

Do Not Be Ashamed

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[0 : 00] We're going to turn back for a few moments and look together at that chapter we read in 2 Timothy 1 and verse 8.

2 Timothy 1 and verse 8. Therefore, Paul says to Timothy, Do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me, his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works, but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

Just these verses 8 to verse 10 there, in which Paul is writing to Timothy the last recorded letter in his life. That doesn't mean he didn't write anything else.

We don't know what he wrote since then, but that's the last letter that we have before he was executed in Rome under the Emperor Nero. Now, I don't know how I would be inside if I knew I was going to die in a prison in Rome, if I knew that in a few days' time I was going to be executed. I don't suppose any of us knows how we would react to that news. And what thoughts? I can say what I would hope I would be like, but we don't know until we're actually in that position.

[1 : 41] And this is something that was real to the Apostle Paul. It was only a matter of time before he was going to be taken and executed. And we know that he wasn't concerned about himself.

He was absolutely fearless when it came to death. He had looked at the death face to face in the past. He had come within an inch of death in the past, and yet he is not ashamed, he says.

He says, I know who I've believed. I know that he's able to keep that which I've committed unto him against that day. He says, for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

That's the way he looked at death. Death is only a doorway, as far as he's concerned, to bring him from this life into the next. So as far as he is concerned, he's not worried about himself at all.

I suppose the other thing that you or I would be concerned about in that similar position would be some kind of provision to be made for a family. Now, Paul didn't have a family, so he, again, that wasn't something that was relevant to him.

[2 : 44] But his church was the family, the church that he had come to know and love over all these years he had been preaching throughout the regions of Asia and the Roman Empire.

And it was the church that was concerning him the most. Now, he could have said, his attitude could have been, well, God's church, he can, just like we were saying last week, we were remembering how Jesus made a promise that the gates of Hades or the gates of hell will not prevail against the church because he was going to build it.

So Paul's attitude could have been, well, it's God's church, he started it, he'll finish it, I don't need to worry. But that wasn't his attitude at all because he knew that God ordained means and mechanisms whereby the church would grow and spread.

And he must, the apostle Paul, must put every effort that he possibly could into making whatever provision he could for the ongoing future of the church. That's why he's writing to Timothy, to encourage him, because he sees that there are threats facing the church.

And the first threat that faced the church was the threat of wrong doctrine, wrong teaching. It was coming in at that time. This first letter is for this purpose.

[3 : 57] If you read chapter 1 and verse 3 of 1 Timothy, What was happening was, you can imagine, the church is in its infancy.

The people of God don't know what we know. They don't have all the great theology books that we have, in which the Bible has been thoroughly explained. That doesn't mean that we know everything.

We don't. But these people knew very little. And so they were vulnerable to all kinds of wrong notions and ideas coming in, creeping in, particularly when it came to the person of Jesus Christ. They believed that he was the son of God. But what does that mean? Does that mean that there was a time when he was an ordinary man and then at some point God chose him and selected him and set him apart to be his son?

Or does it mean that he came from heaven? But as a kind of lesser being? Almost a kind of an angel. And God kind of promoted him to being his son.

[5 : 07] And when we talk about the Trinity, we talk about the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Are these persons all equal? Or was there a time when the Son wasn't the Son and he was created to be the Son?

And all of these questions would have been asked. And it went much further than that because people were coming in and they were teaching all kinds of wrong things. And they were leading people astray to believe that Jesus wasn't really God at all.

But they only appeared like God. He only seemed to be God. He wasn't really God at all. And all kinds of things like that. I don't have time to go into them. But there was a whole host of wrong ideas coming into the church.

And people were believing it. And going down the wrong road. And Paul was extremely concerned. There's always a concern that we believe the right thing. And that we know what it is that we believe.

It's not good enough to say, as long as I trust in Jesus as my Savior, then everything's going to be alright. Well, of course, that's the basis. Faith in Christ is the basis. But what do you mean by Jesus as my Savior?

[6 : 13] What do we mean next week when we say that he died for our sins? Do we understand what it means for Jesus to become sin for us?

