

The Happiest Man on Earth (2)

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[0 : 0 0] Now let's turn together this evening to Luke's Gospel, chapter 2, following on from where we looked this morning. And we can read once again from verse 25.

Luke chapter 2 at verse 25. Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel.

And the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him according to the custom of the law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace according to your word.

Lord, for my eyes have seen your salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.

And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. And Simeon blessed him and said to Mary, his mother, Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel and for a sign that is opposed.

[1 : 2 0] And a sword will pierce through your own soul also, so that the thoughts from many hearts may be revealed. This morning we looked at verses 25 and 26.

And as we noted there, the two things that we saw in relation to Simeon were his personal character and his patient expectancy as he waited for the promise of the Lord that had been given to him, as he waited for that to be fulfilled.

The Lord had especially promised him that he would not die until he had seen for himself the Lord's Christ, the Messiah, the promised deliverer, the one who was through the Old Testament promised as the one who would come and be the savior of his people.

And now he is seeing that Christ for himself in this passage. And as we see Simeon at that moment, we called him the happiest man in the world, the happiest man on earth at that moment.

And surely that's what he was. Simply because of the thrill that it gave him, not only to have God's promise to him fulfilled, but to have it fulfilled in this way that he was able to see for himself and to hold in his arms this infant child, this Jesus, this savior of the world.

[2 : 4 4] And as we've noted, his personal character, his godliness and his righteousness and his patient expectancy, how he waited with expectation for the promise of God.

Tonight we're going to look at another two aspects of Simeon's life as it is in this passage, looking firstly at his pronouncement, especially in regard to this Jesus and who he was, and then his prophecy and especially the prophecy as it was in regard to the child and also Mary, his mother.

Simeon's pronouncement, first of all, was about himself and about how the Lord was now letting him depart in peace. Wonderful words which relate to his leaving this world to his death.

And yet that's how Simeon puts it. It's the importance of, as we saw in the morning, this word now is really what makes the difference between what was and what now is.

He was waiting. He was expectant. He was in the position of one who had not yet seen the Lord's Christ. But now, now that he's seeing it, he can depart in peace.

[3 : 57] The Lord has shown him the Lord's Christ. The Lord has shown him the Messiah. The Lord has actually verified and proved his promise to him. And now as he sees it, he says, Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace.

And the word depart there is itself important as well. And it's very closely connected to the way that Simeon is there using the word servant for himself.

And the word servant there really means more than just an ordinary servant. It means a bond servant. Something you would have in the slave of those days. Someone who had been bonded to a family to be their slave.

And of course, mustn't get mixed up in the whole idea of slavery as it came to be, in many ways, a cruel institution. In Israel, in the Old Testament, you know that somebody had fallen on hard times and couldn't pay their debts and things like that.

They were able to sell themselves and sell their labor to someone else. And then after a process of time, especially in the year of the Jubilee, slaves had to be set free.

[5 : 07] It was the Lord's means of caring for the poor, but also seeing that the poor were not abused. And it's that sort of word, the word that speaks about being tied closely to someone that you're working for as a bond servant.

That's what the bond servant really is. Of course, the Bible uses that. Paul especially uses that idea to speak about a Christian and his relation to God. A Christian in relation to Christ.

Paul describes himself as Christ's bond servant. He describes being a Christian as being bonded to God. Being a servant in the sense that you are under contract, if you like, to this God.

By his grace, he has bonded you to himself. And that's the kind of word, that's the word that's used here by Simeon when he says, You're letting your servant depart.

Depart. And the departure means he's being released from his relationship with God up to that point. Now, that doesn't mean, of course, that Simeon found that relationship or that service tedious.

[6 : 17] It wasn't something that he found he wished he had never gotten into. It wasn't something that he found oppressive. What he really is saying is that he's so glad now that it's come to an end.

Not because it was tedious in any way. But he's so glad that it's come to an end in this way. That he's now seeing the promise of God fulfilled. And you know, the Bible speaks about the departure of Christians from this world in a very similar manner.

Not only does the Bible tell us that we are bonded to Christ. That we are bonded to him by way of our allegiance to him.

