

But God

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[0 : 0 0] Well good morning brothers, sisters and friends, a joy to worship the Lord together. I just realised the one time our intimation sheets are probably the busiest they've been we're still at home, so I have them tonight.

Finally, thankfully actually, the intimation sheets are for this week and for next week too, so if you miss it today you can grab it again next week. That's because, God willing, as of Tuesday we are on annual leave for a few weeks.

All the information is on the sheet in terms of who's doing supply for us on these two Sundays off. We're thankful to the Lord for people who are willing, men especially, who are willing to give their time and who are willing to do the study and do the work to come and to preach for us.

We're especially thankful to these guys who are not trained, technically speaking. They haven't got the theological training that ministers have, but we all know and we've all been since the first day we came to church.

Thankful for elders and others who are willing to preach and it's proof for us that God's word is sufficient. It's not about training. It's not about reading books.

[1 : 0 9] It's not about having access to this or access to that. God's word taught and preached with a heart full of love and respect and care for the gospel. God uses that.

We give thanks to God for all who are willing to lead the services. So the plan is we're away from the 14th to the 26th, so we're two whole weeks off.

The rest of the information sheet is filled up with our Hope Explored plans. Just to say there's these invites to the back door. Please take them. My hope is when I come back, all the invites are gone.

On the invite, there's the dates and the times of the three meetings. That's a reminder. This is a chance for anyone here, but also our friends and family and neighbours.

It's just the simple gospel. It's why do we care about Jesus? Who is Jesus? What's so good about him? And it takes people right back. It strips away all the stuff we've added onto it.

[2 : 0 9] Right back to who is Jesus? Why does he matter? And why should we care? Just three weeks in the T'Haley throughout September. And it's a great way to invite friends or neighbours or anyone in the village who you've had conversations with perhaps.

Who have shown some interest in church or some interest in the Lord. It's a very easy way for them to come in a completely relaxed atmosphere. To come and chat and learn who Jesus is.

We're looking for volunteers for that. Three or four volunteers. Men and women would be great. And again, to speak to myself for that. There's no pressure. I'll be doing all the heavy lifting for that.

All the volunteers have to do is to come and to be there. Be a friendly, welcoming face to those who come along. The rest of the intimations will be on the sheet this evening.

Our prayer point this month is praying for hope explored. That is our main desire. We see the Lord work through that. But one intimation not on the sheet, but should be on the sheet, is that God willing, a week today, Sunday school begins again.

[3 : 27] So pray for the children as they come back. Pray also for the parents and the grandparents. And this is a good chance for anyone in the village who has kids who are not in Sunday school.

And quite often people would love their kids to come along, but they just don't know that they can. They don't know that they're allowed. They don't know that they're invited to bring them along. And again, speak to Ben. And I'm sure Sunday school will be more than happy to accept some new faces.

Although it does bring some logistical problems. But we praise the Lord for the new faces we've had. And praise him for this next session. That's all for today in terms of intimations.

Just one prayer point for us. This week in the West Side and based in Carly, OM, the mission group, are up. And they're doing a week's worth of witnessing, a week's worth of mission work based in Carly, but covering the wider area around Carly as their plans.

There's a group of 15 or 16 people up from Jamaica, Germany, a few from the UK, traveling from across Europe and across the world to come and to share and work with the Lord.

[4 : 40] They're doing door to door. They're doing groups. They're doing discussions. They're doing public talks. They're doing anything and everything they can do in the West Side to glorify and to show people the hope that can be found in Jesus.

So we pray for OM and we pray for that week. We pray especially this week for Claire MacLeod. She's from Lewis. She's a daughter of Malcolm MacLeod who runs Steadfast Global.

And she works for OM down in Wales. And providentially, she is in charge of this mission. So she's actually up home for those two weeks. Not on holiday, but she's up home running the mission.

So we pray for OM on the West Side. And we pray for Claire as she does that mission. We're here to worship the Lord. All our worship today is from Sing Psalms. So that's the front section of our psalm book.

