

# Christ's Mission and Man's Decision

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[ 0 : 00 ] If I may, could I ask that we sing that, not what your hands have done again, at the end. Thank you. I don't, every week, change the order of the service, but I don't think I do, do I?

No, I don't. I don't. But I got to tell you, the words to that song just fit perfectly with the text. I want you to understand that it's the text that drives our music, and it's the text that drives our singing. So we come to the text.

In John chapter 3, we're going to look at verses 17 through 21. And as we take up this passage this morning, I would be remiss if I didn't labor for a moment to plead with you to do that, which is probably my most common request, and that is that you pray as the preaching of the Word of God goes on.

I am fully persuaded that prayer is a vital part of preaching, in that it is the work of the Spirit of God, both to declare the truth and then to have the truth strike hearts and make a difference.

[ 1 : 39 ] And I can tell you that Tim Knoyer has, on many occasions, sat through sermons, the start of which I thought, well, I've got to last for another 40 minutes or whatever, and then the Spirit of God has tapped me on the shoulder.

How many of you know what the Spirit's tap is like? It's not a physical tap. It's just like, hey, Bubba. And it's like, okay, I got this. I'm supposed to pray now and ask you to work in my heart.

Yes, and the Spirit does. So I'm going to ask that you join me as we pray and that as I preach, you pray. And I don't mind if your eyes are closed. I won't have any suspicion.

I mean, after all, you didn't have to come to Sunday school, so I know you're bright-eyed and bushy-tailed. And so if your eyes are closed, I'm assuming that you're thinking, oh, Lord, help him. I'm there. I buy it. Let's pray.

Let's pray.

[ 2 : 58 ] Even as it does today, the frailty of mankind. And you had these words penned for our edification, not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.

And so this morning, as we take this sacred passage in hand, we are mindful that we are coming to a text that is for our profit and for the glory of Christ.

And it is our humble desire and our confessed dependence on you that you would be exalted.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, as we look at John 3, verse 17 through 21, we are continuing the study of the book of John.

And I want to remind you that John is not like the other synoptic gospels in that it is not a gospel that gives us a great deal of detail about Christ's life here on earth.

[ 4 : 12 ] It is fundamentally a theological discourse. And I don't want to use the word theological to cast it in this heavy, gloomy light. But it is instruction about the nature and character of Christ.

If you were actually looking for one verse that would give you a summary of why the book was written, you would find it in John chapter 20, verse 31, where the apostle says, Hey, listen, all these things that I've gathered, and he only tells us about eight different incidents about Christ in the early flow.

He says, These things are gathered so that you may have the information on which to rest your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God and the Savior of the world.

And that believing, you might have eternal life. And so as we work our way through this passage, one of the things that we're going to see is this recurring theme of John's gospel is profoundly evangelistic.

And John's gospel is profoundly edifying for the believer. And the two pieces come together. There's another thing that we are going to find in particular today.

[ 5 : 26 ] And that is that we are going to be challenged by the doctrines of the responsibility of mankind for his rejection of the sweetness of the offer of salvation.

And on the other side, by the reminder that really salvation is a work of God. And when we try to put these together in a perfect and symmetrical way where we've got it all figured out, the truth of the matter is that our minds kind of short out.

I'm reminded of Isaiah chapter 55, verse 8. You probably know it by recitation and not by the text. It says, My thoughts are not your thoughts. My ways are not your ways.

You see, we have a tendency of being rather singular. We can pick up on, All right, all right, that's what I'm supposed to do. Or, All right, all right, that's what God does. And being able to put the two together requires a broader scope and grasp of truth than our little pea brain can handle.

And so we kind of have a tendency to get wiggled out on one side or the other. How many of you understand where I'm talking about so far? Okay? The truth of the matter is, is that often in Scripture, in order to help our frailty, we find that, I just don't want to trip on this and embarrass myself, kick, kick, kick, kick.

[ 6 : 45 ] There we go. Okay. In order to help us with our frailty, remember, we see one thing or the other, right? Often in Scripture, you find that when God explains something about His sovereign work in a situation, He also helps us understand the dynamic of our own responsibility.

We're going to see that today. I want you to look this morning at Christ's mission and the gospel's division.

And in essence, what we are going to do this morning is answer two questions. Number one, why did God send Jesus? Why did God send Jesus? I do love that as my go-to Christmas question.