By way of his grace actually purchasing us to be his servants. But when we come to leave this world as the servants of Christ, we're released from that into a freedom and a liberty where none of the things that apply to the restrictions of this life will anymore apply.

And I suppose the classic passage for that is Paul's reference in 2 Timothy chapter 4 and verse 6. Where he's talking there about the time of his departure is now at hand.

[7 : 34] He knows he's going to die shortly. He knows the end of his life is near in this world. And yet, like Simeon here, he speaks of it as a departure. He doesn't speak of it in terms that are really sorry that this has now come about.

He doesn't speak as if he would rather be left in this world for another period of time. To go on in the circumstances of this life. He wants to depart and to be with Christ, he says, which is far better.

And now he says in 2 Timothy, this time of my departure is at hand. And the word was used at times of what happened when people were traveling from one place to another in tents, which would be quite frequent in those days, especially Old Testament days, where when you were moving on from one place, you would pack up your tent.

You would take up the tent pegs. You would fold the tent up. You would bundle together all the possessions that you had with that. And you'd put it into some sort of way of carrying it. And off you would go.

You're leaving one place for another. Another way it was used was when a ship tied in the harbor, tied to the quayside. When the time came for that ship to leave the quayside and sail out onto the ocean.

[8 : 51] Well, this is how the sailors, this kind of word would be used. This very idea of slipping the mooring ropes, of letting go of the mooring ropes. As you've seen the ferry departing or any other ship departing, the ropes that tie it to the bollards on the quay.

The last thing you find happening is that these ropes are taken off the bollard and just released. And off the ship goes onto the ocean. And that's what Paul is saying.

That's what this word depart signifies. He was ready to depart. The time of his departure was at hand. And here is Simeon says, Lord, now you're letting your seven depart in peace.

You're letting me sail away into the ocean of eternity with you in heaven. Because everything you've promised me has been fulfilled. And I can now go.

I'm happy to go. You've fulfilled your word to me. And this is all that's left for me. That I will depart. And be no more in this life.

[9 : 55] And of course, it's according to your word, as he says. The time has come, he says. Now you're letting your seven depart in peace according to your word.

What a wonderful addition that is. And how important it is. This peace, this sense of well-being. This readiness to depart wasn't based on something that Simeon had manufactured for himself, as we saw this morning.

The fact that he was a righteous man. The fact that he was a godly man. Was not something on which he based his future and his eternity. He based it upon this Christ.

This salvation. This God who had provided this for him. And now he can go according to God's word.

God has fulfilled his promise to him. God has fulfilled his promise. And so it is with you and with me. He promises to look after you in this life.

[10 : 56] There will be hard times. There will be things you didn't expect. There will be opposition that you didn't anticipate. There will be times of crisis.

There will be times when relationships get difficult. There are many things you have to overcome as a Christian. But God's promise will not fail.

And when that moment comes. When the promises of God for you have been fulfilled. Then you can say. We hope we could say like Simeon.

Lord now you're letting your servant. Depart in peace. If you had died last night. Would these words have been on your lips?

Would this have been the reality for you and for me? Would it have been a departure? A slipping of the mooring ropes. That tie us to this life. To this world.

[11 : 58] Would it have been the kind of sailing away. From what ties us in this life. And in this world. Would it have been a situation. Where we were at last glad to leave.

Because God had fulfilled his word. And God had kept his promise. And God was taking us home. Or would it be something else? If you put yourself in Simeon's shoes.

What would you say about this infant Jesus? What would your verdict? What would your conclusion be? What would your statement be? Lord.

Now you are letting your servant. Depart in peace. According to your word. For he says. My eyes. I've seen your salvation. That you have prepared.

In the presence. Of all peoples. Why was Simeon. Able to depart. In such peace. Why was he glad. Now that his life in this world.

[12 : 55] Had come to an end. Not because. He despised it. Not because it was something. He felt he was quite glad. To be rid of. But because he now. Had reached the point. Where he knew. That God's promise.

Being fulfilled. There was only one thing. Left to do. And that was to die. God had said to him. You're not going to die. Until you see. The Christ. Until you see the Messiah. Now he's seeing the Messiah.

