself. No one's invited but me.

Self pity. Self righteousness. Ha ha. Holier than thou. Self love. Oh I'm so good. I just love taking selfies. And putting them on Facebook.

Yeah. Self love. What a self centered world we live. Self sufficiency. Ha. I don't need anybody. I don't need anybody to pray for me.

We can get like that can't we? Self righteousness. Ha ha. Ha ha. Woe to us. If we ever get to that place.

[28:20] And I was talking to a man of late. And he's got this weird idea that his works save him. I thought how sad. How sad that is. To get to such a warped false doctrine as that.

It's only by his grace. It's only by his grace. That we trusted him. That we are his. It's his gift.

And if we ever get so high and mighty. That we think. That we are doing God a favor by our good

works. Then woe to us. Woe to us. Die to self. A young man went to an old preacher and asked.

How can I get victory over pride and criticism? And the preacher gave him some advice. He said.

Young man go to the grave of brother Jones. He's recently passed away down at the cemetery.

You'll find his body there. And as you stand by the grave. Say all the nice things you can about him.

Flatter him greatly. And he did as the old preacher advised him.

[29:21] When he returned the old preacher asked. What did he say? The answer. Nothing. He's dead. The old preacher then told the young man. To go out to the grave.

And criticise brother Jones. Say many mean things to him. And so he went and did that. And when he came back. The preachers asked the young man. What did he say? The young preacher said.

Nothing. He's dead. Reckoning ourselves dead. With Christ. We'll be unmoved by flattery. Or criticism. Us preachers cop it all the time.

If someone flatter you. And then the next minute. Stamp you in the back. Oh. Kick me in the guts.

You know. I'm exaggerating a little bit. But it does happen. People can go from one to the other.

In just a few moments. And you're their worst enemy. When just last week you were. Oh this is the greatest church ever. I'm going to settle here.

[30:20] And never leave it. And then. Then. Nah. That's rubbish that church. You know. We don't. We've got to. Be dead.

I've got to die. I can't take it personally. You know. Otherwise. Be. You know. I don't have less hair than I have now. We've got to die to self. Don't we? We all have to. Every Christian has to.

When you have people pat you on the back. And then they're. Stabbing you in the back. It happens. It's life. How do we cope with that? Die to self. Die to self.

Get rid of pride and selfishness. Oh. Yeah. You've almost got to have water off a duck's back. Don't you? Water off a duck's back. Because you don't want to. You don't want anything to stop you. Don't let anything stop you. Brother. Sister. Fellow Christian. Don't let anything stop you. Serving God. And. Die to self.

[31:17] We're seeing our Lord say. If they did it to me. They'll do it to you. And when you become a Christian. Your best friends.

You tell them about Jesus. And then they'll be best friends anymore. Now you see that. Quite. It's. Evident. And. So. When you stand up for Jesus.

You'll get used to that. And you'll go through them. And you won't let it get. Get you down. Because. Our Lord said. It would happen. He's told us that.

So let's get rid of pride. And selfishness. Let's. Learn to be selfless. And. Christ filled. We're talking about a reduction.

He must. Increase. I must. I must. Decrease. So. For a reduction to occur. There's got to be a barrier. A separation. Between our self and sin.

[32:16] A distance between. Us and it. To stop feeding the self nature. You know. They. People put. Rubber bands around their stomachs. And that. Don't they. To. To restrict.

To restrain. To reduce. What about spiritually speaking. Are we feeding the flesh man. And. Missing out.

On God's best. How do we. Reduce. Something. Now. If we wanted to. Reduce the light.

In here. We could just remove some of these tubes. One by one. By one. Until. We've reduced the light.

Completely. What about spiritually. Some things need to be removed. God might speak to us. About things in our lives. Well. That's something I should remove.

[33:17] Out of my life. Because it's stopping me growing. For God. To reduce the materialism. To reduce the. Things that occupy our time. Unduly.

Paul says. Casting down. Imagination. And every high thing. That exalted itself. Against the knowledge of God. Bringing into captivity. Every thought. To the obedience of Christ.

