

Genuine Conversion

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[0 : 00] A stranger walking from outside would have gotten that right. I know his heart leapt when he saw that. He was so happy that he was going to get that.

Well, I want to begin by thanking Brother Lyndon for preaching the last three Sundays! Well, this morning we are continuing our sermon series in Paul's Ladder to the Ephesians. And in the last two sermons, which covered verse 17 of chapter 4 through verse 4 of chapter 5, we were urged to live lives that are consistent with having a new life in Christ. And what that means is that we are to put off attitudes and conduct associated with our old life and put on attitudes and conduct associated with our new life in Christ. In Ephesians chapter 5, verses 5 to 21, the Apostle Paul is concluding what he has been saying since verse 14 of chapter 4.

[1 : 36] It was my intention to cover verses 5 to 21 this morning, but I decided that I would break it into two parts. We're just going to cover this morning verses 5 to 14, and then the Lord willing, next week we will cover verses 15 through 21.

But in these verses that we are looking at this morning, the Apostle Paul raises and warns us about a sobering reality.

And the sobering reality that he warns us about is the issue that people whose lives give evidence that they have not been converted still believe that they have an inheritance in the kingdom of God. And the process, the Apostle Paul gives us a clear reminder of what genuine conversion looks like. Brothers and sisters, it's one thing to be deceived about things pertaining to this life, but it's another thing to be deceived about something that has eternal consequences.

And so may we all hear these words from the Apostle Paul this morning in Ephesians chapter 5, verses 5 to 14.

[3 : 15] Please follow along as I read. For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous, that is, an idolater, has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

Let no one deceive you with empty words. For because of these things, the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

Therefore do not become partakers with them. For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.

Walk as children of light. For the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true. And try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.

Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of the things they do in secret.

[4 : 44] But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible. For anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore, it says, Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.

Let's pray together. Father, we pause in this moment, asking that you would speak to our hearts.

That you speak through the pages of Holy Scripture this morning.

And Lord, we know that your word is like a laser-guided missile that is able to come to us exactly where we live and find us and speak to our hearts and penetrate our hearts and convict our hearts. And I pray, Lord, that you will do that for us this morning. Lord, where there are those who need to be assured of their salvation, I pray that as we consider what genuine conversion looks like, they will grow in assurance and conviction.

But, O Lord, where there would be any who have fallen into deception, any who are under deception about what it means to be genuinely converted, I pray that you would bring conviction,

and most of all, Lord, I pray that you would bring them from death to life.

[6 : 25] And have your way and speak now through the preaching of your word, we pray. In Jesus' name, amen. When we look at these words, they can seem somewhat out of place given the fact that the Apostle Paul is addressing the church, the Ephesian church.

And by extension, he's addressing all those who profess to belong to Christ. And in a nutshell, what the Apostle Paul says is this.

Do not be deceived. Those who have been truly converted renounce darkness and walk in light.

Do not be deceived. Those who have been truly converted renounced darkness and walk in light.

I think that's a faithful summary of what we find in these verses, especially when we consider what Paul has been saying up to this point.

[7 : 45] One of the things that happens when we are in an extended series like this is we can somehow forget what went before. But let us not forget what has gone before.

What has gone before is that Paul begins this letter by reminding us of the glorious gospel of God. How he, before the foundation of the world, chose particular people for salvation and how he, in time, brought them to that salvation.

And how he assembled them and joined them together in a church with people who are different.

Breaking down all the barriers and all the hostilities and all the prejudices and making them into one people.

people. And it seems like what Paul then goes on to do after doing that, he does that in a nutshell in verses 1, in chapters 1 through 3.

He comes to chapter 4 and in chapter 4 he begins to tease out the implications of that. He begins to help us to see that those who fall in this category of having been predestined for salvation and saved by God their lives are supposed to reflect a certain way of conduct and their attitudes.

[9 : 15] And that's what Paul has been doing since chapter 4. He has been laying out what it looks like to truly be converted. And this was especially clear in the last two sermons.

That we have this new life in Christ and we are supposed to live in a particular way. And as Paul is concluding it, it seems like he really looks us in the eye.

He looks us square in the eyes and he says to us, do not be deceived. Those who have been truly converted renounce darkness and they walk in light.

and he does that because the sub-reality is that there are those who claim to be converted. They claim to belong to Christ but they walk in darkness rather than light and hence the warning that comes.

and the truth is all of us this morning would do well to posture ourselves with humility and to hear these words because they're not here as an empty warning.