He knows he has to go. But he says. That's the reason. I can go in peace. For my eyes. Have seen.

Your salvation. What an amazing thing. That you come across here. In these words. What is effectively. An equation. You know what equation is.

Something on one hand. Equals something on the other hand. And that's what you've got. In these words of Simeon. About this infant. That he's now carrying. And holding in his arms. An infant.

[13 : 49] Not more than a month old. Not much more than a month old. As we saw this morning. A small. Vulnerable. Little child. And here's the equation.

Seeing. Seeing. Jesus. Equals. Salvation. My eyes.

Have seen. Your salvation. Because this. Salvation. Of God. Is not about. Keeping a certain. Creed. Until you can fulfill. All the terms of it.

It's not a set of rules. And regulations. That you work through. Until some. Time. In the course of your life. You're able to say. Well that's it. I've now managed it. I can sign the foot of the page.

And God will accept me. Salvation. Is in a person. This person. This wonderful person. Salvation. Is in.

[14 : 44] This. Jesus. Who was born. And given this name. Who had come into the world. As we saw this morning. To lift the curse of sin. From off God's creation. And from off us human beings.

And now Simeon is seeing it. And he's seeing. This person. And it's very very easy. For you and for me. Because many many people.

In the world do it. It's very very easy. For you and for me. To forget. That our salvation. Is in a person. And our salvation. Has been completed. By this person.

And our salvation. Does not depend. On what we do ourselves. On what we achieve ourselves. On what status we have in life. Or how low. Or how high we are in society.

Our salvation depends. On none of these things. But it depends on him. Who has done this for us. Now you're letting your servant. Depart in peace.

[15 : 42] For my eyes have seen your salvation. That you have prepared. That God has prepared. That he has accomplished. Isn't that amazing?

When Simeon is holding this little child. And he's able to say. Lord this is what you have done. This is God's action. That's why.

In the passage we read in Matthew. The emphasis was upon. The child in Mary's womb. Even before he was born. He had come to be conceived.

By the power of the Holy Spirit. Not by human. Begetting. Mary conceived him. But he was not begotten. By a human father.

He was begotten. By the Holy Spirit. Now I know that that's. Laughed at by people. I know that people.

[16 : 41] Celebrate Christmas. And perhaps believe. That such a person. As Jesus did in fact exist. Christ. And yet.

It's the supernatural element of it. That really strikes you. As you read the Gospels. That this is something. God created. Something which God himself.

Brought into being. Something in the sense of. This event is what I mean. Not something in the sense of. This being a thing. This was a person. The person of the son of God.

Who came to take out human nature. To himself. Always remember. That you define this person. Not by his human nature. Not by what he is now. In the arms of Simeon.

As Simeon sees him. In that human form. That human nature. That he undoubtedly has. You define this person. By who he is. From all eternity. He's defined as being.

[17 : 37] The son of God. And it's as the son of God. That he's come to have a human nature. Joined. To his divine person. That's at the root of our salvation.

That's not something. That you can actually just get rid of. And still be left with a gospel. Because this gospel. And this salvation. Is all really fixed upon this person.

And when you adjust the person. You're adjusting something to do with. The way the person is. The savior. Presented to us in the gospel. You adjust salvation. When you adjust the person. When you take away.

His true divinity. You're left with nothing more than. A human being. A remarkable human being. A remarkable teacher. But less than God. And if you take away.

His true humanity. You're left with God. But not actually. God in our circumstances. Not God in a real.

[18 : 35] Human. Situation. And body. And soul. And mind. But that's what you have in Christ. Both together.

In the one person. And this wonderful event. As it's taken place. Has fulfilled God's promise.

Of bringing a savior. That's what. The salvation. Is about. And it evokes. This question. Remember when we went through. Luke's gospel.

Some time ago. And we took a long time. Going through it. Quite deliberately. And I hope. Beneficially. But you remember. One of the great questions. That Luke. Consistently. Asks.