Sing Psalms in the front section of the psalm book. Singing first of all then in Psalm 40. Sing Psalms Psalm 40. That's on page 50.

[5 : 47] Psalm 40 on page 50. We can sing verses 1 down to verse 5. Psalm 40 on page 50. I waited long upon the Lord.

He heard my cry and turned to me. He raised me from a slimy pit. And from a mire he pulled me free. He set my feet on solid rock. A place to stand both firm and broad.

He put a new song in my mouth. A joyful hymn of praise to God. Psalm 40 verses 1 to 5. To God's praise. Stand and sing if you're able. Psalm 40. Psalm 40.

Amen. Psalm 40. I waited long upon the Lord. He held my cry and turned to me.

He raised me from a slimy pit. And from a mire he pulled me free.

[6 : 58] He shed my day on solid rock.

A place to stand both firm and broad. He put a new song in my mouth.

A joyful hymn of praise to God. Many will look with all the fear.

Our God, the Lord, the Lord, the Lord, we die. Blessed are you who cast the Lord.

Who shams the night and calls the night.

[8 : 16] The wonders you have done, O Lord. Our God, the Lord, the Lord, the Lord, the Lord.

Our God, the Lord, the Lord, the Lord, the Lord, the Lord, the Lord, the Lord.

beyond our power to now let all be clear let's join together now in a word of prayer let's pray Lord we thank you for the great privilege we have of worshipping you like this today help us as we ask for your blessing and ask for your peace in this time of worship help us to understand that what we do is not just a mere weekly pattern what we're doing just now is drawing before you the only true and living God, the only God worthy of our worship, the only God worthy of eternal worship help us then to understand just now we come to a place where you are present we know for certain you are here today here today in your fullness not because of the building not because of even any particular thing we are doing but you're present today because your people are here worshipping you and your word lets us know that where your people are there you have made your home in us and you work through us and you live in us now and forever we come then aware of that reality the place we are standing on is holy ground for this is a time of worship set aside from the rest of our week and we bring that week before you just now we bring just now before you the pain for many this past week we pray especially remembering those of our brothers and sisters those of our friends and those of our number and those in the village who are mourning this past week as we saw both at a wake and a funeral as we saw the building almost full we are aware that there's so much heartbreak happy memories yes but happy memories tainted by the fact that the life is now gone the time is now gone we are so aware

Lord as providence shows us and as the reality of death shows us that our lives at times feel so short our time feels so fleeting Lord help us then to be wise and to allow the voice of death to speak to us and to understand as it speaks to us it reminds us to make full and good and judicious use of our time bring just now before you the rest of the burdens of this past week the family worries the family burdens the health worries the health burdens financial burdens perhaps physical and mental worries and burdens Lord you know the full range that we take before you today we leave these things just now at the throne of grace that place where you tell us to come and to find grace and hope and help in time of need praise now Lord for the responsibilities which hang over us this coming week as we begin this new week we are aware of our many things which perhaps are heavy in our minds we bring them to you just now too things which feel so small perhaps for us and feel so things we would fear to bring to you in prayer but things which are weighing down in our minds we come to you the God who cares who cares about the small things of our lives who is so involved in our very existence that nothing is as it were too small for you we thank you Lord that to this day those of us here who know and who love

Jesus as our saviour but we can know for certain that he cares for us he who this whole universe was made through and made for he who sustains every distant galaxy and star right down to every atoms which make up our daily lives that he cares for us he is not far away he is not distant but he is so close to his people and he showed that love and that closeness by entering into this world by taking on himself human reality human flesh by becoming like us in every single way apart from sin Lord we thank you for that for we have a saviour who cares a saviour who understands a saviour who knows we don't come just now to a saviour who is distant but we come to one who the word reminds us is closer and greater than a brother than the best of brothers he is closer than even that pray just now