[10 : 43] They are here as a sober warning. all who claim to belong to Christ need to hear this warning because if we truly belong to Christ what this will do for us is it will cause us to grow in our assurance of salvation and that's a good thing.

but if we do not it will undermine a false assurance and that's a good thing because then we are able to come to the knowledge of the truth as it is found in the Lord Jesus Christ.

So for those who are taking notes I've structured my thoughts around three key words taken from the text and what we are called to do regarding them and they are number one deception and Paul says guard against it.

Number two darkness he says renounce it. And number three light he says walk in it.

So let's consider the first word deception. What Paul says to those who profess to belong to Christ is guard against it. Guard against deception.

[12 : 14] What is the deception that we are called to guard against? We find it in verse five. It's the view that people who are sexually immoral or impure or covetous have eternal life.

That's the deception. Notice again how Paul says it. For you may be sure of this. It is as if he is saying this is with certainty.

There is no exception to this. You may be sure of this that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure or is covetous that is an idolater has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

Paul's warning is rooted in reality. Paul is not just thinking this off of the top of his head. Paul's warning is rooted in reality.

The reality in his day was that there were people who were living unrighteous lives and claiming to belong to Christ. And friends, there are people in our day who are living unrighteous lives and they

are claiming that they have an inheritance in the kingdom of God.

[13:41] Paul says, you will be sure of this. No exception. No exception. And this is why, despite the fact that there is no exception to this rule, that there are people who live unrighteous lives and still believe that they have an inheritance in the kingdom of God.

Why is that? Why do they do that? Why do they, in the face of such a very clear and explicit warning and a statement, still believe they have an inheritance in the kingdom of God?

And the answer is they are deceived. They are deceived, and this is why Paul says to us in verse 6, let no one deceive you with empty words.

Those words are empty. Because of these things, the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

So Paul actually is reminding us about two particular deceptions. The first deception is the belief that people whose lives are marked by immorality, by unrighteousness, can at the same time be children of God and have an inheritance in the kingdom of God.

[15:09] That's the first deception. But the second deception is that it is without consequence. The second deception is that, well, there's really no big deal about that.

Paul says, no. He says, those who live that way, they are going to have the wrath of God poured out upon them.

And the big deception about this, especially today, is that God is too loving to send anybody to hell. I'm sure you've heard people say, not the God I serve.

The God I serve is a loving God. He is not the kind of God that you preach. And they tell us that we are hateful. They tell us that we are fire and brimstone preachers.

And all we're simply doing is saying what God says in His Word, that those who live that way, the wrath of God will be poured out upon them.

[16:20] People are deceived in thinking that God is going to overlook sin, but the fact is that He is too holy to overlook sin, and because of that He does not overlook sin, and pouring out His wrath upon sin is an expression of His holiness.

sin. And notice that those upon whom God's wrath is poured out are referred to as sons of disobedience.

This means that their lives are marked by disobedience. This is who they are. This is the way they live. They are sons of disobedience. And so in verse 7, what Paul says to us is don't be partners with them.

Do not participate in the same kind of conduct. And we know the saying, birds of a feather flock together. If you are participating in that kind of conduct with those who are the sons of disobedience, Paul says, then you will be partners with them, and the wrath of God will be poured out upon all.

who live in that disobedient manner to God. The kingdom of God will be denied to all those who live in that manner.

[17:49] And when we think about the kingdom of God, we're thinking about eternal life. Having it now and participating in the kingdom of God to the extent that we are able to now, but also in the future, in the fullness of the kingdom of God, those who live this way, have no inheritance in the kingdom of God, now or in the future.

Now, I think it's important for us to note that the apostle Paul, in verse five, is not giving us an exhaustive list of the kinds of people who would not inherit the kingdom of God.

God. We know this by just looking at scripture broadly, and one particular passage that makes this very clear is 1 Corinthians chapter 6, verses 9 to 10.

Paul says the same thing in a slightly different way. Listen to how he says it. Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived.

Neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God.

[19:08] Notice, a different letter, different group of people, in a different locale. The first warning is to the Ephesians, this warning is to the Corinthians, and he says the same thing.

Do not be deceived. Again, why? Because people are deceived. But notice that Paul gives a longer list.

He calls some other kinds of sinners who will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the all-encapsulating description that he gives is the unrighteous.

He says that in the very first part of verse 9, do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Those who live unrighteously, those whose lives are marked by unrighteousness, that is who they are, that is what they do.