All the way through. His question. Sometimes. Through his gospel. Through his gospel. Sometimes. The question is on. The mind of people. Who are seeing Jesus. Doing what he was doing. Maybe after a miracle.

[19 : 28] Or whatever. Maybe it's actually on the mind. Of somebody who's not a believer. At all. But the question is. Who. Is this man? Who is this man?

Who is this figure? Who is this person? And as you read this passage. That's something. That's surely striking. For your own heart. To your own heart. And to your own mind as well.

And to your own conscience. And mind. You cannot surely come. And look at the words of Simeon. And let them soak into your mind. Without asking yourself. The question. Well.

What do I see in this Jesus? As I take him up. In the way. In which the gospel. Presents him to me. What do I see in him?

What significance. Does he have in my life? In your life? What place does he have? What place are you giving him? Have you really taken him up.

[20 : 30] Into your arms? Have you embraced him? You know. We keep referring to. The catechism. And the wonderful way. The catechism uses. Such brilliant language.

And so wonderful. Summary of doctrine. And in. The question on. Effectual calling. Which is how we come. To be joined. To Christ.

In our effectual calling. In that. Question. And the answer to it. In question 31. Of the catechism. You have that. Statement there.

Or that phrase. That. He may. That God. Makes us. Willing. To embrace. Jesus Christ.

Freely offered to us. In the gospel. He convinces us. Of our sin. He enlightens our mind. Of the knowledge of Christ. And renews our will. And he persuades.

[21 : 27] And enables us. To embrace. Jesus Christ. That's. In a very. Personal way. In a very. Physical way.

But also. In a very spiritual way. What Simeon is doing. He's not just. Embracing this child. Jesus. In his arms. He is doing that. Physically. But just look at. His embrace.

Spiritually. As he describes. The salvation of God. That's bound up. And situated. In this child. He's embracing. The provision of God. He's embracing. The salvation.

God has provided. In this person. Have you. Have you embraced. Have you embraced. This Jesus. You know about him.

You've known about him. For so many years. But have you embraced him. Have you welcomed him. Into your life. Have you laid down.

[22 : 23] All that is between you. And this Jesus. And. Come to embrace him. As your savior. That's really. What it means.

To. Have Christ. United. With yourself. It will not come about. Without. Including. Your embracing.

Of. Yes. We know that. God is behind it all. God has done this. Now this. You have prepared this. In the presence of all people. God has. Prepared this Christ. God. Offers this Christ.

To us. In the gospel. Just as he's here. Offered at the temple. Literally. To fulfill the terms. Of the old testament law. So he's offered. In the gospel.

One of the great things. About our Scottish theology. One of the great things. And features of our. Gospel. In. In the Scottish theology. Is. The way in which. In the most part.

[23 : 15] At least. It has come to emphasize. The preaching of the gospel. And the free offer of the gospel. And Christ presented in the gospel. So much so that.

Theologians. In Scotland. In the past. While they would not be happy. About someone in the pulpit. Saying to every single person. Christ died for you.

Knowing that. That Christ died for his people. That the bible talks about. A people that are. Given to Christ. And the people that Christ himself.

Died for. So while they wouldn't be as. Ready to say from the pulpit. Yes Christ died for you. And he died for you. And he died for you. For they would say absolutely.

And with. Complete openness. Is. Christ is dead. For you. This Christ. And his death. Is for you. This Christ.

[24 : 11] And his birth. Is for you. This Christ. And his ministry. Is for you. This Christ. And his resurrection. Is for you. As for sinners. That's why he's called. Jesus. And there is no distinction made.

In the offer of the gospel. Between one person. And another. Because. This. Is God's. Provision. That he has prepared.

In the presence. Of all people. So he's seeing. Salvation. And he's giving us. This question. What do I see. In Jesus.

What is my Christmas. About. Is there more to it. Than just. Opening presents. Am I opening. This one. Have I opened this one.

Is this one. Still wrapped up. Have I not yet. Taken off. The wrappings. And embraced. Its contents. So here is.

[25 : 08] Simeon's pronouncement. But. He then goes on to say. As a further part. Of. That pronouncement. That you have prepared. My eyes have seen your salvation. That you have prepared. In the presence.