You know, whenever I'm involved in a conversation with people in the proximity of Christmas, and we get into this business of salvation, and after all, that's where some of our conversations should go, I don't think you can force them, but hey, you ought to be praying and looking for opportunities to talk about why Jesus came.

And in the course of conversation, when I come up with this issue, I always like to ask that real trick question, why did Jesus come? I mean, if salvation is just a matter of a little bit of self-improvement, or, you know, helping at SPCA or something like that, I mean, hey, Jesus wouldn't have had to come for that.

[ 8 : 10 ] And the truth of the matter is, is that we're going to answer, we're going to find the Bible answer to the question, okay, why did God send his son? The second one is this, and if Christ came to save men, why aren't all men saved?

So we're going to look at those two pieces this morning and put these together and have a good Bible understanding of it. So let's begin by looking there in verse 17, for God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

I have to tell you, as I began praying and meditating about this verse, earlier in the week, and just so you understand, generally what happens is when I go home on Sunday, guess what I'm already beginning to do?

I'm beginning to pray and meditate and think about it. I'm generally about two weeks out, just a little wiggle at the verse that I'm going to look at next week. This morning, as I was having devotions in prayer, I was studying, as a sidebar, just kind of took a look at the passage in Philippians that we're going to come to next week.

It's just the way my mind works, okay? I'm not sure how it works, it just does. And so here, as I've been meditating and just chewing on this thing here in verse 17, why would God tell us that?

[ 9 : 32 ] I mean, that's an obvious... How many of you understand that asking the question why, with a prayerful deliberation, and also a dependence upon the Holy Spirit, is an intelligent thing to do in the process of figuring out what the Bible has to say?

Why is it there? And so here is John telling us, hey, God wants you to know why Jesus came. And I want you to recognize, as we look at this there in verse 17, that God's first thought towards mankind is merciful.

Is merciful. That's the way He is. Now, it would help us to understand that that is a challenge for us in some senses because the truth of the matter is is that there's an inclination in our heart to not always be very merciful.

Would you agree with that? I mean, let's try this. You're driving, and the person in front of you is not driving responsibly, at least according to your set of rules.

How many of you understand that our set of rules is very flexible? And so when you have an opportunity to exercise mercy or judgment, what is the first inclination?

[10:47] Off with their heads. Thank you, Mark. It's like, yeah. What story does that one come from? That's not a Bible story. Okay. I'm teasing, Mark. But, you know, the truth of the matter is that here is God wanting us to understand something that's against our flow and our nature.

He wants us to understand that this business of the reason that Jesus came is foundational and against the grain of our thinking.

So why is it so important for us to grasp that Jesus came to save men and not judge them? Stop and realize that judgment for sin is actually an understandable expectation and one that is woven into so much of common sense and thinking all around the world.

No religion that I can think of that really has a long history does not have some thinking regarding the matter of judgment. Now, the way in which judgment is accommodated may vary, but nevertheless, the idea that consequences flow out of decisions and actions is woven throughout our thinking.

Even our common vernacular, the way in which we communicate, is marked by this. You know, you've heard the old saying, what's going around comes around. Have you ever heard that one?

[12:15] Or what about that? What you sow is what you reap. The idea underlying that is that you get what's coming to you. You did bad, you're going to get bad. And that's the way it is. And the idea that judgment is out there in some form or another kind of lurks on the horizon in all of our thinking.

The Bible also helps us understand that this business of understanding judgment is not just a matter of common vernacular, but it's also something that the Bible is very clear on.

Romans chapter 1, very interesting that unbelieving men and women really do have a sense of judgment. We may not think so, but they do. Romans chapter 1, verse 32, it says, men knowing that those who practice sin deserve to die, does that make sense?

They still go on and do those sins. Another passage would be Luke chapter 23, and here is Jesus between two thieves who are hanging there on the cross.

And remember, one of the thieves is kind of railing at Jesus. Hey, if you are the man, the son of God, come down off the cross and do something for us too, you know. And what does the other thief say?

[13:26] Does anybody remember? Hey, we're getting what we have coming to us. Another illustration would be in the Jewish culture in that day, when a lot of people died, they thought that the death was the consequence of divine judgment.

Remember when Jesus said, hey, all those guys who got squashed when the tower fell on them, don't you just think that they were worse sinners because you need to repent as well. All of us stand condemned before a holy God.

