

A Gospel Refresh

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[0:00] All right. Well, it's great to be back in this pulpit. And I just want to thank you once again for the sabbatical that you so graciously gave Jenny and me and our family. I come back refreshed and eager to get back into the harness.

And it was a refreshing time. But come on, you tell me. Sometimes you just need to be refreshed. Do I have an amen? If you're married, sometimes your marriage needs a refresher.

John Tippman, who opened us and is going to close to seeing his wife, Terry. They're part of a ministry called Family Life. And they organize conferences called Weekend to Remembers. And what they're designed to do is bring couples and bring God's word to bear on marriage. And it's designed to refresh couples in God's good design of marriage.

Sometimes you just need a refresher for your marriage. Sometimes you need a refresher for your finances. You turn to God's word and you see what God's word has to say about financial stewardship so that you can be refreshed and walking by God's word.

[1:06] Jenny and I are refreshing our finances right now. And this morning, we're going to look to God's word, the first three chapters of the book of Romans, to be refreshed in the gospel.

One of the effects I'm praying for, as we are reminded of the Christian gospel, is that you will walk away this morning, not just refreshed, but rejoicing.

Rejoicing in what God has done through Jesus Christ to rescue you. And so think of this sermon as a flyover of the first three chapters of Romans.

Of course, I'm not going to get into every detail. But there's three things I want you to see, three points. The gospel defined. And our problem elaborated in we have got a terrible unrighteousness problem.

And then the gospel applied. And it's there where I'm hoping you're going to be like, what an amazing God we have. So, let's look at the gospel defined.

[2:14] It's Romans chapter 1. If you have a pew Bible, it's page 1116, 1116 of your pew Bible. Well, let's ask this question.

What is this Christian gospel? I grew up in Connecticut. I grew up outside of Hartford. And the immediate neighbors to the south of us were the Freemans.

And the Freemans had moved in from Great Britain. And it turns out we spoke English. But they spoke British English. And the Salvati spoke American English.

And though we used the same English words, there were some very odd, strange moments. For example, they called a truck a lorry.

And so, for some time, you can imagine. Are they talking about a woman named Lori who's as big as a truck? They called the trunk of a car a boot.

[3:12] And so, Mrs. Freeman would ask her sons, boys, go get the groceries out of the boot. And I was kind of like, what is she talking about? They call elevators lifts.

If you're familiar with weightlifting, we're not talking about a clean and jerk lift. We're talking about something that brings you up into the floors of a multi-story building.

The point is, it's possible to use the same English word, but have two different meanings. And it creates confusion.

Therefore, in order to unite together as a church, let's look at what Romans 1 has to say about the gospel.

We need to be clear on what the Bible means by the gospel. It's that not only we can unite as a church around what the Bible means by the gospel, but unite in what God has done through the gospel.

[4:13] So there are two essential elements of the Christian gospel from Romans 1. It's historic. We see that in chapter 1, verses 1 through 4. Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle God, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets and the holy scriptures, concerning his son, who is descended from David according to the flesh, and it was declared to be the son of God in power according to the spirit of holiness, by his resurrection from the dead.

Jesus Christ, our Lord. Just a couple things I want to point out. That word gospel, when used in antiquity, first century, when Paul was writing, it was not a religious word.

It just simply meant an announcement of something good and important. So let's say like the 11th legion of the Roman military, they had stormed some kind of beach in northern Africa, and they won a victory.

They would send someone to Rome with the good news, the gospel that they won. And what we see here in Romans 1, 1, we see set apart for the gospel, the good news of God.

Here's how you need to think about that. This is God's announcement to humanity of something that he has done in space and time that is good and important.

[5:42] The gospel is God's announcement. It's historic. It happened in time and space. And it has to do with verse 3 concerning his son, Jesus Christ.

Whatever this good news is about, whatever happened, is about Jesus. And in verse 4, we see the actual event.

By his resurrection from the dead. The good news, the historic good news of the Christian gospel is God's announcement that Jesus Christ's death and resurrection accomplish something that is absolutely unbelievable.