Of all peoples. A light for revelation. To the Gentiles. And for glory. To your people Israel. Israel. In other words. He's making it clear. That. This. Savior.

Is not just. For the people of Israel. He's going to be. Prepared. In the presence. He is prepared. In the presence. Of all peoples. And he's a light. To the Gentiles.

To bring light. To the Gentiles. That's you and I. Everybody who is not a Jew. Everybody. Doesn't belong to Israel. Israel. Israel. In the biblical sense.

The Jewish people. They're Gentiles. That was a great division. In the world. Before Christ came. That's why the New Testament. Is so concerned.

[26 : 02] To emphasize. That. That great division. Is done away with. The revelation. That God had given. All down the years. Of the Old Testament. To the Jewish people. Is now extended.

Beyond them. And the Gentiles. Are embraced. In the salvation. Thank God. That the Gentiles. Came. To be incorporated.

Into. The salvation. That's in Christ. And you see. He's saying. Not only has God. Prepared it. It's God. Provided.

God. Initiated. God. Completing. This. This salvation. But. It's in the presence. Of all peoples. Just notice the way. That that's put. In the presence.

Of all people. And it's. It's literally. Before the face. Of all peoples. In other words. God didn't do this. In a corner. God didn't do this.

[26 : 56] In a way. That kept it hidden. From most people. What happened. In the events. Of Christ's birth. And death. And resurrection. And his life. And his ministry. None of that.

Was done. By God. In an obscure way. It wasn't something. That he kept hidden. In. And really. Away from most people's. Attention. God's not like that.

This is something. That has been done. Openly. Something for everyone. To see. That doesn't mean. Everybody wants to see it. That doesn't mean. Everybody in the world.

Comes really. To welcome. This great event. And everything. That's associated. With it. But God. Has prepared. This. In the presence. Of. Before the face. Of all people.

So whatever people say. About not knowing. Christ. About not wanting. To know Christ. The problem. Is not made. By God. It's not because.

[27 : 58] God. Has kept people. In the dark. It's rather. That they chose. As John's gospel. Begins. Or in the first chapter. That they chose.

Darkness. Rather than light. They will not come. To the light. It's not that they don't know. About the light. It's not that they don't know. About Christ. It's not that they don't know. That there's a gospel.

It's not that they don't know. That there's a church. Because you see them. Criticizing it so often. And in fact. The very. The very fact of. The bite of the world.

And the opposition. Of humanism. And atheism. And every other kind. Of opposition. That opposes. The gospel. And the bible. And the place of the bible. That shows you.

That this is not something. That's hidden. It's something that God. Has openly revealed. And people are aware of it. And when we come before God. On the day of judgment.

[28 : 53] One thing that we will not be able to say. Is that we didn't really know much. About what God had done. To provide salvation for us.

He's done it openly. He's done it. Before the face of all peoples. And it's. And it's. A light for the Gentiles. To bring them revelation.

To bring them. Into the revelation. That God has given of himself. And the glory. For glory to your people Israel. A very similar. Kind of expression.

The Lord's using. The word glory there. But. Whatever you. Where you take it. It really means that. You begin with the opposite. Of these. And God comes.

Into this. Situation. Where there is. Darkness. And where there is shame. Because. These are the opposites aren't they. The opposite of light. Being darkness obviously. The obvious. The opposite of.

[29 : 49] Of glory. Being shame. That's where we are. That's where we were. That's what we are. By nature. That's where we are. How we are born. That's the curse of sin. That's come. Upon us.

And upon the world. Because of sin. And whatever people. Might say about that. And how God was unfair. If that is really true. Of course God is not fair. God is just. And in his justice.

He has provided a way out of that situation. A way to overcome it. And it's in this person. It's a light.

For revelation to the Gentiles. And into our darkness. And into our shame. And into our sin. And into our sin. And into our sin. God has powerfully entered.

In the birth of this savior. So as to bring light. And to bring glory. Where there was darkness. And shame to begin with.

