

John: The Word Became Flesh - John 1:1-18

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Preacher: Scott Liddell

[0 : 0 0] As Malinca mentioned, we are this first sermon of the book of John. We begin this Gospel today and we will conclude this sermon series. It will take us one year and so in August of 2024 we will conclude this sermon series walking through the Gospel of John. And so if you want to familiarize yourself and remind yourself of this Gospel, please read it through several times over the course of this sermon series of course, but you can read it several times even just this week to get ourselves familiar with this Gospel. I want to just share who wrote this Gospel and how does it fit into the grand scheme of the Bible. You will notice it's one of the first four books of the Bible. It's called one of the Gospels. That is, it's someone who is an eyewitness of Jesus who wrote about his life wanting everyone to know Jesus Christ is the Messiah. He came, he was born of man, he died a death for sin and he rose from the grave and he wants to communicate this. And who is this John? There are many John's in the Bible. This is one of the disciples. He is one of the sons of Zebedee, James and John, the sons of Thunder, the sons of Zebedee. He's one of them. He's the John of that group, the brothers there. He was chosen by Christ and he followed Jesus for three years as one of his disciples. He witnessed him walk on water, heal the blind, perform all of these miracles, rebuke the religious. John was with Christ at the

Last Supper, the Last Supper before Jesus were to be killed and died on the cross for sin and then he was an eyewitness to the resurrection of Christ, the resurrected body of Christ. John likely ministered with James in Jerusalem and then around 70 AD when Rome came and sacked Jerusalem. It's likely that John moved to Ephesus. There's a lot of people who wrote and say John was in Ephesus.

In fact, if you have heard of Polycarp, he was one of the first pastors in Ephesus and he was a disciple of John, this apostle. He likely wrote the gospel of John while he was in Ephesus. The dating of this book is probably around 85 to 90 AD is when John was in Ephesus when he probably pinned this gospel. It is not one of the synoptic gospels. The synoptic gospels are Matthew, Mark, and Luke. What does synoptic means? It means kind of this with the same vision or the same sight and it would be like this. If we all saw a car accident here out on this street, we would all be witnesses to that car accident but we might all write down something different. We all saw the same thing but we might all note the screams that someone had, the sound of the actual accident.

Someone else might note that there was a dog that ran by at the time of the accident. I don't know why that would pertain but somebody would inevitably write it down. When you have Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the synoptic writers recording of Jesus, they all mentioned much of the same thing to illustrate this. 90% of Mark's content is found in the Gospel of Matthew.

If you read the Gospel of Matthew, Matthew will include a lot of other things but 90% of what he will write about Mark wrote about. 50% of Mark's gospel can be found in the Gospel of Luke. With the same sight, if you will, the synoptic, same sight, Matthew, Mark, and Luke wrote their Gospels. They were very similar in what they recorded of the life of Jesus. John stands apart. You will find all the parables are found in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. There are no parables found in the Gospel of John. John doesn't record any of them. But John gives us the very purpose for which he writes his gospel. It's found and we'll get to this many months from now. But in John chapter 20 toward the end of the book, John tells us, this is why I wrote my gospel. The gospel that I wrote about the life of Christ, his death, and his resurrection, who he is. And he says this, Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. So John is saying, I didn't record every single thing that Jesus did. But these were written, what I did right, these were written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. This is the why John wrote his gospel. He wants us to know that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, he is the Son of

God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. This is the purpose that John wrote his gospel. So to accomplish that, John opens his gospel in a very unique way. If you have a copy of Scripture with you, please turn to the Gospel of John. It's the fourth book in the New Testament, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and then John. By the way, because of John's explicit purpose for which he writes, all of the Gospel writers though have the same purpose, but the many would, let me say it this way, when I was in college and someone might come to Christ or they were in the process of seeking to know God but didn't know him, I would start in the book of John and so I'd say, well why don't we just read the book of John together? And I knew the purpose of the John's writing is that the person might know that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, and by believing in him you may have life, eternal life. John opens his gospel and he opens his gospel in a very unique way that sounds a lot like Genesis. If you read John 1, we read, in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things that were made were made through him and without him, not anything made that was made. We hear this phrase in the John 1, 1 in the beginning, and in the beginning was the Word. It sounds a lot like Genesis, in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, John 1, 1. So John is saying that in the beginning, John is connecting

[7 : 14] Jesus with creation, claiming that Jesus existed before creation, and Jesus existed before the world began, before there was even time, and I'm going to illustrate that in a moment with this box that we're going to please hold for the illustration.