Probably one of the most sobering pictures of men's attitude towards judgment is over in the book of Revelation. So I want you to look, if you would turn in your Bible to Revelation chapter 6, verse 16 and 17.

Talk about some of the more sobering Bible verses regarding the heart of man. I mean, after all, the attitude of some is that, oh, well, men have some problems, but just with a little bit of tweaking, a little bit of helping, they'll get there.

Listen, everybody, smile at me because I want you to look at me just for a second, okay? The book of Revelation makes it clear that God will judge sin.

[14:44] That's what the tribulation will indicate. And here's the other piece in that. And in the full face of the evident judgment of God against sin, men for the most part will not repent.

Revelation chapter 6, verse 16 and 17. And we find that as these horrible things are happening, the seals, et cetera, it says, calling to the mountains and rocks, fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne.

And now mark this part, and from the wrath of the lamb. For the great day of their wrath has come and who shall stand? Instead of saying, I have it coming, I deserve it, and your judgment is just and holy, men will, instead of coming to grips with the reality of their sin, will resist that fact.

Let me have you look at another passage. Revelation chapter 16. How many of you ever just thought to yourself, well, if guys would just make it a little clearer, or if people could just figure it out, it would be okay?

Remember I said the book of Revelation is a very clear indicator that what men lack is not more information. Revelation chapter 16, verse 9.

[16:04] They were scorched by the fierce heat, and they cursed the name of God who had power over these plagues. They did not repent and give him glory. They knew who was causing the heartache.

This was not just the providential, circumstantial happenings of accidents that, whoop, bang, there it is. Well, is it my fault? Is it your fault? No, they knew this was God doing something and trying to get their attention and help them understand the absolute hardness of their heart.

Verse 11. And they cursed the God of heaven for their pain and their sores, and they did not repent of their deeds. Verse 21.

And great hailstones, about 100 pounds. How many of you have seen a hailstone the size of a softball?

I never have, other than on Google. You know, it's like, whoa. I mean, can you imagine hailstones the size of softballs? Now, this is not a softball-sized hailstone.

[17:06] This is a 100-pound chunk of ice. And it says here, they were falling from heaven on people, and they cursed God for the plague of the hail because the plague was so severe.

Now, why were they cursing God for his judgment against them? Because of the hardness and the darkness of their heart. So I want you to understand this morning, as you look, going back to John chapter 3, that when John the apostle opens up here in verse 17 and says, hey, listen, let me make it clear, God did not send his son into the world to judge the world, but to offer salvation.

He wants the unbelieving world to understand the heart of God as merciful and gracious, tender, long-suffering, and compassionate, and God's desire is that not any should perish, but all should come to everlasting life.

And so I want you to understand this morning that the Spirit wants us to marvel at the mercy and the grace of God who offers salvation to us. I trust that that is one of the things that gives you that buoyant sense of confidence and hope that you know for certain that salvation is of the Lord and there is no one that is beyond the shadow, beyond the pale of his ability to save.

Earlier in the week, I had the opportunity of sharing the gospel with two men had come to clean out my drain. You buy a new house and you find out that the drains are plugged. You know, there are lots of surprises in home ownership.

[18:40] And so I figured that they needed supervision. I'm down there, you know, just watching and figuring out, you know, if I'm going to be a drain cleaner later in my life, I need to have a little bit of experience. So I'm on the job watching them, grinding it out.

And you know what? I did not wear my turned-around collar. I was in blue jeans and a gruddy-looking old shirt. But somehow or another, we got to talking about, guess who?

First about life. And I mean, they were right there. Tattoos on both arms and pretty impressive. And you know, guy said, hey, look here. I mean, there was so much ink.

I am not a tattoo expert, so I just want to... Do you see it? No. What is it? It's a cross. Okay. Well, it was a pretty fantastic cross.

It wasn't one that was traditional. It was very unusual. And they said, do you see that? Well, that I could see. It was a devil. And I said, yeah, I got that one.

[19:39] That's a devil. And then somewhere in the midst of just hundreds of other little dots and things, he said, do you see that? I said, no. Those are two eyes. That's me. He says, and the devil's fighting for me and Jesus is fighting for me.

And I said, well, I'll tell you what, it's better than that. I want to tell you the sweetness of the gospel is this, is that God sent his son not to condemn the world, but that through him all men might be saved.

