

# The Grace of Christ to a Fallen Believer

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[ 0 : 00 ] The name Thomas Cranmer may not be familiar to many of you, but if you were a student of the English Reformation, the name Thomas Cranmer would be very well known.

Thomas Cranmer was an Archbishop of England back in the 1500s, and he himself became someone who professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And as a result of him professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, he also embraced what is known as the Protestant principles. He rejected the Roman Catholic Church as a result.

And in rejecting the Roman Catholic Church, he was imprisoned for his faith. He was tried, he was convicted, and he was sentenced to death.

And while he was in prison, he was pressured over and over again to reject his convictions about the Protestant Reformation and his convictions concerning that salvation is by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, by faith alone, through grace alone.

[ 1 : 15 ] And so while in prison, being pressured, he succumbed to the pressure to deny what he had so dearly held to.

He rejected the Protestant principles and embraced what Roman Catholicism taught as the way of truth. And in so doing, he actually signed a document in which he denied that he had believed the Protestant principles and at the same time affirmed the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church. And that paper, in which he rejected the Protestant principles, was widely distributed throughout the land of England to embarrass and to shame the Archbishop of Canterbury.

And there was a reason why he had perhaps done this, because during that time, Archbishop Cranberry was living under the reign of a woman who was known as Queen Mary, who was otherwise known as Bloody Mary, because she had executed so many believers at that time.

Now, Archbishop Cranberry was not the first person to have denied the Lord Jesus Christ. 1,500 years prior to that, an apostle of the Lord Jesus had vehemently denied and rejected that he even knew the Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 2 : 46 ] He so affirmed that he had denied and rejected the Lord Jesus Christ that he did it three times, not once, not twice, but three times denied that he even knew the one with whom he walked with for three years.

In so doing, he even hurled curses down. And you can imagine the apostle Peter, that when he had denied the Lord Jesus Christ at that point, it's a reminder that a believer can commit very, very serious sins, grievous sins.

And this morning, what I hope to do is, as we look at the apostle Peter and the Lord Jesus Christ, is to remind you and to remind me that even after our conversion, we may commit very, very serious sin.

All of us, at one time or another, may have thoughts or have said things to another one whom we love or have done things that are very, very painful and that bring tremendous shame and tremendous grief to us.

But this morning, there is hope that we will see how the Lord Jesus, and we will see the heart of the Lord Jesus, and how he restores Peter in John chapter 21.

[ 4 : 06 ] Turn with me then, please, in a copy of the scriptures to John chapter 21. And as you're turning there to John chapter 21, we have here the third appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ to his disciples.

In the previous chapter, John had indicated that the Lord Jesus had appeared to his disciples. And now, in John chapter 21, he now appears the third time.

And there, you will see that the disciples had actually gone out fishing. Seven of them had gone out fishing, and they had fished in the nighttime, and they had not caught anything. And the Lord Jesus approaches them on the shore in the morning and asks them a simple question.

Have you caught anything? And they replied, no. And so the Lord Jesus then instructs them to cast their net to the side. And in obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ, they cast their net, and suddenly, 153 fishes are caught in the net.

And we pick up the reading now, as the Lord Jesus then prepares a meal for his disciples and feeds them. And in John chapter 21, we'll pick up in verse 9, and we'll read through to verse 19.

[ 5 : 26 ] When they had got out on the land, they saw a charcoal fire in place with fish laid out on it and bread. Jesus said to them, bring some of the fish that you have just caught.

So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn.

Jesus said to them, come and have breakfast. Now none of the disciples dared ask him, who are you? They knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish.

This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead. When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?

He said to him, yes, Lord, you know that I love you. He said to him, feed my lambs. He said to him a second time, Simon, son of John, do you love me?

[ 6 : 38 ] He said to him, yes, Lord, you know that I love you. He said to him, tend my sheep. He said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love me?

Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, do you love me? And he said to him, Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you. And Jesus said to him, feed my sheep.

Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted. But when you are old, you will stretch out your hands and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go.

This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God. And after saying this, he said to him, follow me. So it reads God's word.

Let us pray together, please. Let's pray. Let's pray. And grant, almighty God, that since we have the privilege to hear your word this morning, when there have been many throughout the ages that have not only not had the entire Bible, but have not had the privilege to hear these words.