Actually, it's very believable. But it is amazing. Matt Chandler, who wrote the book, The Explicit Gospel, talks about describing the gospel in two ways.

As kind of a close-up, like Christ died for our sins. Very personal. It addresses our greatest need now here. But he also talks about the gospel being spoken of in a panorama.

[7:01] That this is the good news for all time. It's a plan for the fullness of time. Both are true. This good news, this event that God wants all the world to know, has everything to do with your greatest needs individually, and it's got everything to do with the history of mankind.

So the first element is that the gospel is historic. We're talking about a specific time and place that Jesus Christ died and was raised.

It either happened or it didn't. Second, the gospel is effectual. It's powerful. Look at verses 16 and 17. Many of you have memorized verse 16.

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes. To the Jew first and also to the Greek, for in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith.

As it is written, the righteous shall live by faith. Habakkuk 2.4. The gospel, this historic event, Christ's death and resurrection, it gets something done.

[8:12] It's powerful. Look at verse 16. For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it, the gospel, the death and resurrection, the gospel, the resurrection of Jesus is the power of God for salvation.

That historic event of Christ's death and resurrection is God's power getting something done. Our salvation.

Our rescue. And whatever we needed to be rescued from, it required God's power to rescue us. We can't rescue ourselves. We can't save ourselves from this predicament that we're in. Salvation only comes from something that God has powerfully done.

And God has made that known to us. Verse 16, it's for everyone who believes. For the Jew first and also the Greek. For the Jewish mind, Paul who wrote this was a Jew.

[9:19] And for the Jewish mind, all of humanity is divided into two camps. You're a Jew or you're not a Jew. And what we're hearing here is this gospel announcement that God is making to all of humanity.

He is making to both Jews and non-Jews. To all who believe. And did you notice verse 17? This gospel, it trades in righteousness.

For in it, the righteousness of God is revealed. In it, the gospel, the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith. Righteousness is addressing God's upright moral character and God's upright moral activity.

He is perfect in all that He does. And this gospel that God announces having to do with the death and resurrection of Jesus is a manifestation of His righteousness.

And that's raising our biggest problem. Our unrighteousness. So just let's make sure we're on the same page here.

[10:37] The Christian gospel, biblically defined, is historic and powerful. It's God's power to rescue us from our unrighteousness.

If our greatest problem is the unrighteousness of man, God's solution is the righteousness of God. Through the gospel. Okay, we've covered that ground.

Let's move on to our problem elaborated. In chapter 1, verses 18 through chapter 3, verse 20, Paul exposes and elaborates on our terrible unrighteousness problem.

He divides all humanity into two types of sinners. There are the unrighteous hedonists, and there are the unrighteous moralists. And in 1, verses 18 through 32, it's an elaboration on the unrighteous hedonist.

Now, a hedonist is someone who casts off all rules and regulations in order for him or her to pursue pleasure, illicit pleasure.

[11:46] Nothing will stop them from it. They're like, all of God's good rules, get out of my way, I'm going to live, and I'm going to do and get what I want. Listen to Romans chapter 118.

I'll read through 20. Now, these hedonists are most likely Gentiles, and Gentiles of this day were probably people who didn't have a Bible in their house.

But what Paul is saying here, in verses 18 through 20, is that if you're an unrighteous hedonist without a Bible in your house, you are still without excuse before of the living God.

You are actually under His wrath, for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. Now, you may be saying, well, that doesn't sound fair. Well, in verse 20, we are told it is fair. For His invisible attributes, namely His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world and the things that have been made.

[13:18] So they're without excuse. They might not have a Bible, but they have all of creation. God revealing His power and bringing this all in from nothing. And His goodness, He provides for all people on the earth.

And so what's being said here is God has sufficiently revealed Himself to all people on the planet so that there's no hedonist who doesn't have a Bible in their house who can say they're without excuse.

In fact, they're under God's wrath. They suppress the truth about God and His ways. Look at verses 21 through 23. For although they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks to Him, but they became futile in their thinking.