And I want you to know this morning when you think about this verse, the thing that the spirit of God wants us to understand is that God sent his son for our sakes, to be our savior, to help us in the absolute despair of our life.

And so there's a sense in which this repetition, and you have to admit that it is repetitious, I mean, what's it say in verse 16? For God so loved the world, right? And then in verse 17, God didn't send his son into the world to condemn the world.

Connected. So we understand that in this repetition there is a desire in the heart of God to make it clear that men need salvation and Christ came to be their savior.

[ 20 : 54 ] Well, if Christ came to be our savior, why are not more saved? I mean, that's a fair question, isn't it? I mean, after all, who is Jesus?

Let me give you a couple illustrations so you have this fixed in your mind already. You'll remember that when the water into wine deal pulled off, remember, Jesus didn't ask all the people who were sitting around, do you think I can do it?

Do you believe I can do it? What do you think? Do you think I can? No. Shambang, what happened? Just ordinary Palestinian water became top shelf wine.

And how did it happen? It happened by the power of God. And so when you think about this business of salvation and you stop and recognize God sent his son to be the savior of the world, why are not more saved?

Well, actually, I want you to recognize in the following verses, beginning there in verse 18, carrying on down to 21, we find that Christ is actually a divider. The light of the world draws, but also repels.

[ 22 : 06 ] So let me break down the next few verses into several very simple truths. believers. First, we find in verse 18 that God divides mankind into two separate groups, believers and unbelievers.

Look at the verse. Whoever believes in him, that's the believers, whoever believes in him is not condemned. But whoever does not believe is condemned already because he has not believed in the name of the only son of God.

And so, you may not be thinking about this this morning, but here is the absolute gospel truth. All mankind falls into two categories, one of two different groups.

Those who have trusted in Christ and those who are rejecting him. Those who've come to faith and those who refuse the call and the work of Christ.

So, let's think with this, about this just for a moment and recognize that a believer is one who believes that God sent Jesus to be your Savior. That's what is meant in verse 18. Believes in him.

[ 23 : 15 ] It's like, yeah, I believe there is Jesus. I mean, remember over in James it says, you believe there is one God, you're doing well, even the demons believe and that doesn't rescue them. So, what is it saying really when it says that salvation is the matter of believing in Jesus?

It's not just believing in the historical fact, but it's coming to grips that Jesus is real and he is real to you and he makes a world of difference in your life.

Believing in his name means believing that you need a Savior and that you recognize you have no hope apart from his finished work on the cross.

Why is it that I have abiding confidence that the day I draw my last breath, I will wake up in eternity and I will enjoy the presence of Christ?

Not because I look back across the record of my miserable life and say, well, you know what, Tim, at least you've been on the uphill journey and you're getting better all the time. Well, that's the work of God, not me.

[ 24 : 19 ] And I want you to understand that when I stop and think about it, it's Christ who saved me. I want you to recognize something else as you look at verse 18. The unbeliever really rejects the truth that God sent his Son to be the Savior of mankind.

Look at the passage. It says, whoever does not believe is condemned already because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. It's stunning for us to really stop and ponder just how arrogant this rejection is.

It's not just among jihadis in Iraq or in Afghanistan or rebels in Africa. America, the depravity of man abounds everywhere you turn.

One of the things that I was really struck by, just deeply affected by, was the fact that I was doing some research and came across the fact that the state of Ohio ranks around about fifth in human trafficking and sexual slavery.

Can you imagine that? Let me say that again slowly so you can appreciate what's being said. There are how many states? This is not a political question. The answer is 50, okay? So some of you are wondering, you've been in Washington too long and you don't know what the answer is.

[ 25 : 33 ] It's 50. And we are where? Fifth. You stop and think, the depravity of man's hearts is evident everywhere you go.

Everywhere you go. It follows then, given the truth that God sent His Son to save men that we want to know why. Why is it? Why would men not believe?

Why would they reject salvation? The answer that follows actually is there very clearly for us in verses 19 through 21. And as we follow the verses, we understand, for one thing, that men do not

just wander away to their own destruction ignorantly in the dark.

I want you to recognize this. Men do not just slip away and fall into eternity in darkness with complete oblivion of their condition.

Just as being a fool, I want you to follow very carefully because this is worth thinking about. Just as being a fool. Now what's the difference between doing foolish things and being a fool? How many of you know the difference?