John continues, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Let's look first at the phrase, and the Word was God. Jesus, in his eternal pre-existence, is God.

Jesus shares the same nature and being with God. He is of the same quality and character as God. Everything that can be said about God can be said of Jesus Christ. We refer to this theological concept of God as the trinity, that God we worship one God, but he manifests himself in three persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Here in our text, we're primarily concerned about two. We're differentiating two, the Father and the Son.

And so he says, in the beginning was the Word, and we'll find out later who this Word is. He's Jesus, but so I'm going to just mention that now. In the beginning was Jesus, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. So he's fully divine. He was God. There is one God. We are a monotheistic people who worship but one God, and he exists in three persons, Father, Son, Holy Spirit. But the point of what John is writing is Jesus is the eternal God.

The Word was God. He shares the same nature as God. This is one of the criticisms that the Muslims have of the Christian community. They believe that we worship three Gods. This is not true. We worship but one God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of creation, the only true God who manifests himself in three persons, Father, Son, Holy Spirit. But notice also he was with God. From eternity past, Jesus enjoys a deep intimate fellowship with God the Father.

[9 : 38] From eternity past, Jesus has enjoyed communion with the Father. Jesus was in his high priestly prayer in John 15. Let's read this together. What does he say in the blue? And we'll get to this. Now the Father glorify me in the presence with the glory that I had before the world existed. This is Jesus praying before he goes to the cross. One of the last things that Jesus says, and we hear this prayer, that he is praying to the Father and he says, glorify me in your presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed. So Jesus existed before the creation of the heavens and the earth, and he wanted to enjoy the glory that he enjoyed with the Father before all that happened. And that's how he says it later in the gospel. So let's consider some realities that existed between Jesus, the Son, and God the Father in eternity past, what they enjoyed. God existed in community. Father, Son, Holy Spirit. They lived in community. They enjoyed what they had in common and shared. And so it's interesting that we were created in his image. And so why is community so important that God says, I want you to live together as a people of God. It's good for you to do that. Now where did that concept come from? Because it's who God is. He lives in community. Father, Son, Holy Spirit. He enjoys that and he wants us to enjoy that. And so live in community. That's one implication. God existed also with diversity. We have Father, Son, Holy Spirit. What I love is to consider, since God is one in essence, how can you distinguish who is Father, who is Son, who is Holy Spirit? Well I would say it's the diversity of their roles. It's the diversity of the relationship with one another. It's the diversity of the responsibilities each of them have been given. So they have roles, relationships, and responsibilities that are different, that they enjoy together in community. So I think, isn't it beautiful, that we're all different? And yet our

differences is what wants us to divide us and yet notice what also God enjoyed. Not only did he enjoy community, not only did he enjoy diversity, but he also enjoyed unity. He was of the same mind with himself.

Wouldn't that be wonderful? And yet what's the problem in our culture today? Oftentimes diversity wants to, we want to separate ourselves by what is different about us. Whether it's a different age or a different sex or it's a different whatever, we have a desire to pull away from one another and yet when we look at the Godhead, oh we see beautiful. Before the world existed, we see God in himself enjoying community, diversity, and unity. And oh how we have that as our portrait, an example to emulate as a people of God. So I say my bullet points, what is John 1-3 sharing with us? That God is the eternal God, that Jesus is the eternal God, who shares God's divine nature. He is distinct from the Father. Notice with me that not only he says he was God, but he was from the beginning with God. So not only is he God, yes he shares into divine nature, but he was also with, he's distinct from God. So he's not only yes

God, but he's also the Son of God, distinct from the Father, distinct from the Holy Spirit. And who is Jesus? He transcends creation and is the Creator.

Look with me in verse 3, all things were made through him and without him not anything made that was made.