[ 7 : 53 ] And therefore, we are truly the blessed among your people. Grant now that the eyes of our heart would be enlightened to see the hope that is revealed and laid up for us in Christ Jesus.

And that with all of our heart, we would seek you and not wander away from your truth. And that we would treasure your word in our hearts so that we would not sin against you.

Teach us now by the spirit of Christ that we might not only hear your word, but do it. And that we would learn from this passage of what it means truly to receive the grace of Christ when we have sinned.

And that we might know also of the love of our Savior in a more intimate and deep manner. We pray now your blessing upon your word this morning. And we remember our brother, Pastor Moss, as he preaches this day, that you would enable him also to preach your word with faithfulness and truth and with power, granting that you would be glorified and that those who are among your saints who there are hearing your word there, that they might also be edified and built up and conformed to the image of our Savior.

We pray these things now in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is our prophet and our redeemer, and who is coming again with great glory. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

[ 9 : 14 ] Well, in this passage here this morning, what John wants us to know is that how Jesus Christ restores fallen disciples. It's very simple. He wants us to see in this passage of how, through the restoration of Peter, of how the Lord Jesus restores his disciples when they have fallen or when they have sinned greatly.

And I have just simply three things I want us to see in this passage. First, I want us to see that how the Lord Jesus probes Peter with questions. See, first of all, Jesus probing question to Peter.

Second, we'll see Peter's prudent answer to Jesus. And then third, Jesus' gracious command to Peter. So we have, first of all, Peter's probing question.

Second, Jesus, sorry, first of all, Jesus' probing question. Second, Peter's prudent answer. And third, Jesus' gracious command. Now, the restoration of Peter to fellowship.

And the apostle begins with the Lord Jesus around the setting of a charcoal fire. And this, you see that in verse, in the context is that here, if you see in verse 9, the charcoal fire that is mentioned there, the same word is used only one other time.

[10:31] And it's actually used when, you remember that when Peter himself is around a charcoal fire, and he is actually denying the Lord Jesus Christ. And some have suggested that the word that John intends to use is to help to remind the readers of the setting that took place then, and also the setting that takes place now.

And so here, Peter is with the Lord Jesus Christ, and around him also are the six other disciples. And the Lord Jesus is speaking to Peter, but also speaking to the other disciples indirectly.

And the first thing the Lord Jesus does is that he begins with a question. He says, Simon, son of John, do you love me? He asks a probing question.

And three times our Lord asks Peter this question. And the same question is almost asked by verbatim. There's a slight modification in the first time in verse 15, where he asks a simple question, Peter, do you love me more than these?

Do you love me more than these? And in the context of these, he's referring probably to, and most likely to, the disciples, that he's saying that, Peter, do you love me more than these other six disciples?

[11:43] Now, the Lord Jesus did not ask him about several things. He first of all did not ask him, Peter, about his faith. Notice, he did not ask Peter, Peter, do you trust in me?

Peter, do you believe in me? Peter, are you relying upon me? He's not asking Peter that. He asked Peter a very simple question. Peter, do you love me? Nor does he ask Peter about his repentance. He doesn't say to Peter, Peter, have you sorrowed and grieved over what you have done? You have denied me. You have denied me three times, and have you wept enough so that you feel remorseful about what you have done?

The Lord Jesus doesn't do that. Nor does he ask Peter about his works. He doesn't ask Peter, have you prayed enough and long enough so that you can actually feel as though you have something to commend before me?

He doesn't ask Peter also about his works, whether he has wept enough for his great sin. And the Lord did not even ask Peter about his past love.

[12:55] About his past love. He doesn't ask that Peter says, Peter, have you loved me? But he says, Peter, present tense, do you love me?

Do you love me, Peter? So in short, our Lord's probing question was not about Peter's faith, not about his repentance, it's not about his works, his good works they may be, and it's not about his past love.

But now notice what he does ask Peter. He says to him, he asked Peter in the first question about the degree of his love. You see there in verse 15, he says, Peter, son of John, do you love me more than these?

And as mentioned already that he's asking Peter, do you love me more than these six disciples?

Now you remember that when the Lord Jesus told and informed Peter that he would deny him, you remember the words of Peter, Peter said what?