[ 26 : 44 ] Smile at me if you do. We all on occasion do foolish things, okay? A fool is someone who's making a career choice to stay that way.

Got that? A fool is someone who's making a career choice to stay that way. I mean, we've all done boneheaded things. But then when the Holy Spirit and our family and officers of the court or whatever else come aside and give us a little gentle tap to say, not good, I got that.

I'll work to change. A fool is someone who makes a career choice. I'm going to keep doing that. I don't care what you say. It's what I want to do and hey. I want you to understand rejecting Christ is a deliberate and conscious choice.

Listen to the indictment of Scripture against man. You look there in the passage going back just a little bit to John 1, verse 4 and 5. It says, the light has come into the world.

There in verse 19 we see the same thing. It says, the light has come into the world and in essence what John the apostle is doing is reciting what he's already said. So I want you to turn back just for a second to John 1, verse 4.

[ 27 : 55 ] It says, in him was life and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. Instead of stepping into the realm where truth and grace operate, men consciously and deliberately choose the dark.

Their deliberate choice is not an accident or an act of ignorance. It is a willful act to suit their wicked hearts. I remember many years ago early on in my ministry we had a break-in out in the garage out here and this was before we had a lot of security lights here on the property and I remember that those who were involved in caring for the property suggested, well, we need to put a security light up.

I said, how much does that cost a month? It was \$12 back then. I thought, not on your life. We're not spending \$12 on some light. Now why, you look around, how many do we have?

In fact, when one of them burns out we get an email from somebody saying, did you know you got a light turned out? Put another bulb in. You know, it's like, why is it that light makes a difference? It's because men love darkness.

Men love darkness. Thieves hate the light. Thieves hate security cameras. One of the interesting things is to go into a store and watch people who you're wondering about their intentions.

[ 29 : 24 ] You know, those who just are out there to shop, they're kind of buzzing around looking at shelves. Do you know there are people that specialize in loss prevention? Do you know what loss prevention is? Stopping people from stealing.

Do you know what people who specialize in loss prevention watch? People who are looking up. Do you know what people are looking up for? Not for the coming of Jesus.

They're trying to figure out where they can get away with it. Okay? And so I want you to understand as you think about the truth that the Bible makes it clear that men love darkness when the heart is pure and the conscience is clear, there's no desire to hide from the light.

Where sin is, there's a desire to hide. Furthermore, as you look in the passage, go back to John chapter 3, let's just mark what we read there in verse 20. It says, for everyone who does wicked things hates the light.

Hates the light. I'll never forget years ago when I was in seminary, I was a paint contractor and there was a home that had burned under suspicious circumstances.

[ 30 : 34 ] You've heard the saying that spontaneous combustion is where the mortgage papers and the insurance papers get too close together. Have you ever heard that? Okay? Well, this home was an absolute dump.

I mean, it was the dumpiest dump that I can remember, at least at that time. And for whatever reason, I was hired to paint in this house. And the guy who hired me, the insurance agent, said, listen, all I want you to do is put it back in the shape it was.

Yeah, I saw that look. It was a challenge for my conscience to do that, but that's what he did. I remember going into one of the rooms and deciding that, you know, I mean, I had to paint the

windows so I thought I'd lift the window just to see, you know, painters want to know whether the windows work before they paint them.

Okay? And so I remember the window was kind of halfway open so I moved the window up and there were cockroaches that were just, I mean, they were back to back and belly to belly across the window sill.

No, the sill is on the bottom part. What is it? Pardon? The sash. I mean, and when I moved that, I mean, there are like about 30 or 40 cockroaches that suddenly sprinted for the dark.

[ 31 : 52 ] I thought to myself, ah, I can't believe I'm going to work here. And one of the things I did, I thought, you know, if they don't like light and I don't like them, I think the idea is what?

More light is better. Here's the deal. It's not just cockroaches that don't like the light. Sinners don't like the light. Sinners don't like to be exposed.

Sinners want to hide. I kind of chuckle when I think about politicians. Isn't it standard for politicians to tell you that their administration is going to be the most transparent? I mean, it's like, really?

Men who engage in lies hate the light. Now, I want you to look at the closing part. We can understand wicked, disobedient, rebellious hearts don't want to hear the truth.

Turn it off. I'm out of here. There's something very interesting in verse 21. But whoever does what is truth comes to the light so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.