And their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools. Listen to verse 23. And exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

Do you know what is at the heart of hedonism? Idolatry. It's an exchange. It's not just a rejection of God.

[14:27] It's a swapping out of God. It's an exchange. Exchanging the one true glorious God for created things. And that's why they are without excuse under God's wrath.

And then in verses 24 through 32, we see this repeated phrase, God gave them up. You see it in verse 24. Therefore, God gave them up.

Verse 26. For this reason, God gave them up. In verse 28. And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up. Have you ever been wondering why our culture in America right now seems to be just spinning downwards?

If you've been around the block, maybe 20, 30 years, you're kind of like, what is going on with our culture? Romans 1.

Our culture is being handed over by God to their sinful desires. It's a judgment. And we're living in the middle of it.

[15:36] This giving up language is a kind of judgment. That's what's happening in our culture. In verse 24, we read, therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their heart to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves.

Impurity is probably referenced to some kind of sexual sin. but this dishonoring of their bodies. Of having, giving their bodies the things that they shouldn't be doing.

It's where we're living right now. God has designed our bodies very specifically. Biblically speaking, the Bible approaches gender by defining gender biologically.

Whether you have a Y chromosome or not. We're living in a culture in which our culture is adrift. And instead of having a biologically informed definition of gender, we have a psychologically informed definition of gender.

It's how you feel. To match your body to how you feel. And now we live in a time, it's unprecedented, now people can have surgery or have some kind of hormonal treatment that changes their body to match their feelings.

[17:08] Claiming to be wise, they've become fools. At the heart of gender dysphoria, at the heart of transgenderism, there's an idolatry.

An exchanging of God for a lie. That's where we're living. We're living in Romans 1 again. In 26 and 27, for this reason, God gave them up to dishonorable passions.

And then he goes into, for their women exchanged natural relations for those that are not contrary to nature. And the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion. The natural relations are simply God's good design of a man and a woman in physical union in the context of marriage.

One chromosomal man, husband, married to one chromosomal woman, wife, uniting together physically till death do they part under God's purview.

And what we see here is when you exchange God for a lie, it's going to show up in your practice of sexuality in your culture. What becomes normal?

[18:28] Homosexuality is categorically sinful, and unrighteous in God's eyes. And at the heart of it is idolatry.

Are we sympathetic in seeking to care for our friends and family who are struggling with homosexuality or transgenderism? Yes, of course. But at the root of it, it's idolatry.

There's a man, his name is Christopher Yon. He's a brother in Christ who is entrenched in the homosexual lifestyle. God awakened him, radically transformed him.

Eventually, he became a professor down at Moody Bible Institute. And now he has a ministry based out of California. I would encourage you, if you want to read some helpful material on what the Bible has to say about homosexuality, read Christopher Yon.

Y-U-A-N. He has a very helpful perspective. In fact, he will say, what a homosexual needs is not to be made straight.

[19:36] They need to hear the gospel to address their heart idolatry. In verses 28 through 32, we have the third God gave them up, and it's to a debased mind.

Do you know what a debased mind is? Think of it this way. If someone doesn't know God, if they have no fear of God before their eyes, they are still going to think and they're going to still build their life.

But what they will think about and build their life on has no God foundation of it. It's off the foundation. It's debased. Do you see? Proverbs 1-7 says, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.

Proverbs 9-10 says, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. We build our lives on who God is and what He says in His Word.

That's knowledge and wisdom. And if that's not there, you're building on the sand. And what we see in verses 29 through 31 is quite a sin list.

[20:49] Let me read it. They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness. These hedonists. Evil, covetousness, malice.

They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossip, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless.

Do you see it in you? Do you see your inner hedonist?

Maybe you're not struggling with transgenderism. Have you ever coveted someone else's body? Do you gossip?

Do you gossip? Do you slander? Boy, we've got all, all of us have got some of this in us.