[30 : 53] And. That's Simon's. Or Simeon's pronouncement. Let's hurry on to. Simeon's prophecy. Because he then goes on to speak about.

When his father and mother. marvelled at what was said. Simeon blessed them. And said to Mary. His mother. Behold. This child is appointed. For the fallen rising of many in Israel.

And for a sign that is opposed. Or spoken against. So that the thoughts from many hearts. May be revealed. Well he is. Destiny's child. He's the child. That really is.

Connected with human. Destiny. With all. With the destiny of all human beings. It's interesting that this word. Rising. In the New Testament. Is always used about resurrection.

Always used about. The resurrection. So that you can read that into. What Simeon here. By God's. Enabling. Is able to say. This prophecy. That he comes out with.

[31 : 50] Is really bringing things forward. If you like. To the last stages. Of the world. And of the world as we know it. Right up to the day of Christ's coming. And what he's saying is.

This child. Will really be the crux of that issue. He's going to be at the very core. Of human destiny. And our relation to him. Is really the litmus test.

As to how we stand. On that day of judgment. In relation. To God. He is set for the fall. And the rising.

You can take that. As some do. That. We need to fall in repentance. So that we can rise again. And through resurrection. But you can also take it. That the fall. Is really. The opposite.

Of the rising. In the sense that. Some people are going to fall. In terms of their relationship. With Christ. Peter. Uses that same. Image of Christ.

[32 : 51] Being a stumbling block. To many. Or a stone of stumbling. Over which they stumble. And perish. But the point is. That. Christ really.

Himself. Is the one. That immediately. Relates. In his person. In his work. To our human destiny. Whether we're lost. Or whether we're saved.

You cannot detach that. From your relationship. With Christ. Christ. And at the end of the day. What that relationship is. Is going to be all important.

Whether we fall. Or rise. It's going to be. Determined. It's going to determine. Which of these. Will be true of you. And of me. The fact that we've been.

Part of God's church. On earth. That's not going to be. The crucial issue. The fact that we've preached. The gospel. From pulpits. That's not going to be. The crucial issue. The fact that we've.

[33 : 48] A rich. Spiritual pedigree. In our family. That's not going to be. The crucial issue. The crucial issue is. How do we relate. To Jesus. What is he to us.

What is my life. In relation to him. Because that's what is saying. He is set. Appointed. For the falling. And rising.

Of many in Israel. And you can extend that. To all human beings. So that the thoughts. From many hearts. May be revealed. And that's not as easy. To interpret.

Or to really. Be sure about the meaning. Of the words. But one thing. That seems to be. At least intended. In it. Is this. So we can include. In it. Is that. Every philosophy.

Every human idea. Every human philosophy. Of what is. And is not. Proper. For human beings. Human thoughts. And human ideas. Human philosophies.

[34 : 44] As to how to live your life. And what it is. To prepare for another life. All human philosophies. Are going to be measured. Against him. Against this provision.

Against this child. That the thoughts. Of many hearts. May be revealed. And at the end of the day. It is this.

Jesus. That's going to expose. Every human philosophy. For what it is. Because it will be seen. In relation to himself. And it will be declared. Either through or false.

And of course. That's. Where Paul's emphasis. On the gospel. Is so important. I'm not ashamed. Of the gospel. Of Christ. For it.

Is the power of God. Unto salvation. To everyone. Who believes. Is the power of God. Is the power of God. Is the power of God. Is the power of God. He is appointed.

[35 : 41] For the falling. And rising. Of many. So that the thoughts. From many hearts. May be revealed. And at that day. Humanism.

And atheism. And all the other isms. And religions. That the world has had. Whether pagan. Or otherwise.

They'll be measured. By what. By what they are. In relation. To Jesus. And the gospel. Christ will expose them. In his own way.

But he says to Mary. Sword will pierce. Through your own soul. Also. And that. Is a prophecy. That was taking Mary.

Up to the time. Of the cross. That was taking Mary. To the time. Of the death. Of her son. When he would be crucified. And die.

[36 : 42] That death. Of the cross. And the word. For sword. Here is not the same. One you find. Later on. In Luke. In chapter 22. Verses 49.