[13 : 38] Lord for the unspoken pain in this place today situations worries stresses and strains that perhaps only you and the individual knows about we bring that before you just now pray just now for those who are missing from our number today and those who are on holiday Lord we ask you give them a time of peace a time of blessing thank you Lord for times of holiday that we can enjoy time at home or time away and rest and relax and remember remember the fact that we have a God who permits his people rest a God who gives his beloved sleep pray just now for those missing from our number who have been missing for many months and many years those who desire those who would long to be here but through age or through illness and for other various reasons are kept from gathering as often with us as they like to be pray for them just now especially Lord be with them help us to be your hands and feet towards them as we pray for ourselves we remember the upcoming plans we have of us a few weeks looking at who

Jesus is as we plan to have these hope explored sessions we ask Lord you'd give us the zeal to understand that this is our chance to invite those around us to come hear about Jesus as we've heard recently from your word how can they believe how can they be saved if we do not first hear help us Lord then to be a willing people to willingly engage to willingly hand out invites whether bits of paper or by our own words not just Lord hope explored but help us every single interaction to be praying for ways to point our friends and family and neighbours to Jesus to the one who cares the one who can save the one who can transform them and we ourselves today are living examples of that we're examples that you can take anyone in any situation you can transform us and mould us and make us more and more like the sun help us Lord then today to understand what it is we're doing here to understand this is a time for our benefit to come around your word we ask that your word would encourage us help us not just to be hearers but help us to be doers of the word help us to be faithful servants at home in this village we do pray Lord for this village for every single home from the Glen to Gary pray for every single individual represented in this village pray for the many homes and many individuals who do never and perhaps have never prayed for themselves we pray for them today those who have no understanding those who have never heard the beauty or the hope of the good news of Jesus we ask Lord you would use us as witnesses and bring in gentleness bring in love bring with clarity and boldness also the good news that is found in the Saviour that there is hope and life in him and in him alone help us Lord then this day to keep our minds focused on your word we thank you for it as we pray for ourselves we pray for the wider gospel work across our island especially this week we pray Lord for the work of OM as they bring a mission team to the west side

Lord it humbles us it humbles us to see the reality that there is outside mission coming to help us and so it should humble us but also give you thanks for it the reminder that we are not on our own we are part of the worldwide church of Jamaicans and Germans Brazilians Americans and others from across Europe come to to serve and come to be your hands and feet as we are on the west side as we pray for gospel blessing the proverb goes on pray just now for the wider presbytery pray just now for the wider island across all the denominations pray just now for every congregation that seeks to worship you and spirit and truth with that in mind we pray just now for our brothers and sisters next door pray just now that the gospel would be heard in their midst today and they would be encouraged and built up by it pray for ourselves for mindful we are part of a worldwide church mindful we are part of your people across every land every culture every language we thank you for that reminder a reminder that we in so many ways have so many blessings that our lives are so easy in terms of service to you pray just now for those this week who have faced persecution who have faced anger who have faced great evil simply for daring to share the good news we pray for brothers and sisters just now once more in central India as issues and problems continue there as your people face aggravation face having their homes burnt down and their churches burnt down simply for sticking to the gospel for daring to declare there is one king there is one lord there is one saviour there is one way of hope and life peace there is one way to god and that is only the lord jesus christ pray lord for his brothers and sisters we cannot enter into their sufferings but we can remember them before you in prayer you know them and you care for them in a way we will never understand thank you lord the word goes out today across our island our nation and this world and wherever your word goes out you will use it for your glory there is not one person here today by accident not one person here today by routine for every single person you have brought us here today to hear your word once more to pray lord across the world we pray also for our own nation pray lord for peace as we see that the stirrings of more and rest this week lord help us to be wise in our words help us to be wise in our views help us lord to pray for the peace and prosperity of our nation pray lord for those in leadership over us to give them wisdom pray for those in the council pray for those in holyrood those in westminster we pray also as your word tells us to do so we pray also for our king pray lord for wise leadership and for good leadership we also pray especially that your name would be known and glorified by all in leadership over us that they would come to bow down to king jesus and understand that though their earthly authority may be great their authority ends and we all come to jesus the one who has ultimate authority over his own creation help us lord then to concentrate on your word to come just now with hearts and ears and minds open and ready and willing to listen keep the evil one we ask far from us forgive us for our sins we confess sin before you in our words our actions our thoughts sins which cause us at times to as it were hide our faces from you help us lord then to look to you knowing that we deserve nothing from you