[21:47] Be honest with yourself. As you come to God's word, be asking the question, hey, what's wrong with this guy? No, no, no. It starts with you. It starts with me. Verse 32, though they know God's righteous decree, these unrighteous hedonists, they know down deep God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die.

They not only do them, but give approval to those who practice them. And in our culture right now, not just approval, we make laws saying that it's okay.

Corporate policy these are the times we live in. At the heart of it all is idolatry.

Exchanging the truth of God for a lie, claiming to be wise, they become fools. Our culture, brothers and sisters, God is handing over.

That's where we find ourselves. Can I just remind you of something? The Apostle Paul wrote Romans to Rome in the Roman Empire in the first century.

[23:06] You see, human history is a history of God handing over culture, individuals, over and over again to their sinful desires.

It even goes back to judges in Israel. being handed over to what they want. It's a kind of a judgment and it is the story of human history.

Not just 21st century America. Humanity. Unrighteous before God. Now, if the problem is the unrighteousness of man, then the solution is the righteousness of God.

And you know what this means? This announcement of the gospel God talked about. We saw in Romans 1. This gospel is for the unrighteous hedonist.

Even though they're without excuse, even though they're under God's wrath, God says, here's good news of what I have done about your unrighteousness.

[24:16] Now, you might be thinking like, you know what, Paul? You give it to them. Give it to them, Paul.

Bring it. Bring down the hammer on those hedonists. But Paul doesn't stop with the unrighteous hedonist. There's another type of sinner starting in chapter 2, verse 1, going through chapter 3, verse 8, the unrighteous moralist.

Where the hedonist rejects God's law, the moralist prides himself or herself in keeping God's law. These moralists, which in chapter 2, verse 17, Paul calls them Jews, Jews, it's not too difficult to imagine present-day Christians in this same camp.

The problem of the moralist, simply put, is hypocrisy. The hedonist swaps out God for sin, right? The moralist is hypocrisy.

Look at chapter 2, verse 1 through 3. Therefore, you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. Paul is anticipating the moralist response.

[25:39] All these hands over, handing over, and the moralist is saying, yeah, you give it to him, you give it to him. And then Paul says, whoa on, buddy. You have no excuse either, you moralist.

O man, every one of you who judges for in passing judgment on another, you condemn yourself because you, the judge, practice the same, very, very same things. We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things.

Do you suppose, O man, you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God? Verse 4, or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and the forbearance and patience and not knowing that the kindness, God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?

Verse 5, but because of your hard and impenitent heart, you moralist are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.

Apparently, the gospel is not just for hedonists, it's for moralists too. The reality is a moralist will obey some of God's holy law.

[26:52] Think of Steve's Ten Commandments. God's Ten Commandments spoken by Steve. Run me out of here. A moralist will obey some of God's commands some of the time.

But a moralist cannot obey all of God's holy law all of the time. That's the reality. The problem is the hypocrisy. It's when a moralist thinks some is enough and because some is enough I can now judge other people.

That's the problem that Paul is addressing. The moralist who judges the hedonist in their self-righteousness, Paul says, you are without excuse. You are storing up God's wrath.

Verse 5, the moralist is in as much danger as the hedonist of God's wrath. Look at verses 17 through 24 in chapter 2.

But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast in God and know His will and approve what is excellent because you are instructed from the law and if you are sure that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth, you then who teach others, do you not teach yourself?

[28:17] While you preach against stealing, do you steal? You say that one must not commit adultery. Do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? You who boast in the law dishonor God by breaking the law and then he quotes Isaiah 52.

He says, as it is written, the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you. So who's in a worse position? It seems like the moralist because the moralist hypocrisy is causing the hedonist to say, eh, their God is not such a big deal.

Our hypocrisy confuses non-Christians. Do you see your inner moralist quick to judge but slow to see the log in your own eye?

Maybe you judge the adulterer yet you are feeding your sexual lust. Maybe you judge the greedy and yet you give only when it's convenient.

Maybe you judge someone else's harshness yet hop in the minivan and yell at your kids. Do you see your unrighteousness? All of us fall short of God's glory.