He says it doesn't matter what they say, it doesn't matter what it looks like, it doesn't matter how the world turns, it doesn't matter how the church changes, because there are whole churches now that are now endorsing and embracing the very things that God's word says, people who do this, they're not going to inherit the kingdom of God.

[20 : 30] And they are going contrary to it. So the list is not exhaustive. Now I think it's important for us to notice what Paul is not saying.

He's saying a lot, and what he's saying is very sobering, that those who live unrighteous lives will not inherit the kingdom of God. What Paul is not saying is that if a believer commits one of these sins, or even one or more of these sins, he is, he or she is excluded from the kingdom of God. Instead, what Paul is addressing is those who practice sins, like the kinds that he is referring to, but sins of unrighteousness generally.

And I think it's important to make a distinction here. He's not talking about those who may commit these and even other sins. He's talking about those who practice these particular sins, those whose lives are marked by this ongoing sinful conduct.

And this is important to remember because the true believer may fall into sin, even repeatedly, these sins, whatever other sin comes to your mind, the true believer may fall into those sins.

[22 : 16] sins. But the true believer will not practice those sins. The true believer will not build those sins into his or her life.

And when they fall into sin, when they sin, they will repent. repent. But there's no repentance on the part of the person whose lifestyle is in unrighteousness or some act of unrighteousness.

They are marked in that particular way. Listen to how the apostle John says this in 1 John 3, 6 through 9.

He writes, No one who abides in him, in Christ, keeps on sinning. No one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him.

Little children, let no one deceive you. Different author, different apostle, different audience, says the same thing.

[23 : 31] Let no one deceive you. Why? Why are we being told again and again, let no one deceive you? Because, brothers and sisters, people have been deceived and people are deceived today in believing that it matters not how they live.

They can simply profess to belong to Christ and then they can live any kind of how, any way they wish to live, and it doesn't matter.

Paul says no, John says no, the word of God says no. Verse 8, Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil. For the devil has been sinning from the beginning.

The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. No one born of God, and this is the key term, no one born of God, makes a practice of sinning.

For God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. Two times in the same verse, at the beginning, at the end, we are given the reason that the true believer cannot make a practice of sin.

[24 : 54] Though he or she may fall into sin, and though he or she may fall repeatedly in the same sin, they will not build that into their lives, and they will not continue in that.

They cannot continue in that because they've been born of God. They've been regenerated. They belong to God. There's something in our hearts that convicts us.

There's something in our hearts that makes sin detestable, even when we find ourselves stumbling into it, falling into it. There's something in our hearts that reminds us, this is not who I am.

This is not who we are, brothers and sisters. We cannot continue to sin if we belong to God.

And if we are continuing to sin and we believe that is okay, then we are deceived. And I believe this morning we need to hear the word of God afresh in this regard.

[26 : 07] So how can we guard against deception? I want to suggest three quick ways that we can do that. First, we need to take the word of God seriously. Those who fall into deception where they believe things that God's word clearly contradict are not taking his word seriously.

And we grow in our knowledge of God. God's word will search us and convict us and guide us when we spend time in his word, when we read his word, when we study his word, when we take his word seriously.

Can any one of us envision a day where we just forget to eat food or we forget to do other things that are just a rhythmic part of our lives?

See, God's word needs to hold a prominent, essential, necessary place in our lives. We take it seriously. And when we do, his word will guide us.

His word will sanctify us. His word will convict us. And then second, we need to take sin seriously. Brothers and sisters, we're no match for sin.

[27 : 49] And see, the devil is not going to come with his first move against us to say commit adultery or commit fornication or steal.

It's going to be more in a staged process, step by step, a drawing away and enticing over time. And this is why I think it's helpful to take to heart these famous words by John Owen, the deceased Puritan preacher and theologian.

He famously said, be killing sin or it will be killing you. Be killing sin or it will be killing you.

And brothers and sisters, if we by God's grace are killing sin, if we by God's grace each day of our lives are seeking to kill sin in an ongoing way, it will never be true of us that we are practicing sin.

[29 : 06] Never. Never be true of us that we are practicing sin because we are daily trying to kill sin. Otherwise, it will be killing us. You know, one of the ways that we don't take sin seriously is that we can be cozy with the seed of a very serious sin and not be able to connect the dots as to where that leads.

when we take sin seriously, we by the grace of God will see the seed of it. We will be able to see where this leads. One of the things that happens for some Christians is over time as we grow and as we mature, we believe that we can handle certain things.