[14:22] Of all the divine persons in the Godhead, the one that was tasked with the responsibility to create is the Son, Jesus. And what a beautiful privilege he had. Notice here in Colossians how Paul writes of this very same thing, for by him all things were created, speaking of Jesus, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authority, all things were created through him and for him. All things were created through him and for him, all things. So back to my box. So not every one of you has a box this size, but this one is huge. Here's why. I want us to, for those of us who are more, tend to be more literal, you're gonna struggle with this as I do, but we're gonna ask everyone to use your imagination and your abstract thinking to do this with me. All things that God created, so everything that God has created in this, in the six days of creation, stars, moon, mountains, plants, animals, from every sunflower seed to the redwood tree, from every beautiful sunset to a tiny lightning bug, to every human being that would ever live an angelic host, to every imperceivable atom, to the entire galaxy, it's all in here. And in the beginning, when it says God created the heavens and the earth in

Genesis 1, God created all things, but specifically tasked with that responsibility is the sun. And Jesus is this, and if you will, let's close the box, so the whole galaxy, everything is in here. And you have God out who, the theological word is transcend, he transcends creation. He's outside of creation, and he existed before creation, and he existed in the person of Father, Son, Holy Spirit, and he is God. And so Jesus, he's portrayed here in John 1-1, he says, John the Gospel writer says, I want you to know who he is. He's the eternal God who shares the very nature of God, he is distinct from the Father, he transcends creation, and he is the Creator. That is who your Jesus is. So let's be clear who this Jesus is, and then lastly, we see this in Revelation. Our Lord and God, who are worthy to receive glory and honor and power because you have created all things, and by your will they exist and were created. John the Revelator, he's writing of Jesus, and he lets us know one day the praise that Jesus will receive, and he says, oh our Lord God, you are worthy to receive all glory and honor and power, because, and he says this, he affirms this, you created all things, and because of that fact, and by your will they exist, nothing that was created didn't happen without his will, and he was created, and I love how we read in Colossians that they were made through him and for him, they are made for his glory. One of the implications of being made for his glory is that he he owns everything he's created, everything in the box Jesus created, and it's his, you are his, he has rights over your life, he created you, and you exist for him, for his glory, for his will, for his purposes, that's why you were created.

So too is the star, moon. Let's consider some of these implications a little further, since God has created, he is the owner of all of it, he possesses authority over all things, Jesus has authority over your life because he created you. One of the other implications is that God is not a part of creation, he's not in the box, if you will. He is holy and pure, yet Jesus was tempted in every way we were, but without sin. This is what makes God distinct from all other religions. The Sun God, the Moon God, modern animism where there's a spirit in every tree or rock or whatever, what does mankind do to the God when they do that? They put him in the box. These false gods, they exist in the box, the Sun God, the Moon God, well God transcends creation, he's not a part of creation. Think of this

when we pray. A few weeks back I mentioned that prayer is powerful and effective. Prayer can turn the heart of a king, he created that king, he created atoms, he can heal, he can cause a person to repent, and he can call a person unto himself and think of this, when you and I pray, we are in the box by the way, when we pray we're praying to a God that transcends creation, and he created everything, so whatever you're praying for, a heart to repent for someone's health, for someone to a wayward child to be restored to the parents, you're praying about something God created that he has authority over certainly he can do it because he transcends it. When I think about the power of prayer that we are praying to God who transcends creation, all that has been created, what is too difficult for the Lord? Nothing, he owns it, he has authority over it, he can by his will he can command something to happen and it will happen, and we pray, and God we're told let us therefore go boldly before the throne of grace and we may upturn mercy and find grace in a time of help and a need. It's not that we're to cower as we approach this Lord, he says no come to me, and what there's a paradox here because there's also a theological concept called the eminence of God that he is with us, so not only does he transcend creation but he is very much with us, for example you were sealed with the Holy Spirit, so he's not very far. This concept when I think about prayer it encourages me to pray to go boldly before the throne of grace, ask nothing is too hard for him, it's all in the box, it's not too hard, I'm encouraged.