[29:38] None of us. None is righteous. No, not one. One of my favorite parables of Jesus is Luke 18, 9-14.

It's the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector. The parable of the moralist and the hedonist. And Jesus depicts both praying to God and the moralist is saying, Oh God Almighty, thank you for not making me a hedonist.

I pray often, I give much. And then he turns to the tax collector who prays, have mercy on me, a sinner.

to which Jesus says, who went up justified that day? The hedonist.

Part of the problem of moralism is that it blinds us to our own unrighteousness. Only if we would humbly take the log out of our own eye first to see our unrighteousness problem.

[30:53] But you know what? God proclaims the good news to you, moralist. He's got God's righteousness for you.

In chapter 3 verses 9 through 20, Paul lumps both the unrighteous hedonist and the unrighteous moralist together into the unrighteous all of us.

listen to what he says. This is chapter 3 verse 10. None is righteous, no, not one. No one understands, no one seeks for God. All have turned aside.

Together they have become worthless. No one does good. No, not even one. Verse 18, there is no fear of God before their eyes. Speaking of both the hedonist and the moralist.

There may be different types of sinner, different types of unrighteousness, but all are without excuse. All are under God's wrath.

[31:54] The hedonist and the moralist are without excuse. The hedonist and the moralist are under God's wrath. No one is righteous, no, not even one. Which means, right now, no one on the planet, no one in and of

themselves has the power to excuse themselves from God's judgment.

No one has the power to escape God's wrath. No one can make themselves righteous in his sight. Brothers and sisters, our biggest problem is an unrighteousness problem.

That is the biggest problem on the planet. But in order for God's gospel of righteousness to make sense to you, you must own your unrighteousness.

Whether it's hedonistic or moralistic, or like me, a combination of the two. Now let's look at the gospel applied. Verses 21, it goes all the way through 31, but I'm going to be focusing really 21 through 25.

Paul has just spent a lot of time elaborating on human unrighteousness. And in verse 21 of chapter 3, he circles back to the gospel. Oh, thank God he circles back to the gospel.

[33:21] He circles back to the historic, effectual, gospel. But now the righteousness of God has been manifested.

He's been talking about the unrighteousness of man. And now he says, but now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law. Although the law and the prophets bear witness to it, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe, there is no distinction.

This is good news, brothers and sisters. may your soul rise to what you're about to hear. To the unrighteous, God declares the good news of a righteousness, not our own, but his, that saves. When an unrighteous hedonist or moralist hears and believes the good news of the gospel that Jesus Christ died and was raised from the dead, when they hear that and they believe that, God applies what Christ has accomplished through his life, death, and resurrection to that sinner. It's their salvation, it's their rescue, it's their transformation, it is glorious. And it's only by God's grace, it's only by his power.

[34:49] Let me point you to three specific areas in which God demonstrates his saving power in this passage. They show up as three words. In verse 23, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

24, and are justified by his grace. That's a word you need to pay attention to. Through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, justification, redemption, 25, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood to be received by faith.

Propitiation. Now you might be thinking, what? Propitiation? I can't even pronounce that.

Justification? What? Redemption?

Huh? Oh, brothers and sisters, don't let the scrabble words distract you from the glory. Let's take them one at a time starting with propitiation.

Propitiation is a word that is having to do with the realm of sacrifice. Offering animal sacrifice. In the Old Testament, animal sacrifices would be offered on an altar.

[35:55] Their blood would be spilt and the belief was that that shed blood would propitiate God's wrath temporarily. Satisfy God's wrath.

And what we're reading here for all those under God's wrath is that by the blood of Jesus, God's wrath is fully satisfied so that there's no more wrath.

On Good Friday, Jesus on the cross endured God's wrath and for all who would believe all of God's wrath that you would ever commit past, present, future, all of God's wrath for your unrighteousness was poured out on Jesus.

So the moment you believe, you are therefore now, no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. God's wrath fully satisfied both for the hedonist and the moralist.