He said that if all others would deny you, if all would deny you, I will not. I will not. In other words, Peter was essentially saying to the Lord Jesus, right, that all their disciples may actually flee from you, may deny you, may reject you, but I have such a commitment and I am such strong love for you that I will not deny you.

[14:15] And then later on in Mark chapter 14, we read also that Peter even said to the Lord Jesus that even if I have to deny, even if I have to go to death, I will not deny you. And so the Lord Jesus is asking Peter right now about the degree of his love and is saying to Peter, you had boasted, you were proud, you were arrogant when you said those words and you had such confidence in your own strength.

And so I'm asking you now, Peter, do you love me more than these? Yes. And so he's compelling Peter to think about his weakness and to examine the degree of his love in comparison to the other disciples.

But not only does he inquire and probe Peter about his degree of his love, but now he goes on to ask Peter about the reality of his love. He says, Peter, in verse 16, do you love me?

And in verse 17, notice there again, he says, Peter, Simon, do you love me? And so the question there is not concerned now with the degree of Peter's love, not the concern about the existence of his love.

The question now is about the reality of his love, the existence of his love. The question is concerned not so much about the quantity of Peter's love, but the quality of his love. It's not about so much about the degree Peter loves, but really about the genuineness of his love towards his Savior.

[15:46] And as one writer, Ted Donleev said, each question is gentle but relentless. And each question would have caused Peter to relive the bitter experience of his denial.

But now, why does the Lord Jesus Christ probe Peter about his love? Why? Well, I think the reason why is that, first of all, you remember that the Lord Jesus knows that a fundamental truth for anyone who is going to serve him in ministry or serve him at all is that at the heart of their service must be a genuine love to the Savior.

There must be a reality of love. No matter how imperfect that person is, no matter how weak and how frail it is, as Peter was, that the reality is that love must be present.

And you'll remember that the Apostle Paul says about the greatest of these three are what? Faith, love, and hope is what? Love. Love is the greatest. And that a person can do many things, but if love is not at the foundation of it, one cannot serve the Lord faithfully.

And so the Lord Jesus, I think here, is saying to Peter, like a loving spiritual physician, that he knows that despite his defects, despite his shortcomings, despite all what Peter's done, essentially and foundationally for Peter and for the wider believers, is that if they are going to serve the Lord Jesus, love must be at the heart and root of it.

[17:15] And it must be remembered that no one who has genuine love will be absent of faith and repentance. Where there is love, there is faith and repentance.

And so Peter, after his denial, would have probably questioned his love. And so our Lord now, before the other disciples, used this question to help Peter spiritually. Now some of you who may have heard a message on this, may be aware that in verses 15, 16 and 17, that some have tried and argued that the word love that is used, there are two different words that are used.

In verse 15 and 16, right, there is one word that is used for love in the original text, and that word speaks, some people have argued for, a divine love, like a higher love. So when the Lord Jesus says to Peter in verse 15, you see there that Simon, son of John, do you love me with this higher love or this divine love more than these?

And then in verse 16, the same thing is said, do you love me more than these? That is with a divine or higher love. And so some have argued that there is intended in this passage, this word love is to be used and understood in two different meanings.

One is a higher love, and then the other love is a friendship love. One is a divine love, and one is a friend love. The only problem with that is that John himself uses two different words in the original language stylistically to indicate the same thing.

[18:54] Let me show you, for example, in John chapter 20 in verse 3, when John himself refers to himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved, in John chapter 20 in verse 2, John uses the word, therefore the higher love.

But then in chapter 21, when you turn over in verse 20, he then refers to himself again as the disciple whom Jesus loved. He used the other word. And so in two chapters, he's using two different words to indicate love.

And in both meanings, John is referring to himself as the one whom Jesus loved. The same thing can be said also in the gospel of John again. In John chapter 3 in verse 35, when it says the father loves the son, it speaks about what?

In that context, the father having one word is used, but then turn over and you see again just a few chapters over in John chapter 5 in verse 20, it speaks about the father loving the son.

And again, the other word is used. And so the point there is that those who would argue and suggest that this idea that John is using this word to mean two different things, it just doesn't bear out, especially the way John uses the word love in his own gospel.