After John helps his readers understand who Jesus is, let's make sure we have the right God here that we're praying who Jesus is, he says Jesus is life and he's victorious light reading in verse four and five, and him was life and the life was a light of men and that light shines in darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. In order for us to understand light and life we must understand darkness and death, and death is fundamentally separation. I know this is a morbid illustration but if we were to go to a funeral and there was an open casket it's not likely that many of us would crawl into that casket to be with that person we love that we miss, why? And I know this is morbid, bear with me.

[23 : 18] Who we miss is no longer there, there's a separation from what we miss and the body that is there, and so death is by nature separation, so when we are in sin the problem with being in sin is that we are separated from God, and so here when John writes in him is life and the life is a light of many, shines light into darkness and darkness has not overcome it. And this term for light, when light shines there's two verbs I want to call our attention to in verse five, the light shines in darkness and the darkness has not overcome it, that light shines that verb shines is in the present tense it's as if John is saying the light is still shining in darkness, nothing can stop the light of Christ from shining, it's contrasted with the darkness shall not overcome it, that verb did not overcome it

John is using a verb that signifies completed action, a completed action, so darkness has done everything it could, it's schemed, it plotted, and it ran out of ideas, and no matter what the darkness does the light will shine and the shine will not be overcome. Jesus is still shining into a dark world and the light can still be seen and so John writes and the light shines and the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. I think about the application of this, this light shining in darkness and the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ cannot be overcome by darkness, so if we shy away from sharing Christ with others perhaps we need to be reminded of this, be courageous in your gospel proclamation share the light of the gospel in Jesus Christ into a dark world, the dark world cannot overcome that. I find great courage in my courage to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with these two verses knowing that the light of Christ is still shining, darkness will not overcome it. In verses six through ten I simply say this that Jesus had a special witness and that special witness is John the Baptist, we find him in verse six. By the way John never writes of himself in the gospel so when you read the word John it's not the gospel writer, so this is

John the Baptist. What did Jesus have when he came to the world? He had this special witness John the Baptist, we read about him, there was a man in verse six that was sent from God whose name was John, he came as a witness to bear witness of the light and that all might believe through him, he was not the light but came to bear witness of the light. When I look at this, these verses I think about the responsibility that John had, we read of him in Luke chapter 3 verses 15 and 16, I don't have a slide for this but just listen to Luke chapter 3. As the people were expecting and all the people questioned in their hearts concerning John whether he might be the Christ speaking of John the Baptist, John answered them all saying I baptize you with water but there is one mightier than I coming whose strap on the sandal I am not worthy to untie, he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire, so John is testifying, he's witness, he's giving witness to who Jesus is and he's saying

there is someone who is far greater than me. In verse 7 he came as a witness to bear witness to the light that all might believe through him. It's as if John is on the witness stand giving his testimony to who Jesus is as the Messiah and the people of

Israel in the first century and us today sit in the jury box needing to make a decision based on the information John the Baptist is providing. Israel must decide how should they respond to John's testimony and so too do we. John is on the witness stand to share the testimony about the light that that light that shines into darkness. The question could be asked why did John need to tell people about light? If the light is always active and it's and it's overcoming darkness why does he have to tell people about the light? Let me illustrate. If this was the brightest, well today is a nice bright shining day, thank you Lord.

So we'll go out today, we could be when the the Sun is at its highest peak and the only people who would ask is the Sun shining or the blind and that's the point.

[28 : 28] John is proclaiming a people to a people who are spiritually blind and they can't see the light and so why is it recorded that he came as a where bear a witness to bear witness to the light that all might believe through him. He's proclaiming Christ to a people who are spiritually blind and that is why it's written in this way in the Gospel of John. Jesus made our eyes and yet some refused to see his glory. Jesus made our ears yet some refused to listen to his words and Jesus made our heads and some refused to bow before him. When I think about again applications here, John illustrates what a proper witness does.

John is not the light himself, we see that in verse six or verse eight. John is not the light himself but he is a witness and does what a witness does is he reflects the light of Christ. We have this amazing privilege to bear witness to the light of the world Jesus Christ. We can take courage today and follow John's example to be a witness. This year many of you returned to school this week, many of you already have had at least a half a week of school this last week. School is in session and what is your chief concern as you go to school? I pray and I plead with you who are students whether you're at an elementary, high school, collegiate level, whatever level of schooling you're in to make it your chief concern to bear witness of Jesus Christ. Many of us are employed at work and I know some have to be careful about how you do this but I plead with us may we make our chief concern to bear witness of Jesus Christ to proclaim the light of the world, the light of the gospel may we be courageous.