Do we understand what it means for the second person of the Trinity? What does that mean? To come into this world and to become a man? To be born as a baby?

And to be one of us? What kind of human nature did he have? And what does it mean that he gave himself? That he died? How can God die? How can someone who is God die on the cross?

Have you explored all these questions? These are questions which are not only fascinating. But they're necessary. Necessary to get our minds around these questions as far as possible.

As far as we possibly can. And so Paul's first concern is wrong teaching that is coming in. And it's very, very important for us to get this one right.

[7 : 10] And the way we do so is by applying ourselves and by studying the Bible. And by studying it in its entirety. But the other threat that there was to the church was Christians simply forsaking what they once were.

And that's why Paul is writing this letter here. And that's why he writes verse 8. Therefore he says, do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord.

In fact, he says three things that I want us to look at between verse 8 and verse 10. Three positive and negative pairs. First positive and negative pair is shame or suffering.

The negative is shame. The positive, and I know that sounds strange, is suffering. The second positive and negative pair is works or grace.

And that's found in verse 9. God saved us and called us to a holy calling. Not because of our works. That's the negative. But because of his own purpose and grace.

[8 : 15] That's the positive in which we are saved. And then the last thing is in verse 10, which is death or life. God has manifested through the appearing of the Savior, Jesus Christ, who has abolished death.

That's the negative. That's what came in as a result, as a consequence of sin. Abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. So there's these three positive and negative pairs I would like us to look at this morning just in order for us to have something to take away with. Do not be ashamed, he says, says Paul. I said before that there were two threats to the church. And the second one, this, was that Christians were turning away from what they once believed.

And by the time Paul wrote this letter, he wasn't Paul the fit young man that he had been when he was converted. He was Paul the old man. He was in prison and he was waiting for his execution.

And things in the church had changed for the worse. Now that in itself is really quite something, isn't it? Because if you look at the life of the Apostle Paul, his preaching is so successful.

[9 : 25] There are times when crowds come into the marketplace to hear him. The miracles that he was able to do brought crowds. You would think that this was unstoppable.

That this movement of the gospel was going to grow and grow and grow. And there weren't going to be any problems or setbacks at all. Not so. And Paul tells us that by the time he wrote this last letter, there were deeply disturbing things coming into the church.

And most of which was the number of people who were simply forsaking, turning away from what they once believed. And in fact, if you read this letter, in fact, you'll read several people.

There was this person, Phagellus, in verse 15. And Hermogenes, we don't know anything about these people except this. That they once professed to believe in Jesus.

And they no longer did. Isn't that solemn? That's all we know about these people. And then there was Hymenaeus and Philetus. Who, Paul tells us, have swerved from the truth.

[10 : 31] Just like you swerve in a car. Like going in the wrong direction. And the third person we find out is this Demas. Demas, in chapter 4 and verse 10.

Who loved the present world so much that he too had forsaken the gospel. And then in chapter 4 and verse 14, there was Alexander, the coppersmith, did me great harm.

And if it wasn't for those who had stuck by the apostle, I'm quite sure that he would have felt much more desolate and lonely and concerned that he did. But there were one or two. Onesiphorus, in verse 16 in chapter 1, to name just but one.

But there's an even worse statement than that. There's an even more disturbing statement than that. And we read it earlier on. Paul tells us that, Can you believe that?

All those in Asia have turned away from me. Now that's the state of the church. That is the way in which the apostle Paul met his death.

[11 : 39] Very different from how things had started off. A very different situation. But even in such bleak circumstances, Paul did not flinch.

He believed in the same Jesus who had met him on the road to Damascus and had changed his life. And he was refused to go along with the flow of popular thought that was so against the gospel at that time.

And as far as the apostle was concerned, his faith did not depend on his circumstances. And how successful his circumstances were. His faith was fixed in the Jesus who died alone for him.

And so he therefore was prepared to die alone for the Jesus who loved him and gave himself for him. Now, it's easy to be a Christian for a day. It's easy to be a Christian when there's a revival.