[20:03] He used it stylistically, just as you and I, when we speak, we may use two different words synonymously to indicate the same thing. So now having seen Jesus' probing question, Peter now replies with a prudent answer.

You see that in verse 15, 16, 17. Peter responds to the Lord Jesus' probing question, Do you love me more than these? Peter now responds in verse 15. First he says, Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.

Then in verse 16, he says, Yes, Lord, you know that I love you. And then in verse 17, he replies again, he says, Yes, Lord, you know everything.

You know that I love you. And so here, Peter does not answer about the superiority of his love. He's not addressing that his love is far superior to the other disciples. He made no claims as in the past to have a greater love than his fellow disciples.

He made no boast of being better than the other apostles. And he makes no pretense to love more than the other apostles. No, Peter had learned the error of his boast.

[ 21 : 18 ] He had been humbled by his fall. He simply asserted, Lord, you know that I love you. Now, notice what Peter does do.

Although he does not speak about the superiority of his love, he does address about the reality of his love. He declared that he genuinely loved the Lord Jesus Christ. He says there three times, Lord, you know that I love you.

He says, essentially, you know that I'm weak, you know that I'm frail, but Lord, you know my heart, you know the truth, you know that as weak and as failing as I have been, I truly love you.

It is as if Peter was saying, though my love may be like a mustard seed, it is authentic, it is genuine, it is real. And so Peter's prudent answer affirms the reality of his love.

And when the apostle Peter affirms that he loves the Lord Jesus Christ, each time in the actual original, he is emphasizing the fact that it is you, Lord, that I am relying upon, it is as if he would say, you, you, Lord, know that I love you.

[ 22 : 32 ] And he's emphasizing not so much about himself, but he's saying the fact is that, Lord, you are the one who knows all things. You know from the very beginning my whole situation. You know that I would fail.

You know now of my genuine love for you. And so this emphasis is made evident in verse 17. When Peter responds a third time, he says, in verse 17, he says, Lord, you know everything.

You know that I love you. And so Peter is saying that since the Lord knows all things, therefore, he is the one who can attest to the reality of his love. He is the one who can authenticate whether Peter genuinely loves him.

God now, this past failure that Peter mentions or this past failure of Peter became very evident. If you notice again back in verse 17, when Jesus asked him the third time, it says, Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time.

And obviously you think that this would have reminded Peter of what had taken place. That Peter had openly declared before all those who were around in the temple and in the area that he never knew the Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 23 : 53 ] And so here you have now, he was made sorrowful and the grief came about because the Lord Jesus had asked Peter, do you love me? Three times.

And the third question undoubtedly would have recalled to Peter's mind his previous denial. And notice that the Lord Jesus after Peter had become grieved, if the Lord Jesus did not probe anymore, he stopped. He stopped.

He did not ask one more question to Peter at that point. He didn't ask Peter, do you love me? The desired impact had been accomplished. Peter had affirmed that he loved the Lord Jesus Christ and he had been grieved.

And the Lord, like a loving Savior, knows there's no need to go any further now. And yet, Peter, in the midst of this, even after he was grieved, notice again, after he was grieved, he says and affirms that he loves him.

Brothers and sisters, weakness in the midst of our sin is not something to which the Lord Jesus is ashamed of. He is kind and gracious and tender enough to know that even when a brother or sister or the apostle Peter has been grieved, we can still say in the midst of that situation, yes, Lord, you know that I love you.

[ 25 : 17 ] And so from Peter's prudent answer to the Lord's question, we should be, many of us should be rebuked for the fact that when we begin to compare ourselves and our love to other disciples, to other brothers, that you and I, like the apostle Peter, can think that our love is greater than another person.

when the reality is that many times our love may be much weaker than another brother or another sister. We may think that we look at this person and what they say, look at this person and what they do, and we can be very tempted in our inner heart, in our private moments, to think of the greatness of our love compared to another brother or to another sister.

But the reality is that we must remember that when we see ourselves in the light of God's word, when we see ourselves truly for who we are, our love, when we think about comparing it to others, we should be like the apostle Peter, Lord, you know that I love you, and that's it.

We should have a disposition of heart that says, yes, Lord, you know that I love you. I don't know if I love you more than this person or that person, but you're the one who genuinely loves me. Now, that's not to deny that there are some brothers who do love more than others, but that's truly humbled in the light of our sin and before the majesty of God and of Christ, we should have a disposition that says, no more comparison, no more comparison, Lord.