We believe that we can watch a movie that's filled with profanity, for example. And I tell you, it is astounding how we feed our souls things that are contrary to our souls and many times we don't realize the effect on our souls until that seed has germinated and that seed has produced fruit. yesterday, one of our neighbors had some kind of an event and just there was a whole lot of noise for hours and they're playing one crazy song.

I mean, and you know what? I woke up this morning singing that song in my head. Not by intention. I didn't go and find that song to listen to it, but that is the way things get in our heads.

[30 : 57] Brothers and sisters, we must guard our souls. We must take sin seriously. We're no match for sin. We have to be killing it or it's going to be killing us. And the third thing I would say is we need to take accountability seriously.

And by this I mean that we need to, in community, open our lives to one another. Open our lives to brothers and sisters. And in a gender specific way.

Brothers to brothers and sisters to sisters. It will help us to guard against being deceived about living sinfully and thinking that is okay.

See, when we're committed to opening our lives to one another, just that commitment alone will steer us in moments of temptation. Because we realize, you know what, I'm committed to being open.

I'm committed to having an open life with my brothers or with my sisters. And just that commitment will cause us in the moment, by the grace of God, to say no to ungodliness and yes to righteousness.

[32 : 13] But when there's no commitment to walk in the light with brothers and sisters and to be accountable, we slip short and we do all manner of things. Let's take accountability seriously.

So that's the first word. The first word is deception. We're called to guard against it. The second word is darkness. We're called to renounce it. Notice in verses 8 to 11, Paul addresses the issue, well the issues of darkness and light.

He does it simultaneously contrasting them with one another. But I want to separate them, hopefully, so that we can see the transformation from darkness to light that comes through conversion.

Notice what he says in verse 8. He says, for at one time you were darkness, but you are now light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.

At one time you were darkness, but now you are light. Walk as children of the light. Look also in verse 11. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.

[33 : 35] Here in verse 8, Paul is referring to our life before conversion. And notice what he says. He says, at one time we were darkness. Not that we were walking in darkness, although that was true.

He says we were darkness. darkness. We were children of darkness and trapped in darkness. And what Paul is doing is he is touching on the personal transformation that takes place in the lives of those who have been converted. He is referring to the darkness that they were in past tense. He says you were darkness. At one time you were darkness. No longer darkness, but you were. Now I know that quite a number of us grew up in Christian homes.

And we led pretty moral lives, not necessarily by our own choice, but really by our parents raising. And then there are some of us who have had a different experience before coming to Christ.

[34 : 50] We have given ourselves in a fulsome way to the world and all of its pleasures. But you know, despite our different experiences, whether we were more on the moral side of being sinners or we were more on the moral side of being sinners, the description of all of us is the same.

We were darkness. We were darkness. And brothers and sisters, this is more than just a factual bit of information that Paul is giving to us.

Paul is telling us of the condition that we were in, that hopeless condition that we were in.

We were darkness, walking in darkness. But we are no longer. Something has happened. And when we think about this, when we consider this, that we take the time to slow down and think about these words that the Apostle Paul is putting before us, it's reason for rejoicing because we're no longer darkness.

darkness. Yes, we may still sin. But we are no longer darkness.

[36 : 15] But it should also fill our hearts with compassion because we should be reminded that many of our lost friends and family members and co-workers and so many others who don't know the Lord Jesus Christ, they are still darkness.

They are darkness. And though our lives can expose the darkness in their lives because we are of the light, only God can transform them from being darkness to being light.

Only God can do that. And this brings you to my third and final word, which is light.

Paul says we are to walk in it. Paul talks about light in contrast to darkness.

And I want us to take in now the fullness of what he says in verses 8 to 14. He writes, For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.

[37 : 31] Walk as children of light. For the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true. And try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.

For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible.

For anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, Awake, O sleeper, and rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.

Paul says several things about light. First, in verse 8, he says, We were once darkness, now we are light in the Lord. These are pretty strong ways of putting it.

Again, he is not saying that we were walking in darkness and now we are walking in the light. He says, we once were darkness and now we are light. And I think his whole reason for doing this is to bring us face to face with the reality of what conversion is.

[38 : 42] Conversion is a turning from darkness and becoming light. It's a transformation that takes place.

And as a result, we are to walk as children of light. And in verse 9, he tells us how we can have evidence that we are children of the light.

That we are indeed light. He tells us in verse 9 where the fruit of light is. It is found in everything that's good and right and true.