And I say that with all due respect and all reverence. I'm not trying to belittle revival at all. But in every revival, there are those who kind of go along with the flow. It's easy to be a Christian when everyone seems to be converted.

[12 : 51] And there are times like that, aren't there? When there's what we call a kind of movement of people. We're not one or two, but loads of people are being converted. It's easy to go along with that.

But when you're in the minority, if everybody was a Christian, say everybody's not a Christian and is torn away today. There would be no challenge at all. But what about when you're in the minority?

And when you have to stand like Daniel did in a society that was pagan. And when all the odds were stacked against you. And when people hated you. And when people really thought ill of you because you were a Christian.

Then that would be a different situation altogether. But that's the kind of world that God calls us to stand for him in. Not ashamed of the gospel.

And the easiest thing in the world today is when we're faced with a challenge to say nothing about our faith. Rather than to tell people about our faith. It's easy to blend in with the crowd, with the background.

[13 : 58] To become part, as I heard somebody saying the other night, part of the wallpaper. It's easy for that to happen. But that's not the life that God has called us to.

It's a life in where at some point we will be required to say who we are and who we serve. There's a whole host of circumstances in which that can happen.

And the answer is not to just only keep company with Christians. And to lock ourselves away only in fellowship with other Christians. Of course that's important.

But it's also important for God's people to go out into the world. And to mix with other people. And so that people can hear the gospel. Otherwise they won't hear the gospel. You are the salt of the

earth.

Said Jesus. And it's difficult being salt of the earth. Everything's okay when you get to know someone. Say for example. And I'm talking to say for example the students that are with us here. [14:56] You go out. You go into your course. And you're immediately surrounded by people who don't know anything about the Lord. And you get to know them. They become your friends.

You become their friend. You go out for a coffee with them. But at some point. At some point. Mark my words. The conversation is going to drift. To for example.

Where were you last night? What were you doing at the weekend? And everybody says. Oh well I was out in the pub. Or I was out at the nightclub. And then it comes around to you. And you say. I was in church.

That's a dampener. That's the point at which the conversation goes quiet. Because they don't know how to respond to that. In church. Are you prepared for that?

Are you prepared to stick with it? And to try and foster these relationships? So that you'll get an opportunity of being able to explain. Why the gospel is so important to you?

[15:51] Do not be ashamed. Because if you're ashamed. How are people going to hear the gospel? How are they going to see? What God has done in your life. If you're going to just hide away.

And not tell anyone. And not be prepared. To state to people. When the opportunity comes. I don't mean that you make a pest of yourself. And every time you see someone.

You start preaching to them right away. That's not what God wants us to be at all. I don't believe. But when there is opportunity. And as you live your life. Amongst other people. Then are you ashamed?

Are you going to be quiet about the gospel? Or are you going to look and pray for opportunity. For. For. To tell people about their gospel. When you sit down to lunch. And you're with other people. Are you going to bow your head? Are you going to be different? Because that's where you stand out. And they're going to notice. And somebody's going to ask you. What is it you do when you bow your head?

[16:45] What is it you do? What does your religion teach you? And that. There's your opportunity. Do not be ashamed. Says the apostle. Do not be ashamed. So that's the negative.

There were people in his day. Who were choosing the easy option. And forsaking. It was much easier for them. To just blend back into the old life. It was all too much for them.

But here's the positive. Join with me. Share. In suffering. For the gospel. Of. By the power. Of God. Now that's some invitation.

Isn't it? Share with me. In suffering. It's not very appealing. I don't suppose. There's not much attractiveness. In suffering. And you might be surprised.

That Paul is so blunt. But I'm so glad. That this verse is here. Because it reinforces. The truth. That the Christian life.

[17:38] Is essentially. A life. Of suffering. If the world. Hated you. Said Jesus. It will. If it hated me. It will hate you also.

Now there are all kinds. Of different forms. Of suffering. In Paul's day. It was the suffering. That. It was violent. Persecution. Of Christians.

Where Christians. Were required. If they were suspected. Of being Christians. To declare. Caesar's lordship. And if they refused. They would be condemned.