You know that I love you. Well, having examined Jesus' probing question to Peter, and then Peter's prudent answer to the Lord Jesus, now let's consider Jesus' gracious command to Peter.

[ 27 : 01 ] The gracious command there is said, first in verse 15, by the Lord Jesus, feed my lambs. Verse 16, tend my sheep.

And in verse 17, feed my sheep. Now, Peter, as I said, had fallen greatly. At this point, if Peter had just been restored as a disciple, that would be sufficient.

But Peter is being restored and recommissioned as an apostle, as an apostle. Brethren, think about that. How many of us who have been wounded and hurt by deep sin would treat the one who sinned against us in this manner?

Who among us would be gracious? So think about someone who has wounded you and hurt you deeply, would treat honestly someone in such an elevated way?

and that's the heart of the Lord Jesus Christ and his graciousness towards his people. You see the gracious command there, he says to him, of all the things that the Lord Jesus has put into the hands of the apostle Peter, he says, tend my lambs.

[ 28 : 14 ] He says, care for my sheep, the very sheep in which I have shed my blood for. Tend my lambs. And notice that this is done in the midst of all the other disciples, that they would have heard these words, they would have seen the kindness of the Lord Jesus.

And though he had forfeited, and though he had sinned greatly, the Lord Jesus is restoring him and forgiving him and comforting him here. And so we see here the Lord in a gracious and loving manner restoring Peter by his gracious command to his once fallen disciple to feed and care for his sheep.

And clearly here when the Lord Jesus says feed my lambs, he's saying to the apostle Peter that he is to feed them with the word of God. He is not to tickle them.

He is not to tell them stories. He is not to abuse them. He is to care for them with the pure milk of the word. He is not to count them, but he is commissioned to provide them food to nourish their souls and manna from heaven to strengthen their heart.

feed my lambs. Now notice again that Peter is not only to feed the lambs. Notice three times the pronoun my lambs, my.

[ 29 : 36 ] In verse 15 he says feed my lambs. In verse 16 he says tend my sheep. And then in verse 17 he says feed my sheep. They are not Peter's sheep.

They don't belong to Peter. And that's true of every minister of the gospel. They belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. Each and every one who has genuinely repented and who has genuinely put their faith in Christ belongs ultimately to the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so Peter and everyone afterwards who is an under-shepherd is to be reminded that the sheep of Christ belong to the Savior and not to themselves. They are his sheep for he is the one who bore them with his blood.

And so what this means is that Peter should never forget that these lambs have been entrusted to him who belonged to the Lord Jesus Christ.

They are not perfect but they are precious. They are not perfect but they are precious because they have been purchased with the precious lamb of God's blood.

[ 30 : 43 ] But notice then Peter also now is to shepherd he says in verse 16 he is to shepherd or he is he says he had to tend the sheep. That is Peter is to rule he is to protect and he is to govern those whom he has been entrusted with.

And so Peter is to rule humbly govern voluntarily and protect continually Christ's sheep. Now from our Lord's restoration of Peter you and I should labor to inform our minds as much as possible about the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We should labor as much as possible to inform and instruct our minds concerning the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. No matter how mature a believer is, no matter how many years you've been walking with the Lord Jesus Christ, no matter how strong you may believe you think you are, there are still for every single believer some defect in one's knowledge concerning grace.

And the proper knowledge of grace is a prerequisite to silence a troubled conscience. Let me say that again. A proper knowledge of the grace of Christ is a prerequisite to silence a troubled conscience.

If you want a conscience to be silenced, then the grace of Christ is a prerequisite to help you in the midst of that ordeal. And as long as the believer remains content with little knowledge of this truth, then he will have little resource to comfort and to solace his wounded conscience.

[ 32 : 25 ] But the believer that has a more full and biblical understanding of Christ's grace can draw upon it, meditate upon it in a time of temptation, and receive comfort from it. And so therefore, brethren, study this doctrine of grace, of Christ, and study so that you will have a more full biblical and practical knowledge of the grace of Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, the Lord's restoration of Peter teaches us about the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. Why did Peter continue in faith and Judas did not?