Lastly or not lastly we're getting close. Jesus was received by many but only by the will of God. In verses 11 and 12 we see that he came to his own, his own did not receive him. We see that some rejected John's witness to the light of the world and yet verse 12 but to all who did receive him who believed in his name he gave the right to become children of God. Some received him but how is mentioned in verse 3, 13, who were born not of the blood nor the will of the flesh nor the will of man but of God. So I want to explain verse 13 to us. In verse 13 we read how and why some believed that are mentioned in verse 12. Let me read verse 12 one more time but to all who did receive him who believed in his name he gave the right to become children of God who were born and then there's three nots not of this not of that none of this but of the will of God is how it happened. So let me talk about the first not, not of blood because there these are three false reasons why people believe that God has saved them.

These existed in the first century these same reasons exist today. Some think God saves because they are racially or ethnically in the right background. This was the problem with the woman at the well. We'll read about her in John chapter 4. She thought she had the right to know the Lord because she was a descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Even today if you were to go to Israel talk to a Jewish person they would think that they know the Lord because they are of a right racial or ethnic background. But I will say still today there are some Americans who conflate God and country and think purely because they are an American they have a right to be a children of God and they know God. Scripture clearly tells us they were born not of blood. It doesn't matter your racial or your ethnic background that is not what saves a person or makes one right with the Lord.

Second we see nor of the will of the flesh is a second. Some think God saves because they are sincere. The will of the flesh pictures a man and a woman coming together in great passion to receive conceive a child but no matter how sincere or passionate you are about spiritual things you will only be saved if God draws you to himself. One cannot be saved by mere sincerity or spiritual passion about serving the Lord. Thirdly we read nor will nor of the will of the man. This is the last

thing that cannot save you that is in this category.

[34 : 10] Some think God saves people because of their own effort. The will of man could be translated the will of a husband. In fact some of your translations do that. The husband and wife can carefully plan to have a child and their planning may pay off nine months later but no man can plan his way into a family of God.

No amount of effort, no amount of good works can bring a person into spiritual life with God. And so what does John say? He lays out how a person accomplishes what he speaks of in verse 12. Let's read verse 12 again. But to all who did receive him who believe in his name he gave the right to become children of God who were born by the will of God. But of God is the last phrase. People only experience new birth if God chooses to regenerate them. John is communicating this. James affirms this in James 1.18. Many do not like this teaching because it detracts from man's effort. And that's exactly the point. The truth that God chooses sinners and those sinners simply respond, not the other way around, elevates God and humbles humanity. And humility is exactly what we need. God chooses sinners and sinners respond. God is elevated in this and humanity is humbled. Everything that has happened to a Christian for good, especially salvation, is directly attributable to the work of God. Nothing in me has merited salvation. Even the exercise of faith was a gift of the Lord to believe in him. And so the text reads, they received him and believed his name by the will of God. That's it. That is how someone comes to know the Lord. I want to make an introduction. This is my brother and his wife Esther, my two nieces Reima and Stephanie. Stephanie is next to Esther and they chose a while ago when Stephanie was less than a year old to adopt her from an orphanage in China. And there is nothing that Stephanie could do to be a part of this new family. No desire on her part would have connected her to this mommy and this daddy. There is nothing she could have done to earn their affection. Her adoption into this loving family was the result of someone outside of herself choosing to love her, receive her, to give her the right to be called their child. Someone had to do this for her. What she could not do for herself and that is grace. Grace is exactly what happened to us when we believed in the name of Jesus. We have been brought into a family, the family of God, of God's choosing, not of our own.

And so John says it this way, people received him and believed in his name by the will of God. Lastly, this time it is truly lastly, Jesus became fully human.