There's that. That's deliberate effort. That Paul says. We're to cast down. Imaginations. So we can. Have all kinds of. Thinking. Of. Of. Of thoughts.

Paul says. Cast it down. If it's a high thing. That exalts itself. Against the knowledge of God. And bring into captivity. Every thought. To the obedience of Christ.

We've got to let some things go. You know. If you want the. Balloon to go down. Release the air. Release the air. Release it. Remove it. Reduce it.

[34:19] Replace it. Cast it down. Paul says. Tear it down. Tear it from the throat. Of your heart. That which occupies. His place. You know. I love to see.

Some have illustrated. How. The Christian life. Has a picture of a heart. And it shows. Like a throne there. And. We see. Christ seated. On the throne. Of the Christian's life.

Which is this rightful place. But sometimes. As. A half-hearted. Christian. Sometimes. Other things sit on that throne.

Don't they? The self. Tear it from the throne of your heart. That which is taking away. From God. Subtract the things of the world. From your lives.

Shrink their influence. Starve the appetite. Don't feed it. You know. That cancer. That growth. That is the world. Or the self. Needs to be starved. If you know that. If you knew that you had cancer.

[35:15] You'd want to be separated from that. You'd want to be. You'd want to be. Cutting that off. You'd ask the heavenly surgeon. To operate upon you. And to make a choice. To be set apart for him.

Psalms 4:3. But know that the Lord. Hath set apart. Him that is godly. For himself. Set apart.

For God. You know. When. I'm not meaning to be. There's too much levity here. But. You know. Just. In.

Plain terms. That we can think of. We've got to watch. What we have an appetite for. Because it affects our. Physical health. You know. No more pies. And steak sandwiches.

And greasy. Fatty foods. As much as. I love them. When I know it's. Damaging me. Physically.

[36:11] I will avoid that. And. Likewise. What about spiritual things. If you can compare. That poor example. But. Really.

It's a determined choice. Isn't it? As much as there's an affection. For the world. It's natural. That it's. Within us. That nature.

And it takes that determined. Commitment. Doesn't it? To say. No. I'm going to. Abstain from that. Because it's not good for me. Spiritually. And not feed the self.

In the worldly way. So. I'm drawing to a close here. So. Many Christians. Have stunts of growth. Stunts of growth. You know. They. They have. This big spurt.

Of energy. And then. Just coast. It's time to.

[37:08] Set the trajectory. Higher again. To look at. Godly things. That we can. Reinvigorate. You know. This morning. I was talking about. Memorizing the Bible. And.

The more the word. Is in us. The more. It will change us. The more. We abide in Christ. His word. Abides in us. There's a life change.

In there. It's life changing. It's powerful. There's many things. We can. Invest. Our energy. Our love. What about. Spiritual things.

How can we reduce. The closeness. To the world. And. Its things. And how do we. Think. Okay. It's time to take stock. It's the end of the financial year.

Now it's time to do a stock take. Where are we at. Spiritually here. Am I too casual. Too flippant. Am I too. Careless.

[38:05] About what really is important. The Lord is not meant to be just one part. Of our lives. And sometimes it's a. Very little part. Really. Let's face it.

And. As if God has got one compartment. Of our life. I know some of you compared it to being. Like a house. And. And.

There's places in that house. That. Are barred entry to others. Sometimes we like that in. Our lives. Where God has. Just so much of us.

And there's some bits of us. We don't. Surrender all. We don't. Open. All the doors of our life. Of our house. As it were. And. There's just compartments of our lives.

That are just. For self. But instead. Rather let's. Surrender control. Of our lives to the Lord. Now.

[39:02] Memory. Is a wonderful thing. Scientists say that. The human mind. Can store as many as. 600 memories. Per second. For a lifetime. Of 75 years.

Without the slightest strain. That's astounding. Isn't it? What I just said. 600 memories. Per second. For a lifetime. Of 75 years. Without the slightest strain.