To death. Either by the lions. Or the gladiators. Or some other way. Decapitated. Or whatever it was. But suffering. And we must remember. Of course also. That there are countries.

In today's world. Where such violent. Persecution. Still exists. And we must pray. For the witness. Of people. We've never had to go through that. But we must pray.

[18:33] For our brothers and sisters. In these countries. Where such suffering. Exists. For the gospel. It's almost unbelievable. In that modern. Civilized world. That that takes place. It does. If you read.

Open doors. For example. Then the magazines. That are produced. By that. That society. That will tell you. Some pretty harrowing stories. Of individual people. Who have suffered.

Because. They are. But there are different. Forms of suffering. Like if. In Paul's day. There were all kinds of dinner parties. Where you went out to dinner.

With various people. I suppose. Just similar to. What some people do today. You are out to dinner. But the dinner. In those days. Started off with. A dedication.

Of the food. To the gods. Now you imagine. You went out to dinner. With your business.

Colleagues. And you sat down. At a table. And instead of just eating.

[19 : 29] Then they said. Oh. Hold on. First part of this is. We have to worship the gods. We have to dedicate this food. To our gods. What would you do? Quite happy to be part of that.

Well the Christians. In those days. Weren't. And they said. Well. With all due respect. You go ahead and do that. But we can't be part of it. You know what happened then? They lost their jobs.

Any prospect of. Promotion. Any prospect of getting the contract. Finished. Nil. They were impoverished.

That's the way they. That's the risk that they ran. And that's another form of suffering. When people. Ostracize you. And when they make sure that. You don't. Qualify.

For what you could qualify. Because. And it's not always because they. Know about the gospel. It's because they're suspicious. Of anyone. Who is. Who is so prepared.

[20 : 24] To stand. For their love. For the gospel. But there's also the emotional. Suffering of being. There's all kinds. Of different ways. In which a person. Can go through trauma. When he's a Christian.

What happens. What about the person. Who longs. For their wife. Or their husband. To be saved. A person. Who longs. For their son.

Or their daughter. To be saved. Or their brother. Or their sister. To be saved. A person. Who is a Christian. They see. Other people. And their desire. More than anything else. Their longing.

And that's not an easy thing. It's not a happy thing. To long. And to pray. Earnestly. It's something. That requires. Grief. Because.

Very often. It takes years. And years. For anything to happen. If it does. That's a form of suffering. Paul suffered. When he was in Athens. And when he was so moved.

[21 : 19] And troubled. When he looked around. And he saw. The idols. Around him. He was. He was. Grief stricken. And there's a sense. In which every Christian.

Should be grief stricken. Today. As they see. So much. Ignorance. Around us. So much. Of what. What. Need not be there.

If. The gospel. Took hold. Of people. But it's through that. That the gospel. Does take hold. Of people. Through the witness. Of his people. We have to believe. Today. That through our.

Engagement. With the world. That the world. Will hear the gospel. And we must be prepared. To do that. Even if it is. Difficult. Well. There's nothing much here. About the kind of preaching.

That you hear sometimes. On religious TV. Is there? The kind of person. That says. Well. If you do this. And you do that. God will make you rich. And God will make you happy. God will make you successful.

[22 : 15] And God wants you to be. On top of the world. Today. And all you have to do. Is to give this. A certain amount of money. To the church. Namely me. You. Then God will. Then will bless you. With every kind of. Of material blessing.

Have you ever heard. That kind of gospel before? Well. This is the gospel. That I believe in. Share with me. In suffering. And that was Paul's gospel. Not much of a guy.

Who's. Sitting in a mansion. With. Millions of. Dollars in his hand. This is a man. Who's sitting in a prison cell. In Rome. And he's about to die. For the gospel. That's what the gospel. Is all about.

Jesus said. You lose your life. In this world. And he that loses his life. In this world. Will gain it. But he that gains his life. Saves his life.

In this world. Will lose it. That's the kind. Of life. A life that imitates. The savior. The second. Positive and negative pair.

[23 : 10] Is. Is. Is. The works and grace. That he mentions. In. Verse nine. And this is where he gives a description. Of how. We were saved. Who saved us.