Both actually felt remorse? It says that Peter went out and wept and Judas was remorseful. Why did one continue and the other did not? And the answer is very simple.

One was ultimately prayed for. You remember that the Lord Jesus says that Satan has sifted you, but know this, Peter, that I prayed for you that your faith may not fail.

And where does that faith originate? That faith is a gift of God that originated from before the world began in which when God was in his eternal counsels looking upon his believers he was electing Peter unto grace in which he would continue all the way until the end.

[ 33 : 46 ] And so no matter Peter's great sin it was what? The grace ultimately in the election of God in which Peter now would persevere until the end.

And so Peter wept bitterly over sin and Judas felt remorse. But God had a purpose before the world began that Peter would persevere in faith. And so you remember the words in John chapter 10 that not one of his sheep can be taken out of the hand of the Lord Jesus Christ because if one can be taken brethren think about this if one sheep can be taken then all can be taken and Christ would not have what?

A body. But our Lord Jesus says my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me and I give eternal life to them and they will never perish.

And no one will snatch them out of my hand. Peter was not snatched out of the hand of the Lord Jesus because of the promise that Lord Jesus makes not only to Peter but to every true disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ still today.

No matter how grievous the sin is, no matter how much you think at times you are weak and you find yourself drifting, it is the Lord Jesus who is keeping you and I in the midst of our struggles.

[ 35 : 13 ] Now from our Lord's restoration of Peter we should also draw comfort from the grace of Christ when we sin. None of us ought to despair from hope no matter how much we have actually sinned and how frequent.

I trust that perhaps this morning many of you have entered in here with a conscience that's troubled, with sin waiting on your mind and so the believers are often tempted to think that I've sinned once too many times and beyond the grace of Christ and so the enemy of our soul comes and whispers to you, believer, you are mean, you are unkind, you are unfaithful, you are a person of anger, look at you, how could the Lord Jesus ever love you?

And so our conscience stings us because we have been covetous, we have been greedy, we have been idolatrous, we have been carnal, we have been worldly and again we hear the adversary accusing us saying look at you, your thoughts are filled with earthly and carnal things and all of these accusations and sins sometimes sinks our hearts into utter despair and we think we are beyond the compassion and mercy of Christ.

we begin to think that we have sinned once too many times but what does the scripture say? We are sin abounded, grace abounded much more.

Brethren, trust me, I speak right now not of something, not of something distant but something very real and very personal. When we speak of sin abound, grace abounds much more.

[ 36 : 51 ] Peter and his denial of our Lord Jesus abounded in sin but Christ's grace abounds much more. The promise that we are sin abound, grace abounds much more is not made just to Peter or to Paul but to you and to me.

To you, believer, and to me. Though your sins may be a scarlet, they will be white as snow. See the heart of the Savior. And so when believers repent of their sin, the good shepherd gently picks up his fallen lambs and carries them on his back and nurses their wounds and restores them to wholeness.

What comfort is this then to a sinning believer to know that our Savior does not cast us off when we sin? And how true is the scripture it says, the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord and though he fall or he or she falls yet shall not be utterly cast down.

For the Lord upholds him or her with his right hand. So in short, brethren, do not look to yourself for comfort and certainly do not look for the world for comfort.

And do not look for anything in this life for comfort. Look to the heart of the Savior and his grace.

Well, let me speak now to the unbeliever, to the unbeliever who may be among us.

[ 38 : 12 ] And I don't know who you are, but I trust perhaps there are some here who are strangers to the compassion and to the tenderness and to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. You are like a hungry child that looks on from the outside for a family eating the most delicious and delightful sweets.

Your soul hungers for true and lasting sweetness which can only be found in Christ. How many times have you sought in your friends for comfort? How many times has the world promised you comfort?

How many times will you be disappointed of finding some kind of comfort and solace when you get disappointed again and again and again? You think money will bring you comfort? And it doesn't.

You think of all kinds of things that will bring you comfort and it disappoints you again and again.

And where can you receive forgiveness of all of your sins? Just think.

If every one of your sins had to be made known before us right now, your very thoughts at this very present time, how vile they are perhaps, how unfaithful they are, how heinous your sin is, and yet the Lord Jesus is willing to freely forgive for all of your sins, every last one of them.