Now. Some of us have gone beyond the 75. But. Without the slightest strain. But the memory. Is a wonderful thing. Isn't it? Experts advise. Be selective.

About what's worth remembering. Now. Sometimes. We have. Memories. Of things. That we just. Dwell on. Don't we? Things that have happened.

Oh. She hurt me. He said this. Oh. They did that. And those memories. Just lodge.

[39:57] In our mind. And we can't shake them. Experts advise. Be selective. About what's worth remembering. Now. Perhaps we've got a track record. Of disappointments.

Of failure. Of sin. You've tried and failed. Tried and failed. And feel like you're never going to win through. As a Christian. And sometimes we get bogged down. About what's happened before.

What does Paul say? Forgetting. Those things. That are behind. There's some good forgetfulness. Now. I've got a lot of bad. Bad forgetfulness.

Things I should remember. That I forget. But. There's some good forgetfulness. Isn't there? Ask the Lord to. Take those memories away. That are holding you back.

You know. There's. Those hurts. That unforgiveness. That unresolved stuff. Let it go. Let it go. Don't hang on to it. We can't let it hold us back.

[40:54] And the good news is. For us too. Of our. Regrets. And failings too. Maybe we've sinned. And fallen. Even.

We can put that behind us. Because God has. He's thrown it in the sea of forgetfulness. Hasn't he? He's. Thrown it away. It's gone. Erased from God's memory banks.

When we've forsaken it. We can forget it. So give to the Lord. Your past. Give to the Lord. Your memories. And let him. Cleanse. Your mind.

As it were. And renew your focus and love. For him. John the Baptist said. He needed. More. Of Jesus. Don't we?

Don't we? Desperately. Need more. None of us have arrived. Yet. We're still on the journey. Aren't we?

[41:51] Some people act like they have arrived. You know. They know it all. You know. I just. They astound me. People like that. Because. I haven't arrived yet.

I'm still very faulty. And frail. And lacking. None of us have arrived. Yet. We're still on that. Journey. And for the meantime.

Peter says. But grow in grace. And in the knowledge. Of our Lord and Saviour. Jesus Christ. To him. To him. Be glory. Both now. And forever. Amen. Let me.

Just say. One quick wrap up here. We've talked about. This very short. Bible verse. Where. John the Baptist says.

He must. Must. Must. Increase. But. I. Must. Must. Must. Must. Decrease.

[42:55] They. They. Act. In. Tandem. Really. Don't they. I suppose. Where. If he has more of us. There'll be less of us. There'll be less of our. Sinful.

Inclinations. Less of our. Bad attitudes. Less of our. Foolishness. Less of our. Sinfulness. And more of Jesus.

More of Jesus. That's our prayer tonight. Let's pray. Lord. We thank you that you are. Great. And awesome God. And we know. Words cannot express.

The indescribable. Wonder. Of who you are. And of what you have done. That you should deign. To. Step down.

Heaven's steps. To take. Human form. And live on. Planet earth. And be as. A man. Yet without sin.

[43:52] And become. Our very. Substitute. For our sin. And die on the cross. Rise again. Ascend. And praying now.

Even now. For us. How can we. Express our love to you. For what you have done. But we know. Lord. It's your will. As John. Prayed. And sought. That you must. Increase. And we must. Decrease. Help us Lord. To. As it were. Crucify the flesh.

To die to self. To. Find ways that. We won't get in your way. Lord. That you'll have. More of us. All of us. That you'll have. The glory.

That even the good we do. We give you all the glory for it. Lord. That it is all unto you. Unto you be glory. Bless you Lord. We thank you. Pray for every Christian. Here tonight. That will walk in victory.

[44:50] Lord. For anyone who's yet to. Trust you. That even now. They might see what it is to say. Lord. Save me. Trust. I trust you. I commit.

My all unto you. Forgive me. Save me. Lord. We thank you. We can. Each one know that grace. All sufficient.

More abundant. Grace. Wonderful grace. In Jesus name. Amen. Amen. Thank you.