Power of God. Who saved us. Verse nine. And called us. To a holy calling. Not because of our works. But because of his own. Purpose. And grace. Which he gave us. In Christ Jesus.

As you see. There was a day. When Paul. Actually. Truly believed. That he had a better chance. Than anyone else. Of getting to heaven. That was when he was.

Saul of Tarsus. The Pharisee. There was nobody. As far as he was concerned. There was nobody in the world. Who was more diligent. At keeping God's law. In the Old Testament. As he. If anyone.

Could be saved.

Get into heaven. By keeping the ten commandments. It was Saul. Of Tarsus. He thought. It was a matter of what. He could do. To make sure. He was connected. With God.

[24 : 05] But that was the day. Until he. That was. That was until the day. He met with. Jesus Christ. On the road. To Damascus. And. He discovered.

That day. That instead of. Heaping up points. With God. Good things. He was actually. Heaping up. His own condemnation. Because the more.

He went against. The people of God. Was the church. Who were the church. The more. He was sinning. Against God himself. He actually believed. He was doing God. A favor. And he actually. In actual fact. It was the very opposite. But at the same time. As he met with Jesus. He discovered. The forgiveness. Which the Lord. Was prepared. To give him. As God.

God changed. As he became. Aware of his own guilt. And his own. Filthiness. Before God. He changed his life. And he became. A new person. And instead of. Working against the church.

[25 : 00] He worked for the church. Instead of working. Against the gospel. Persecuting them. He now became. Persecuted. For the gospel. But he wasn't. Going back on it. Because he discovered. This.

The grace. Of God. In the gospel. He discovered. The only way. To be right with God. Is for God. To save you. It's nothing about. What I can do for God. It's about what God.

Has done. For me. In Jesus Christ. That's. What it means. To be saved. And Paul. Never. Ever. Lost sight of that. It affected.

His character. And his behavior. From then on. And he never forgot. The love of Jesus Christ. In. At Calvary. And he never forgot.

That what he deserved. Was God's wrath. And his condemnation. You know. When a person. Becomes aware. Of the grace of God. It affects. The way you live. Should make us.

[25 : 53] Humble. It should make us. It should make us. Prayerful. Should make us. Give us a love for God. That is. Different from. From. From what we ever had.

Before. Or beforehand. We. We thought we could. We could. We were just all right. We compared ourselves. With other people. And we compared ourselves. Favorably. Everybody does. Don't they? Favorably.

With other people. But. When you come. To see. Our need. And our sin. Then. And the grace of God. God's grace. Grace. Amazing grace.

Said John Newton. How sweet the sound. That saved. A wretch. Like me. I once was lost. But now I'm found. Was blind.

But now I see. That's what the gospel is. The gospel is God. The gospel is God. Reaching his hand down. And pulling us. Out of the mire. And the filth. And washing us.

[26 : 49] And cleaning us. That's what happened. To the apostle Paul. And that's the only way. In which we can be Christians today. Is by the grace. Of God. And the gospel. Have you taken.

Have you accepted that grace. For yourself. Today. Now the third and last negative and positive pair is this. It's found in verse 10. It's been manifested through the appearing.

Of our savior. Jesus Christ. Christ Jesus. Who abolished death. And brought. Life and immortality to light through the gospel. Now it's not surprising.

That Paul should be speaking about death. Because he was looking at death. His own death. In the face. Eye to eye. It was only a matter of time. Before that gentleman. Was going to open the prison door.

And bring him out. In order for him. To breathe his last. And that's a very. Very solemn thought. And it's not surprising. That you would be thinking. About life. And death.

[27 : 44] But. But. As far as the apostle is concerned. Whatever he thinks. And whatever. Whatever. I can't imagine anyone. Who faces death.

Without. A certain. Sense. And a. A consciousness. Of the solemnity. And the. The. The. The darkness. Of what. Is going to happen. To him.

But. In any case. Paul. As far as. Beyond death. Was concerned. Paul. Was absolutely. Confident. And he could face. Death. Because. He knew. Two things.