And I think we should all consider this morning, those of us who profess to belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, whether this kind of fruit marks our lives.

And clearly, this is not with perfection because there are times when it is almost as if a shadow comes over the light that we are and we're not beaming that light in the fullness as we ought to.

[39 : 56] But that shadow ought not always be over our light to cause us to actually be darkness rather than light. And so the question is whether our lives are marked.

Not perfectly, but sufficiently. clearly that it will be identified as light by that which is good, that which is right, and that which is true.

By the truth. By that which is good. And that which is right. And if we see any evidence of that, any evidence of that, it is a sign that we have moved from being darkness to light.

There is no good, there is no right, there is no truth in darkness. But there is good, and there is right, and there is truth in light.

another thing that the Apostle Paul says about the children of light, those who belong to the light.

[41 : 21] Another bit of evidence that we are of the light and not of the darkness is in verse 10. He says, the children of light try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.

What is pleasing to the Lord is a concern for them. And here Paul is moving away from what is plainly written in the Word of God, because what is in the Word of God doesn't necessarily need to be discerned, because it is plain there for us to see.

But he is speaking about this posture of heart, this disposition, where as we make our way through life, sometimes we come into situations or decisions we need to make, and it is not so explicitly clear what we should do, because we can go to a certain book and verse of Scripture to find what we should do.

But the posture of our heart is I want to please the Lord. That's the fruit of being in the light. The fruit of darkness is that we want to please ourselves.

We want to gratify ourselves and we live unmindful of the God who created us. Children of light try to discern what would please the Lord.

[42 : 54] And they do so perhaps by praying, perhaps by seeking godly counsel, or even by both. And then in verse 11, he says that children of light are to take no part in the unfruitful work of darkness.

Again, we saw that earlier. But instead, they are to expose them. We expose the unfruitful work of darkness by the fact that we are children of light.

Just by being children of light, we expose the unfruitful work of darkness. Those who are darkness and walking in darkness are aware, conscious, sometimes even in a hostile way, of the contrast between their lives and the lives of those who have been transformed from being darkness to light. darkness. But while we may be able to expose darkness, we are not able to transform darkness. Only God is able to do that. And Paul seems to pick up on this. This seems to be what he is saying in verses 13 and 14.

[44 : 18] And he seems to be referring to this transformational effect that happens, that brings a person from darkness to light.

Look again at how he says it in verses 13 and 14. But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible. visible. But then he says in verse 14, for anything that becomes visible is light. What is he saying? First he says anything that is exposed by the light becomes visible. And then he says anything that becomes visible is light.

And I think understood together in the context of this passage, what Paul is referring to is that process of being transformed from darkness to light.

Again, the light of the lives of the children of light may cast light on darkness. Secret, hidden things, bringing them to light.

[45 : 43] But God is the only one who can transform those who are darkness into light. And again, this seems to be the sense of what Paul is saying because how he concludes it by saying, therefore it says, awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead.

and Christ will shine on you. This is a quotation which is difficult to understand in terms of its origin because it is not found explicitly as a quotation in any part of Scripture.

Though in the Old Testament there are different verses of Scripture that have parts of what is contained in this quotation. and so it has led a lot of theologians to say that this is from some other source and some believe it is actually a part of a baptismal hymn that would have been sung at the time of someone's baptism talking about what baptism really depicts and what it represents.

and what it represents is conversion. And the words are awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead and Christ will shine on you.

and this is the reality of every single person who is generally converted. Every single person who is generally converted has been raised from the dead.

[47 : 30] They didn't raise themselves from the dead. There is the voice of God, the voice of His Spirit that gives new birth that says, awake, O sleeper, awake, you who are in the slumber of death and arise from the dead and Christ will shine on you.

And this is not like almost two separate events where one may happen, the other doesn't happen. No, if you arise from the dead, the light of Christ will shine upon you.

And that light of Christ will transform us from darkness into light. It's the conversion power of God that comes to those who belong to Christ.

Brothers and sisters, we are not converted by renouncing darkness and walking in the light. Indeed, that's an impossibility. We can't do it.

And that's why there has to be this voice, there has to be this one who has the authority and the power to speak to the dead sinner and say, awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead and Christ will shine on you.

[49 : 06] now, we're not converted because we renounce the darkness and walk in the light. We, because we have been converted, because we have been converted, because God has given us new birth and brought us from darkness to light, we renounce darkness and we embrace the light and we walk in the light as children of the light because of what he has done.