And 52. Which was really. A small. Short. Sort of. Sword. Almost. No much bigger. Than a dagger. This is a word. For a huge.

Two-handed sword. In other words. He's deliberately. Chosen. This word. Simeon. Has chosen. This word. Or he's been given. This word. So that Mary. Will come.

Even at this point. To realize. That the pain. That she's going to have. Is going to be a pain. In seeing. Her son. Crucified. A pain. A pain.

That's going to be. Deep. And bitter. And great. There never was. And there never will be.

[37 : 35] A mother like her. She gave birth. To the Lord. And his human nature. There never was. A son.

Like the son. She brought into the world. Who is God. And man. In one person. And two natures. Never a human mother.

Like this. Never a son. Like this. And never a death. Like he died. And never. If you like. To call the cross. A deathbed.

Never a deathbed. For a mother. To be at. The way. That deathbed. Was for Mary. It's not just. On what you might say.

A human level. She came to realize. Who her son was. She realized. The honor. That God. Had placed upon her. And the bitterness.

[38 : 30] Of her soul. We cannot leave out. Of the reckoning. You know. I know. You know. Yourselves. That Mary. Has been. Elevated. In some. Traditions.

Like the Roman Catholic. Tradition. Where. Mary. Is a source of grace. So called. Or spoken of. As a source of grace. That can do things. For people. If you pray to her.

If you. Actually go through. The rituals. That they have. And even. With regard to the sinlessness. Of Jesus. Roman Catholic theology. Insists that. She was immaculate. That's why it's called.

The immaculate conception. Wasn't simply that. Jesus was immaculate. Free from sin. The thing behind that. Is that Mary. Was free from sin. Otherwise. He couldn't be.

Free from sin. She was not immaculate. She was a sinner. Who needed to be saved. By the son. She bore. That's an amazing point.

[39 : 25] In itself. But she was unique. And we have to give her. The place.

God gave her. If you find fault. With the woman. That God gave to Adam. Who listened to the serpent.

And then brought to Adam. This proposition. That the serpent. That proposed. By God's grace. Mary has more than made up for that.

She has brought into the world. The Lord himself. This Jesus. The Savior. The consolation of Israel.

She was not immaculate. We don't worship her. We don't give her. We don't give her. A place that God didn't give her. But we do give her. The place that God himself.

[40 : 24] Gave her. Chapter 1. Verses. 43 and. 45. Where she met Elizabeth. The mother of John the Baptist.

When they were both pregnant. This is what Elizabeth said. And she was filled. With the Holy Spirit. So it is. Absolutely. Words. Directed by God.

Blessed. She said to Mary. Are you among women. And blessed. Is the fruit. Of your womb. And why is this granted. To me. And just listen to this.

That the mother. Of my Lord. Should come to me. No other woman. Could have that said of her.

Before. Or since. The mother. Of the Lord. And that's what Mary. Is given.

[41 : 22] In the history of. This world. And of God's people. The mother. Of Jesus Christ. The one who brought him. Into the world.

The one who is unique. Because of that. And when we shy away. From. Giving Mary. Undue. Prominence. And place. Let's not go to the other extreme.

And say that she is less than. What God made her. Let's pray. Lord our God.

We. Again. Give thanks. That you have brought. Before us today. The wonder of your birth. And that you have brought. Before us. The way in which you came.

Into this world. Having been begotten. Supernaturally. And yet conceived. Naturally. And born naturally. And developed.

[42 : 19] In the way in which. Your word tells us. As a human being. Amongst human beings. But we thank you Lord. For your uniqueness. For your sinlessness.

For everything that you. Revealed yourself to be. As you progressed. Among men. And we thank you. That you fulfilled. That ministry. For which you came.

Into this world. For you are born. To die. Not as we are born. To die. You are born. Born to die. That death of the cross.

That atoning death. Which you fulfilled. So abundantly. So that you could say. It was finished. We thank you Lord. Today. That this. Is so meaningful.

For us. As we come to worship. You now. We pray that you would. Continue with us. And bless to us. Your word. We pray all of us. For your own glory's sake. Amen.