[ 39 : 29 ] My friend, look to the Lord Jesus Christ to deliver you from your sin and condemnation.

There is no other way for salvation. You won't find it in Islam, you won't find it in Buddhism, you will not find it in anyone else except in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And if the glorious person and the work and the heart of the Lord Jesus Christ does not attract you, this does not attract you, then heaven is not for you. Heaven is not for you.

It's not for you. And I have nothing to offer you. I have nothing. If the Lord Jesus Christ, in his tenderness, and his mercy, and his goodness, if that will not attract you, then you have nothing.

I have nothing to offer you. And you deserve to be punished forever in hell. That doesn't take pleasure, but that tells you how hard your heart is, how absolutely hard your heart is, that you can continue to reject such love and such mercy.

And so come, person, and bow your knee before the gracious King Jesus and worship the Lamb of God. brethren, let us think finally. If this kind of grace has been shown to us, how do we respond to those who are outside of Christ?

[ 40 : 45 ] Think about your family members, think about your co-workers, think about your friends.

If you are the recipient of this kind of mercy and this kind of grace, and I know, like me, we have failed. We think at times that so and so is beyond forgiveness.

We think that. I think it too. You think sometimes that they will not listen. I think it too. And sometimes you've honestly, you just have your heart so hardened that you don't care. But brethren, let this mercy and grace of Christ towards a fallen sinner motivate your heart again to rise up and to speak about the love of Christ and his grace.

Has Christ forgiven us of our debt of 10,000 sins? And so we ought to do likewise to forgive,

especially to those who we may be struggling with, to forgive them of their hundred sins. Let us not be as the wicked slave who has forgiven all of his sin but was unwilling to forgive his fellow slave.

If anything should mark our lives, it should be grace. If anything should mark our lives, it should be grace. And so therefore, let us imitate our Lord who is full of grace and truth and grow in grace and

in knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And so we ought to show grace to the unbelieving world and remind them what they desperately need because they do not know what they need. They do not know. They are blind by the God of this will.

[ 42 : 03 ] They are deaf and they do not realize it. And we have a message that is genuinely good news and it is free. Free. Free. Free. Archbishop Cranmer, you remember in the final month of his life, was pressured and persuaded to sign a document denying the principles of the Protestant Reformation.

He had recanted and repudiated the faith, but God had another purpose. God had another purpose for this man. And that was to glorify his grace through the Lord Jesus Christ.

After Cranmer had signed the document, denying the faith, he was increasingly suffering from a very guilty conscience. And despite his recantation, the Roman Catholic Church had determined that they would burn Archbishop Cranmer at the stake.

They would put him to death. And on the day of his death, Cranmer was asked boldly to confess the profession of his faith and to confirm that he was a Roman Catholic.

And through the riches of God's grace, Cranmer dropped to his knees and poured out his anguished soul saying these very words, O Father of Heaven, have mercy on me, a most despicable, coward, and miserable sinner.

[ 43 : 27 ] I have offended both against heaven and earth more than my tongue can express. You did not give your Son, O Heavenly Father, unto death for small sins only, but for all the greatest sins of the world, so that the sinner returned to you with his whole heart as I do at present.

Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for your great mercy. And now therefore, O Father of Heaven, hallowed be your name. And the writer J.C.

Ryle records, through the abounding grace of God, Cranmer repented of his fall and found mercy. And through the same abounding grace, he resolved to die in the faith of the Reformation, and at last, through the abounding grace, he witnessed such a bold confession that he confounded his enemies, filled his friends with thankfulness and praise, and left the world a triumphant martyr for Christ's truth.

In the very right hand, in which he had signed and repudiated his partisan Reformation confession, it was that hand which was the first to go into the flame of fire, and he held it there and exclaimed that this unworthy right hand, this unworthy right hand, Archbishop Cranmer died in faith in the Lord Jesus Christ despite his sin, and why?

Because of his strength? No. Because of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ in his life at the very end of his life, at the end of his life.

[ 45 : 06 ] And our brethren, if Peter was restored to usefulness and Cranmer was restored to faith before he died, all because of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, then how much then should we love and adore the Savior?

How much should you and I love and adore the Savior? Let's pray. Amen. Amen. Amen.