But our doing it at best will make us religious people. Our doing it at best may make us better than some sinners around us.

if we just decide because of wisdom or because of whatever reason that we're going to stop doing particular things and we start to renounce some acts of darkness, at best, it makes us a better sinner.

But the work that needs to happen to bring us from darkness to light is a divine work. Only God can do it by his spirit. that speaks to the human heart, the dead soul and say come forth, Christ will shine on you.

And because of that, brothers and sisters, we who say we've had that experience, we need to walk in the light. We need to embrace the light. We need to embrace that which is good and right and true.

[50 : 45] And we need to seek to please the Lord. God, in our day-by-day living, because if we do otherwise, and still believe that we belong to the Lord, we have come under deception.

And it is the worst kind of deception. Paul says to not be deceived. The unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Let's not believe empty words, brothers and sisters. Let us believe the full word of God about how those who are genuinely saved are supposed to live.

Let's pray together. Father, we thank you for your word this morning. Lord, thank you that there are those of us who have experienced the call of your voice, saying to them, awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.

God, we thank you for that. Thank you that you have transformed us from darkness to light. Lord, we pray now that you would do the same for those who are outside of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[52 : 24] Lord, would you call them forth from the sleep of death, from spiritual death, from spiritual darkness, and call them into light.

And may the light of Christ shine on them in undeniable ways. And may they live lives with the evidence of that which is good and right and true, seeking to discern what is your will, that they might please you.

Lord, do your work, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. I invite you to please stand as we sing grace.

Grace. Your grace that leads this inner home, from death to life forever, and sings the song of righteousness by blood and not by marriage.

Your grace. Your grace that reaches far and wide to every tribe and nation has called my heart to enter in the joy of your salvation.

[54 : 19] By grace. By grace I am redeemed. By grace I am restored. And now I freely walk into the arms of Christ my Lord.

Your grace. Your grace that I cannot explain not by my earthy wisdom the prince of life without the name was traded for this sinner.

By grace I am redeemed. By grace I am restored. And now I freely walk into the arms of Christ my Lord.

let praise rise up and overflow my song is out forever for grace will see me welcomed home to walk beside my Savior God.

By grace I am redeemed. By grace I am restored. And now I freely walk into the arms of Christ my Lord.

[56 : 07] By grace I am redeemed. By grace I am restored. And now I freely walk into the arms of Christ my Lord.

By grace I am redeemed. By grace I am restored. And now I freely walk into the arms of Christ my Lord.

Let's pray together. Before I close this in prayer I just want us to take a moment to contemplate what we've heard this morning.

Brothers and sisters it is light and it is darkness. There's no in between.

There's no gray. We are light or we are darkness. If we are light it is because God has been gracious to us.

[57 : 36] He has brought us from darkness to be light. And that's where we are this morning.

May our hearts be filled with gratitude that we're no longer darkness but we are light. And let us hear God's word light.

That since we are light we are to walk as children of light. Brothers and sisters let us not give a hint of our former lives by walking in the light rather than walking in the darkness.

Let us walk in the light. We're here this morning and you are away from the Lord. You don't know Christ the Savior. Remember that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.

He lived the perfect life that none of us could live but are required to live. And he died a substitutionary death that we all deserve to die.

[58 : 56] And he did that so that God can be both just and merciful at the same time.

And he might be able to credit the finished work of Jesus Christ living for sinners and dying for sinners to the account of sinners.

sinners to come to him. And so I echo that call this morning and say come to Jesus.

Whether you are present or you are watching online, come to Jesus. And in Jesus you will find one who is cricked apart in all of your sins.

Father, work in our hearts this morning as only you can. Those who belong to the light, would you help us to live as debtors to your mercy, remembering that we did not bring ourselves from darkness to light.

[60 : 13] But you did that when you called us forth. And oh Father, work in the hearts of those who do not know Christ.

Bring them, speak to them in the same way you have spoken to us. Bring them from death to life and from darkness to light. And now may the peace of God and indeed God himself sanctify you completely and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He who calls you, he who has called you from darkness to light, is faithful and he will do it.

He will preserve his own to the very end. Amen. Amen. God bless you.

You're dismissed. If you need prayer, it would be my joy to pray with you. Please come. Oh, the day when free from sin, I shall see thy lovely face.

[62 : 00] Full of rain in blood-washed linen, how I'll sing thy suffering grace. Come, my Lord, no longer tarry, bring thy promises to pass.