First. Jesus. Abolished death. That's the first thing. He tells us. And the second thing. He tells us. Is that. He has brought. Life.

And. Immortality. To life. Through the gospel. Let's just look at these. Two things. Before we close. First of all. He tells us that. Jesus has abolished. Death. Now.

[28 : 41] I suppose. On the surface. You could say. Well. How can he have. Because people. Still die. People die. All the time. I'm going to die. You're going to die. We're going to. We're going to die. The grave. The cemeteries are full.

Of. Of. Death. Death. So. How can this be. That he has abolished. Death. Well. That's what it tells us.

We have to come to a proper. Biblical understanding. Of what that means. And we can only do that. By asking. What the Bible tells us. About death. What is death? Well. Death is first of all. When. A person comes to the end. Of what they were. In this world. The life that they lived. In this world. And what we believe. Is that. Our soul. Separates from the body. The body is placed in the ground. And our soul goes.

Either to be with the Lord. Or. To be away from the Lord. If we have died. Outside of Christ. God forbid. That's the first. Thing that death is.

[29 : 38] But the Bible tells us. That Jesus. Has abolished that death. Not that people. Don't die anymore. But that Jesus. Put that death.

Into reverse. When he rose. From the dead. On the third day. We'll talk about that. In a few moments time. Let me go on to the second thing. That the Bible tells us. About death. The second thing.

Is that. Death. Is spiritual death. Where a person. Lives his whole life. Or lives. Part of their life. Until they're converted. As people who are dead.

Paul tells us. In Ephesians chapter 2. You were dead. In trespasses and sins. In other words. You had no conception. Of the gospel. Or God. You had no desire. For God.

You didn't think about God. Or you thought about him. Every so often. But your heart was completely. Separate from him. You were dead. But look at what the gospel.

[30 : 32] Has done there. The gospel. Jesus. Has brought to life. Those who hear his word. And those who are brought to life. By his power. Every person here.

Who's a follower of Jesus Christ. Is a. Is a product. Of the power of God. In raising us. From the dead. You're a new person.

If you're in Jesus. I'm a new person. By following Jesus. I'm no longer dead. I'm alive. God has brought me. To life. But the third thing. That the Bible tells us. About death. Is what we call.

Eternal death. And that's where. At the day of judgment. There will be a separation. Forever. Between God. And those.

Who have refused to believe. The gospel. And who have not been cleansed. By the blood of Jesus. That's what we call. Eternal death. Now in all three instances.

[31 : 27] Jesus. Has defeated that death. In all three forms. All of them. Jesus has brought victory. In. In himself.

What does Paul say? Where oh death. Is your victory. Where oh death. Is your sting. Paul says. To me. To live. Is Christ. And to die. Is gain.

He tells us. Death is. Swallowed up. In victory. The once. What victory. Are we talking about? Why do we talk about this. Victory. Because Jesus. He himself.

Laid down his life. He became dead. For us. He was killed. His life. Expired. He gave his life. On the cross. And the body that was taken.

From the cross. Was a dead body. And placed in the grave. He was as dead. As any other dead remains. That are placed in a grave. And yet.

[32 : 22] On that one. Once for all moment. On that single. Unique moment. In history. God. Brought him back to life again. And he rose again.

Again. But remember this. That his rising. Was not. Simply. That God. Had recognized.

What Jesus had done. And was bringing him. To life again. His rising. Was the first fruits. Of the rising. Of everyone. Who believes in him. Let me put it this way.

How many times. Do you read. Matthew chapter 28. And think about yourself. Matthew 28. Is the chapter. That tells us. About how Jesus. Rose from the dead. And how the disciples. Went to visit the tomb.

And how they. Looked. They looked for his body. In the tomb. And they couldn't find him. And the angel said. He is not here. He is risen. Come see the place. Where he lay. And we read about the.

Resurrection of Jesus.

[33 : 20] But how many times. Do you go back. Maybe you could do that today. After church. You go back. And you read that. And this time. Think about yourself. And think about.

Jesus rising. As the basis. For your rising. From the dead. Our belief. And the promise. That we have.