but you give us everything through the finished work of our saviour in his name and for his sake we ask these many things amen let's turn to reading God's word Ephesians chapter 2 that's on page 917 of the church bibles Ephesians chapter 2 page 917 it's pretty easy to flick past Ephesians page 917 we're carrying on our series looking at through the gospel in the alphabet the ABC's of the gospel Ephesians chapter 2 let's hear together God's word and you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked following the course of this world following the prince of the power of the air the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh carrying out the desires of the body and the mind and were by nature children of wrath like the rest of mankind but God being rich in mercy because of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead in our trespasses made us alive together with Christ by grace you have been saved and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ

Jesus so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace and kindness towards us in Christ Jesus for by grace you have been saved through faith and this is not your own doing it is the gift of God not a result of works so that no one may boast for we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh called the uncircumcision by what is called the circumcision which is made in the flesh by hands remember that you were at that time separated from Christ alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise having no hope and without God in the world but now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of

[23 : 46] Christ for he himself is our peace who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two so making peace and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross thereby killing the hostility and he came and preached peace to you who are far off and peace to those who are near for through him we both have access in one spirit to the father so then you're no longer strangers and aliens but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of a household of God built in the foundations of the apostles and prophets Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone in whom the whole structure being joined together grows into a holy temple in the

Lord in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the spirit and then give praise to God for his holy and his perfect word let's again sing to God's praise again from sing psalms and psalm 92 sing psalms psalm 92 we can sing the first version of that psalm psalm 92 a sing psalms psalm 92 a it's on page 122 sing psalms psalm 92 a we can sing verses 1 down to verse 6 how good it is to praise the Lord to sing a joyful song and to your name oh God most high make music all day long to show your love when morning comes your faithfulness at night with music of stringed instruments your praises to recite psalm 92 a verses 1 to 6 to

God's praise praise to good you to is to raise the Lord to sing a joyful song and to your name oh God for child with music on beyond to show your love when morning comes new beautifulness at night with music music in music your place is to music and music for

God united sing to sing for you sing for joy when I'm so new the water to not follow the water to not follow me her great I hope you words for you thought the king found down the sex that the one that not mercy for still your love yes now we turn back just for a short time to the chapter we had Ephesians chapter 2 a text we looked at I don't know when I think quite close to the start of our time together

Ephesians chapter 2 and looking really at verses 1 down to verse 10 taking for our text to help us the words of verse 4 it was the start of verse 4 but God being rich in mercy because of the great love of which he loved us even when we were dead in our trespasses made us alive together with Christ by grace you have been saved again this is the second part of our series now I said this last week I keep starting series just before I go on holiday one year I won't do it but it started by a brand new series we're looking at the ABCs of the gospel the very basic building blocks of the gospel we started last week with where we must begin although it's not easy we must begin with the fact for A all have sinned all have sinned that is at the start of what scripture shows us quite literally at the start after creation we saw in Genesis 3 we saw that Adam and Eve they fall they are ejected from the garden removed from the garden and we see sin enters the world and with that pain sadness separation and death

[29 : 55] I can remember last week really as hard as it was we ended with no real gospel message so we said there is no hope with sin there is no there is no plus side to preaching about it we just reminded ourselves that without God but if by ourselves we are born in sin we sin we remain in sin and if we die in that sin and nothing changes then we face a whole eternity then separated from God it was a heavy week last week it was a heavy message but it's God's word and therefore we preach it and we share it and it's true we said last week although in general it was a hopeless sermon there was a glimmer of hope but yes sin it ruins our own relationships with each other it ruins families it ruins relationships it ruins friendships but sin causes ultimately all the disease and pain we're not saying that those who have disease are sinners and let me watch that sometimes people get caught up there all have sinned we're all sinners but sometimes as wrong it is and it comes from that a health and wealth gospel that we do not hold to sometimes people think that if something goes wrong in someone's life then surely that means they've done something bad it's still in our culture that thinking at times to our shame it's in our culture and Jesus actually addresses that and we'll see that in the future