Do I have an amen? That's propitiation. You can preach like seven sermons on that. Let's move to the next word. Redemption.

[37:04] Redemption. Redemption is having to do with the realm of the slave market. Redemption was the act of buying a slave at a ransom price.

Jesus is not just our propitiation, He's our redemption. When we believed, God acted. He purchased us out of the slavery to sin and has brought us into slavery to God.

Romans chapter 6. You know what that means? Have you ever seen somebody wearing property of UW Parkside? Redemption means you wear property of Jesus.

You belong to Him now. And it shows up in the way we live our lives today. The last word is the word justification. It's in verse 24. Do you remember how both hedonist and moralist were both without excuse because of their unrighteousness?

Justification is the language of the law court. To be justified is to be legally declared righteous in God's sight. It's forensic. It's legal.

[38:20] It's a change of your legal status. So the moment you unrighteous one believed in the gospel, cried out to God, God now declared you righteous in His sight.

Not on the basis of your righteousness though. On the basis of Christ's righteousness. The righteousness of God. Fully imputed to you forever.

I'm devoting next Sunday's sermon to justification because it's so important. You coming back? I can't wait to what I'm going to say because it's like for me too. It's all by His grace.

Verse 24, and are justified by His grace as a gift. You're made righteous in God's sight. You who are without excuse now have an excuse.

Jesus' righteousness. And therefore, you're righteous in His sight. It's by His grace. Think of grace as an acronym. God's righteousness at Christ's expense.

[39:37] By His grace. It's all good news. Propitiation, redemption, justification. These are words that are communicating gospel truth, gospel goodness for those who've been rescued by the gospel.

gospel. And what's amazing about all of this is that God remains just in His justifying sinners. His character doesn't change. Is this not the greatest news you've heard all day? It's the greatest news you're going to hear all week. It's the greatest news you're going to hear all month, all summer, all fall, all year, all life.

Does it refresh your soul? The gospel defined. It's historic. Powerful. Our problem elaborated.

All unrighteous hedonists and moralists are without excuse under God's wrath. The gospel applied.

Our God's wrath propitiated. We have been delivered out of slavery to sin and we have been declared righteous all by the workings of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

[40:57] Christ. It's all focused on Him and what He's accomplished. All resulting from His life, death, and resurrection. That's why no one can boast.

It's all accomplished by Jesus. So if you're not a Christian in the house, have you been convinced that you are unrighteous? That you're without excuse?

That you're under God's wrath this morning? If you've come to realize that, what is keeping you from crying out to this just and loving God who will save you forever?

If you're a Christian, oh, I hope your soul rejoices that you've been refreshed by remembering what God has done for you through Christ.

it's all true despite the way you feel. Do you know what I was doing at 2 a.m. Thursday morning? I was walking around my neighborhood. Do you know why?

[42:02] Because I couldn't sleep. Do you know why I couldn't? Because I was freaking out over something. And as I'm walking on the back nine of my block, God brings to mind the gospel. Mike, I've propitiated the wrath of God for you.

I've redeemed you out of slavery. I've justified you. And when that sunk into my heart, do you know what I said? I can sleep now.

And you know what I did? I went to sleep. We can rejoice in this truth in the ins and outs of life because God has taken care of our greatest problem in an amazing fashion.

One last point. Brother, sister, are you ashamed of this gospel? Are you ashamed? Are you afraid to talk about this?

This announcement of God to all humanity is the only hope for all unrighteous humanity. It's their only hope.

[43:12] We cannot be ashamed because everyone must hear. And with that, I'm going to close you in 2 Corinthians 5.20 where, if my memory serves me, Paul says, we are ambassadors of Christ.

God making his appeal gospel through us. Let me pray for us. God in heaven, you are amazing. And what you have done for us, we are so grateful for. Would you cause these truths to soak into the gray matter of our brains so it permeates our life with gospel joy?

God, help us to live here for the rest of today and this week until next week. We trust you. Thank you, God, for this word. In your name we pray. Amen.

Amen.