Is that just. As Jesus. Rose from the dead. So we. In Jesus. Will rise. Likewise. From the dead. And that's why.

Paul was. Absolutely unflinching. About that. He knew. He knew. That. That. One day. He too. Would rise. From the dead. Because. He was able to look back. At that victorious. Momentous moment. When Jesus. Was brought back. To life. Again. Now there's the very last thing. He abolished death.

[34 : 15] And brought life. And immortality. To life. Through the gospel. Now something. That's brought to life. Is something. That becomes clear. If you go into a shed. On a dark night.

You need a torch. There are things. In the shed. You know. That there are things. In the shed. But it's only. When you take the torch. With you. That they're. Brought to light. So they're there. All the time. You just don't know.

They're there. And you don't know. Anything about them. Now. Here. Is. Where the bible. Tells us. That. What we don't know. Anything about. Is brought to light. And what is it.

What is it. He's talking about. He's talking about. Life. After death. We live in a world. Today. Where there is. A massive. Interest. A fascination.

In life. After death. How many times. Do you hear people saying. Sometimes you see. On the news. Or. Or some program. Or other. And you read it in books. And people talk about.

[35 : 08] Things like. Well. I know. That my loved one. Is looking down on me. Right now. And smiling. How many times.

Do you find people saying. Well. I know. That I'm going to see. My loved one again. They don't know. They know nothing.

About the bible. It's just a wish. It's a wishful thought. But you get it. All the time. You get it. In movies. I don't know.

If you've seen. The lovely bones. I didn't see it. But I read the book. Years ago. It's a most tragic story. A tragic. Tragic story.

Written by someone. Who had gone through. Horrendous moment. Herself. But it's based on a lie. It's based on the idea. That. Everyone's going to go to heaven.

[36 : 08] It's based on the idea. That heaven is getting. Anything that you want. It's a life. In which you enjoy. Everything that you wanted. In this life. That's a lie.

There's no substance to it. At all. And it's when people. They don't know anything. About what they're talking about. But they. But they want to. They want to put. Substance. They want. It's wishful thought.

What's the good of having. Wishful thoughts. When it doesn't exist. But here is Paul. And he's saying. I'll tell you what the truth is. There is a life after death.

But there's more to that. God has told us. What this life is all about. It tells us. That there's a heaven. And there's a hell. And the Bible tells us. The way to get to heaven. And the way to. To escape hell. Makes it absolutely clear for us. The only way to get to heaven. This morning. Is through Jesus Christ.

[37 : 06] Christ. By believing. And trusting in him. Becoming sin for us. And his sacrifice. On the cross of Calvary. And that. When the moment. You come to believe in him.

You become a new person. You rise from the dead. And you. Then you. The promise is given to you. That when it comes time to die. That you will go forever.

To be with the Lord. And the obstacle is this. It's always the case. That you have to leave the old life behind. What good is the old life to you?

When God is offering you new for old. What good is a life that's going to come to an end? What good is a happy meal that's going to be destroyed in a moment?

As I was talking to the kids. It doesn't last. That's a picture of life isn't it? It's a picture of the world we live in. Where we live for momentary pleasure.

[38 : 02] And momentary happiness. What God is saying. Look. Throw all that away. In favor. Of what I'm going to give you. Eternal life. I can't understand why anyone.

Walks away from eternal life. In favor. Of something that's. They're going to lose. One day. Well. Once again.

Paul brings the. Paul brings the gospel to us. In clear and certain terms. The Bible has made absolutely clear. That the only way. To be washed and cleansed.

And to have everlasting life. Is by believing. In the Lord Jesus Christ. And I believe this morning.

That the Lord is. Working within people here. And bringing them.

To a real knowledge. Of himself. It's his word. It's his power. We leave it. In his hands. Let's pray.

Father. Father bless these thoughts to us.

[38 : 59] We ask. And our closing psalm. As we. We pray. That your power. May be upon us. And that your spirit. Will work. Mightily within us. And forgive our sin. In Jesus name.

Amen. Amen. Thank you.