Often memorized verse is verse 14 and the word became flesh and he dwelt among us and we have seen his glory, the glory of the only son from the father full of grace and truth. And the word became flesh. Jesus did not merely become man nor did he appear as a human. No, he became flesh. The son having existed as God at some point in history becomes human, fully human, born of the Virgin Mary. Theologically, this is referred to the hypostatic union that Jesus being fully God and fully man, born of the Virgin Mary. Anyone who denies the full deity and the full humanity of Jesus is a false teacher. We know this in 1st John and this is why, and you know I don't do this very often, but in this case it's too critical not to, but this is why Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, and even the Islamic faith are false religious systems because they deny the full deity of Christ as God. They lead people in lies and they keep them in their sin and they will die in their sin and receive the justice due their sin, which is an eternity separated from him. And John doesn't want us to make that confusion and he says no no no, remember this God that existed in community, in diversity, in unity, apart from his creation. Remember that God? Well, he became flesh, fully God, fully man. That is our Jesus. And he dwelt among us. John says, I saw him for three years. I followed him. He was with us and we saw his glory. How is it that John saw his glory? Well, number one, he was on the [40 : 08] Mount of Transfiguration, so he saw Jesus unveiled, if you will, with Peter, James, and John. But secondly, he saw the weight and the worth of God, his glory, in his attributes, all the time, in truth. He saw Jesus wisdom, love, grace, knowledge, power. And Jesus is the full expression of grace and he is the full expression of truth. He is full of grace and truth. John writes, I want to conclude with some implications for us today. If Jesus, think about Jesus condescending, taking on human flesh, what are the implications of that for us?

If Jesus did not become man, he could not be tempted as we are. Apart from his humanity, Jesus could not have experienced the temptations that he did. In the incarnation, Jesus become flesh. He provides us an advocate before the Father, before the Father's throne, who knows exactly what we're going through and exactly how it feels. God became a man so he could sympathize with us in our weakness, so that he could assure us that victory over sin and temptation is possible in his strength. And I think how beautiful it is to know that God condescended to earth, born of the Virgin

Mary, tempted in the ways we are, sympathizes with us in our weaknesses. And so when we pray, we pray to a God who knows that. Second, if Jesus did not become man, he could not serve as the example that he did. I grew a little tired now that it's a little bit over.

I tolerate a little bit more, but I grew tired of the overuse of what would Jesus do, the WWJD. It was everywhere. T-shirts, bracelets, hats, underwear, you name it. It was there. But one of the things I do appreciate about that though, is we only can say that because we have as an example, because he condescended to earth. And we got to see and think about what would Jesus do. And so now I appreciate the phrase a little bit more. What does it look like to forgive someone, forgive even one's enemies? What does it look like to extend grace? What does it look like to be a person of truth? What does it look like to be selfless? What does it look like to trust God in unfathomable circumstances? What does it look like to commune with the Father? Jesus gives us a portrait of all of this.

And so I'm also grateful that Jesus condescended to earth, took on human flesh, died a death for sin. Lastly, in the incarnation, in him taking on flesh, you cannot look at the cradle in the manger in Bethlehem without looking to the cross. He came, he was born to die. And he did that, that those who believe in his name might be saved. And if Jesus had not condescended to earth, born of flesh, he could not die for sin. And we would all still be in our sin. And so I'm so grateful for the Lord Jesus Christ who did just that and all who believe in his person and his work are saved. And it reminds us of John's very purpose for writing the book. Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of the disciples that are not written in this book. But these things were written so that you may believe that Jesus is Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. May we enjoy life in his name together this year as we study the book of John. Would you pray with me? Father, there is probably not a more theologically rich text about who you are than John's opening chapter 1, 1 through 18. Lord, thank you for revealing yourself so beautifully and wonderfully in our text. Lord, I pray that the implications for us would be things that we live out this week. We pray to a God who is both with us and yet transcends creation and you've told us to go boldly before the throne of grace. So I pray that this week we would have courage to pray to you knowing we're praying for you to for circumstances to change, for you to change and alter circumstances likely in our prayer and you created all things and you can do that. That's easy. So thank you Lord. Thank you also for giving us courage that light is unstoppable and it is still active to this day and the light of the gospel still enlightens the eyes for those who believe in your name and trust you for the forgiveness of sin. Lord, I thank you how that encourages me to be courageous in sharing you with others. Lord, we love you. Thank you for this church. Thank you for the opportunity to sing truths about you again. We praise your name. Amen.