[ 33 : 13 ] God. Remember I said that where you find the responsibility of the heart of man and the sovereignty of God in salvation in close proximity, they're hard to put together.

But God puts both pieces there. You look and the answer to the question, why are men not saved? Well, because they choose the darkness. That's what it says.

They hate the light and they choose the darkness. They don't want their deeds exposed. But listen to verse 21. Give you a summary of it.

It says it this way, believers come to the light so that God can be glorified. The believer does not prance into the light to get credit for being a wonderful person.

Do you understand that? That's what this verse is telling us is that when men come into the light, they're coming into the light so someone else gets credit. I think that's pretty important to understand and you need to put your finger on it, okay?

[ 34 : 16 ] See, verse 21 is not saying that those of us who were good people, we kind of march into the light and say, hey, do you see how good I am? I'm just the most wonderful person.

I am the best neighbor. I'm the kind of person that you want to spend time with. I am just sweet and lovable and I'm always going to think good things about, you know, that's not it.

That's not it. The believer walks into the light and this is what the passage says. The believer walks into the light so that it can clearly be seen that what has happened is a miracle of God's doing.

That little part towards the end of verse 21 says, so it can clearly be seen that his works have been carried out in God. Turn in your Bibles to Colossians 1 verse 29.

Colossians 1 verse 29. And we're going to come back to John so stay with there. Don't take your finger out of there but we're going to look at Colossians just for a minute. I love this text.

[ 35 : 28 ] Colossians 1 verse 29. For this I toil, struggling with all, what's the next word? Look at it. Not my face.

I'm not growing a horn. I mean, look in the Bible. Okay? For this I toil, struggling with, what's the next word? His.

Energy that he powerfully works within me. How does Tim Kenoyer know he is saved? It's because I see the evidence of someone else helping me do things I couldn't do myself.

Go back to John chapter 3. Let me put it this way for you and have it stick in your mind. When the believer tells his story, the hero is Jesus.

I want to make that clear. this Tuesday, I will preach my father's memorial service.

[ 36 : 45 ] I think it's reasonable for a son to think highly of his dad. But I want you to hear me say it this morning. My dad's not the hero of his story.

Jesus is. John chapter 4, verse 29, and we'll close with this. I love the story of the woman at the well.

I like it because her life's a mess. serialized marriage and prostitution are not radically separate. Do you follow that? And here's a woman who Jesus comes to and he says, hey, you need living water. And she says, well, give it to me. And he says, go get your husband. He says, I don't have one.

She said, you're right because you've been married five times and you're shacking up with somebody now. And then God brings salvation into her life and she's saved.

[ 37 : 54 ] And do you know what she does? She runs into town. Now, what does she say when she gets into town? Do you know? I love this part. I love this part. Look at the passage.

Verse 29, so the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. How could that broken and wicked woman say that apart from understanding the complete forgiveness of Christ in her life?

Do you understand that? So what should I do? I want you to understand the passage is simple. God sent his son into this world not to condemn the world. There will be a day of judgment and Jesus will be the one who's judging. But at this time as you hear the presentation of the sweetness of the gospel, it is this, Christ Jesus came to save you from your sins and to take away the complete burden and guilt and shame that Satan has afflicted you and terrified with you.

Terrified you with. So I want you to understand this morning the plea of scripture is this, be reconciled to Christ.

[ 39 : 26 ] Come to him. Understand that Christ Jesus came to be your savior and it would be a horrible, eternally condemning choice choice to walk away from the gift he offers you this morning.

Let's close in prayer. Our Father God as we take this passage in hand and we just revel in the sweetness of Christ, we who know the Lord Jesus stop and recognize that the hero of our story is not us.

we were broken, ruined on our deliberate way towards hell and you in your kindness found us and drew us to the cross.

And this morning that offer of salvation through complete forgiveness in the Lord Jesus Christ is available to those who sit here this morning under the hearing of the word of God and sense the prompting of the spirit that says you don't have to stay there.

You don't have to carry that burden of sin anymore. You may have complete forgiveness but you have to humble yourself. You have to come as a broken contrite sinner that says I deserve the judgment of a holy God but I hear the word that Christ Jesus died in my place and I want his blood attached to my account.

[ 41 : 04 ] And that's our prayer this morning. In Jesus' name. Let's stand together.