Jesus addresses that no illness ultimately comes from sin our bodies began decaying from Genesis 3 to today the world begins decaying ultimately it's just decay and disease and death both now and forever that is the message of sin but we saw last week there's a glimmer of hope right at the start Adam and Eve are ejected from the garden but before he removes them God makes a promise to them doesn't he?

and God says to them but from your line one will come who will crush crush the head of the serpent and from that glimmer of hope we then see the promise all the way through scripture that God will send a saviour to rescue his people from the effect of sin that brings us this week then to our next letter B but God but God all have sinned but now but God now for us to get to there we have to go back a wee bit first as we come to look at these verses initially just three simple headings for us looking at verses 1 down to verse 10 first of all looking at what and where we once were so what and where we once were what happened and where we are now and going forward where we will be so where we once were what happened and where are we now that's our three simple headings and friends for those here who we love if as of yet you can't say that Jesus is your Lord and Saviour if as of yet you can't say that you know him or that you love him then as you listen to these verses the reality is that you as of yet don't go past verse 3 in some sense but we come to verse 4 onwards this is what you could have this is what's been prepared for you by the gift of the Lord if only you would come and you've heard it so many times but hear it again if only you would come and accept the free gift of salvation that's found in Jesus so first of all then what we once were verses 1 down to verse 3 roughly as Paul reminds the Ephesians this small church as he reminds them and we'll hear

God willing eventually in our act series in the evening we'll meet these Christians as Paul reminds them as they're going through a complicated time as a congregation Paul writes to them and brings them back to basics he says think what you once were you were once what dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked following the course of this world following the prince of the power of the air and so on and so on before Jesus what were the Ephesians before Jesus what were we before Jesus what are some of us still today we know this heard it before but it's just we won't hear it again God's word we said before is blunt at times because God's word is always true and at times the truth is not the easiest thing to preach or to hear the Bible is quite simple before we are saved before Jesus we are dead quite simply dead spiritually completely dead and you were dead and the automatic response then is well I'm not you know I'm quite alive

I've got a life and a family and a job perhaps I had a career I've got good friends perhaps I've got children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren you know I'm active and alive in the village and in many ways you are very much alive you are very much active you are making full use of the person God made you and the gifts God gave you but spiritually none of that matters spiritually the Bible is clear you are either alive in Jesus or dead outside of Jesus I said this before but it's often good to remind us often the unhelpful illustration is used and those who use it mean well but it's unhelpful it's often used for children's sermons really the illustration is that imagine you're swimming in life and you're struggling to swim well and you're going under and you're bobbing up and down and your hands go up and Jesus is like the lifeguard the life ring that pulls you up as you're drowning there's truth to that

[36 : 56] Jesus does pull us up Jesus does rescue us but we're not drowning we're not struggling we're not kicking water we're gone we're dead spiritually without Jesus you're dead as Paul makes clear there is nothing we can do nothing we can do to make ourselves somehow get closer to God and we know this is in us it's deep inside us the idea that if I live a good enough life if I attend church perhaps even do family worship if I am a good citizen if I'm a good community member if I'm faithful in my readings perhaps if I'm faithful in supporting the gospel cause all good things but if I can do these things then at the end of my time the Lord would just let me in and say oh well you've done good enough you can come in you won't find that anywhere in the pages of scripture we do find there's something far different

Paul says without Jesus and before Jesus spiritually you are dead without hope and without help in fact Paul goes even deeper than that it's even harder to read perhaps than that you are dead in your trespasses and sins but then there's another layer that separates us from God following the course of this world following then the prince of the power of the air the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience you do your own things also you're swayed by the world around you the Bible the Bible names three things that are against us the flesh ourselves the world around us and the devil and here Paul makes all things clear to us in and of ourselves you want to make yourself look good what we call self-righteousness you think that you can do it you think you can get close enough to God for him to let you in you think well I know God is good and I am not at times but I try and be good and that will do the job

God says no it's not good God requires it's perfect and not one of us can ever be perfect we know that ourselves quite simply ourselves but also the world as Paul says is against us and we follow the world and we every one of us every one of us we all take in the spirit of the age whether we realise it or not we are people of our own time we are people of our own generation also then this third layer that separates us from God that attacks us that keeps us away from him it's the devil we follow our own heart we follow the world but also if we're outside of Christ outside of Jesus Paul says we are following the way of the devil the spirit to the power of the air it's a title that the devil has you think man it's unpleasant to hear it's deeply unpleasant to hear that you think who are you?

who are you to stand up there and tell me I follow the devil? and I assure you if it wasn't there I certainly wouldn't be saying it to you willingly but it's there so we preach it it's there so we believe it it's there so friends you need to hear it we follow our own hearts and our hearts lead us the wrong way we follow the world and the world leads us the wrong way we follow it realising the way of the evil one and he of course very happily leads us the wrong way as we were saying last week outside of Christ it's just dark it's just hopeless it's just helpless there's nothing good there you live a life trying your best but without Jesus what's the point?

what's the point? you live you die and what's the point? that sounds bleak it sounds dark but Paul is getting somewhere we're getting somewhere that's the message of sin that's the gospel of sin that's the good news of sin the good news of sin is live a good life now but then live the opposite forever but thankfully it doesn't stop at verse 3 here we see the beauty of who our God is verse 4 but God but God now in many ways we could easily fill in the rest of the sentence ourselves perhaps and say well but God because he saw how bad we were because he saw the fact we ignore him and ignore him and rebel against him but God because he is just and we are not because he is good and we are not he decided to destroy us or he decided to never listen to us he decided not to save us what does verse 4 actually say to us?

[42 : 32] but God being rich in mercy because of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead in our trespasses he made us alive together with Christ by grace you have been saved by grace you have been saved for me personally this is one of the most beautiful sentences phrases in the whole of scripture this is what takes us from A of all have sinned that hopeless reality that takes all of us in that hopeless reality that takes all of us in to now this hope-filled promise which is a promise also to all of us the love of God and the mercy of God friends God is rich in mercy and we think his mercy perhaps does it extend as far as me surely that doesn't mean me surely I can't be included in those God has shown his mercy to what is we said last week if you remember that Greek lesson we've had a few times before that word for all it's Panta all have sinned all have sinned who is the good news of Jesus for?

who is the hope of Jesus for? what is the hope of Jesus for? again and again in scripture we're told it is for all who listen all who come all who believe all who put hope and trust and every time that word all is used it's the same word all have sinned everyone everywhere has sinned all are invited to come to Jesus everyone everywhere who hears the invite it is for you to come your trust and your hope in the Saviour who made you who knows you and has come to rescue you what's incredible is not just God's mercy the undeserved kindness of God but also we see its love but God being rich in mercy because of the great love with which he loved us we covered this in last week at times we're uncomfortable to hear that aren't we?

to hear God loves us and at times that love of God it's often misused and it's applied in a way that scripture does not apply it people will take God's love and assume it it's a blanket statement but God's love is set on and given to those he calls his own and who are his?

those who come to Jesus he loves us enough that whilst we are still in sin whilst we are still in darkness he sent his son to live the perfect life to die the death on the cross take on all the sins all the wrath I should say of all the sin of all his people so that we can come and know for certain if we come and say whatever manner of words you use the words don't matter the Lord knows the heart and I said this before but I said it again if you haven't yet prayed really to the Lord and asking him for salvation then why not today?

why not today? whatever is stopping you it's not real whatever is stopping you it's either the evil one or your own heart or the world and we are told already in the first few verses these things are less God is eternally greater have you ever asked the Lord have you ever come from the Lord and said Lord I don't know what to say I don't know what to do my understanding perhaps isn't the best my heart isn't always in the right place I don't know what I want but I want to know Jesus I want to be saved I want to have him as Lord and Saviour whatever wording of that you choose to use the Lord knows the heart have you ever actually prayed that prayer?

[47 : 00] well if not, why not? I feel almost rude to say this but I'm glad our preachers before me have said the same thing including our great reformed forefathers, reformers should I say it is okay as Calvin once wrote to one of his friends who was struggling with coming to the Lord it is no bad thing to hold God to his word it is no bad thing to hold God to his word God says I will hear you when you cry to me I will rescue those who come to me those who ask for salvation through my son they will have it but why aren't you doing it?

why haven't you done it? outside of Jesus it is death with Jesus coming to Jesus you see the hope and the love of God what's incredible is you might say well I can't come I'm too bad I can't come I've wasted too many chances already I've been sitting in church perhaps for years I've heard the same gospel for years surely the Lord does not want me well note from the verses here when God set his love on us when did God desire and decide as it were to save his people even verse 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses he was alive together with Christ the gospel is not try your best first and then God will do the rest of the work for you try and spruce yourself up try and look the part or sound the part and then God will take you and do the rest the gospel is the gospel is whilst we were still sinners whilst we were still dead whilst we were still away from him

Christ came to live and die for us that whilst we had no care for him perhaps whilst we hated him he had the sure and certain plan he would come and live and die to secure us as his own it's amazing the amount of legal terms we have in scripture and I'm certainly no lawyer I don't know if I told you this already when I was staying in Leif in the flat studying in the college once at half five, half six in the morning it was early, I was still in bed anyway the door gets banged on I think, oh man, what's this?

I had nice enough neighbours in the block of flats but bang on the door it sounded very official so I go to the door and there at the door are one police officer and two bouncers or two men dressed in black suits I go, man, what's going on here?

and I was informed I owe, was it £12,000 or £13,000 on my electric I've been here for a year so I think, well, I don't think I do I've been paying it every month anyway, they're adamant I do and they come in and I prove to them that I am not in fact I won't say his name, but this other gentleman who lived there before me who still owed a fortune by the time I left he owed 20 grand apparently, but anyway if that was my name on that sheet though if it wasn't a mistaken identity I then was faced out of nowhere needing to pay back a debt quite literally, I could never pay back if my name was on that sheet I had no right to say you're wrong because I did in fact in that situation where I would have owed them 10 grand or 15 grand and I had no recourse and no hope and no help and before I knew it

[51 : 04] I'd be in grave trouble and before I knew it I'd have nothing to stand on Friends, someone has paid the price for us it's not mistaken identity it is over arching identity where Jesus says I have taken on to my very shoulder the full wrath of God I have paid the price in my body on the cross on all the sin of all the people as the Bible tells us in that verse which blows our minds he became sin on the cross for us he became sin on the cross for us why?

so that we might be clothed and covered in what? his perfection his righteousness all a work of grace there is nothing we can do it's not us giving a wee bit and the Lord is the rest no, it is all a work of free love and free grace verse 8 and verse 9 for by grace you have been saved through faith this is not your own doing it is the gift of God not a result of works so that no one may boast it's not saying try hard and then maybe at the end God will say well you've tried very hard I'll let you in no, saying come with nothing not your works, not your goodness, not your badness come with nothing and say Lord I've got nothing to give you will you have me?

will you save me? will you love me? the beautiful thing is it's a free gift isn't it? it's a free gift for by grace you have been saved through faith and this is not your own doing it is the gift of God a gift is handed to you it is wrapped for you it is thoughtfully purchased and planned for you all you have to do is receive it all you have to do is receive it and we have over complicated at times perhaps the gospel the gospel is that simple it's a free gift the Lord has done all the work for you all we have to do is accept that gift we once were dead in our sins what took place God and his love and his mercy he rescues us, he saves us, he gives us life through Jesus and very briefly then what is our future?

verse 7 so that, we're saved so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace and kindness towards us in Christ Jesus right now the message is come and believe in Jesus and right now have hope and peace and life right now come and know what it is to know God has his love set on you and the Christians here today, that's what we know the Christians here today know that God looks on us with care and love and peace and he calls us his own he calls us his sons and daughters right now the Christians here today can say that Jesus Christ, yes he is king and he is Lord but also he is our older brother but also he is our friend all that is glorious right now the Christians here today we know we will never see hell our sins have been paid but there's even more than that awaiting the Christian that is, as verse 7 says an eternity ahead of us so in the coming ages and again just to make clear for us that wording it's quite clearly English but also in the Greek it's more clear in the coming ages that's an unending age in the unending ages to come we could say in the unending ages to come we will be shown the unending riches of grace the unending riches of kindness that is shown to us in Jesus we are promised life now the truth is for every Christian here in one sense yes of course we will die we know that this past week we've been made aware of that but in one sense every Christian here now the second you are saved you are now on your eternal journey now yes there will be a change one day we will be given a new resurrection body but we know that Christians right now who pass away our Catholicism tells us our confession tells us based on the scripture but as they pass away just now we go the soul goes, the spirit goes to be with God who made us awaiting the great final day of our resurrection we're given our resurrected bodies but in one sense right now brothers and sisters you are sitting beside and behind in the front of those you be with in glory what a thought we are promised innumerable immeasurable eternal beauty and riches of God's grace the good news is good for now but also the good news is good news forever for the unmeasured eternal ages to come and the sense here is growth

Christians think how much you love God just now think how much you love your Saviour just now and think then if you can God willing in ten years time how much more you'll love him then think a thousand years a million years a million times a million years forever without end as your knowledge of him grows your knowledge of him grows and because he is eternal your knowledge will grow eternally about him as your love for him grows and because he is eternal your love will eternally grow for him and year after year and for our years in glory age after age of eternal ages we will grow in our love for him our understanding of who he is and also our understanding of his love for us last week we reminded all have sinned all have sinned this week we see all have sinned yes but God being rich in mercy because of the great love of which he loved us even when we were dead in our trespasses has made us alive together with Christ by grace you have been saved our genuine prayer is everyone here would know that life of Christ what it is to have that hope and the trust in that mercy for ourselves put our heads in that word of prayer

[58 : 12] Lord we thank you for the great gift of your word that in it we can be reminded of the reality of what it is to be separated from you by sin but then also be reminded that you have made a way that you did not need us and you do not need us but because of your love for us you have chosen you have chosen to send your son and out of his love for his people his love for you and his obedience to you he took on as a way of that human flesh he became like us in all ways apart from sin and he lived that perfect life and died that death so that we would know the love and forgiveness of God help all we have heard today Lord to settle not just into our minds but also settle into our hearts bless the rest of this afternoon to us thank you Lord for the gift we have of being able to worship you in singing to lift up our voices knowing we have a God who hears our praise and a God who receives our praise help us Lord then to do so with hearts and minds full of understanding let's call these things in and through and for Jesus for his precious name's sake

Amen we can bring our time to conclusion again from sing psalms this time Psalm 130
sing psalms Psalm 130 page 173 page 173 and psalm 130 Lord from the depths I call to
you Lord hear me from on high and give attention to my voice when I for mercy cry Lord in
your presence who can stand if you are sins record but yet forgiveness is with you that we
may fear you Lord Psalm 130 behold psalm to God's praise Spelling .

When I fall now to die Than your presence Newcastle In your margins The sins before the
death of him That sins with you That we may give you all I bring my soul before the door I
hope it's in his word

For I am the Lord My wings are gone My soul is far down For it's temple Your holy love
Our mercy is with him That holy praise Through all blessings Is we ever hear We have the
grace of the Lord Jesus Christ

And the love of God the Father And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit Be with you now
forevermore Amen