

Paul's Deposit

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Preacher: Rev James Maciver

[0 : 0 0] this evening singing in Psalm 103, Psalm 103. That's in the Sing Psalms version on page 135. We'll sing verses 1 to 11, these first three sections.

Praise God, my soul, with all my heart. Let me exalt His holy name. Forget not all His benefits. His praise, my soul, in song proclaim. The Lord forgives you all your sins and heals your sickness and distress. Your life He rescues from the grave and crowns you in His tenderness.

So on down to verse 11, praise God, my soul. We'll stand to sing. Praise God, my soul, with all my heart. Let me exalt.

His holy name. Forget not all His benefits. His praise, my soul, in song proclaim.

The Lord forgives you all your sins and heals your sickness and distress.

[1 : 4 0] Your life He rescues from the grave and crowns you in His tenderness.

He satisfies your deep desires from His unending source of good.

So that just like the King of strength, your beautiful name God is in you.

The Lord is born for righteous acts and trust is true.

The Lord is merciful. The Lord is merciful. The Lord is merciful. Moses' name may go on his ways, his mighty deeds to Israel's sons.

[3 : 1 6] The Lord is merciful and kind to hang us low and full of grace.

He will not constantly reproof or end his anger by his face.

He does not punish our best deeds, forgive our sins, their just reward.

How great is love that I ascend towards all those who fear the Lord.

We're going to call upon the Lord again in prayer, so let's all just join together in prayer. Almighty and gracious God, as we give thanks for being able once again to gather here and to come before you as worshipers of your great name, we thank you for these words we have been singing, reminding us of your own unending stores of good for those who love you and for your own people down through the centuries, even from the beginning of the world.

[5 : 0 9] Lord, you have taken from these stores of good and dispensed them to your people. We thank you tonight, Lord, in the access we have to you, that we can seek from you, that you would dispense further from these stores of good that which would do us good this evening.

We thank you, O Lord, that we can come to you and claim in the name of Christ access to the grace that is in you and to these stores of good and to these stores of good and to these that flow toward us so abundantly.

We thank you that we have not earned them for ourselves. We thank you that they are indeed by your grace and the free gift by which you come to dispense your salvation.

We thank you tonight for the way that you teach us, O Lord, of those great issues in your word that have to do with our redemption. And we thank you that in your word you have taken account of all our need as we find ourselves in this world.

O Lord, bless us, we pray, as once again we gather here before you. Help us once again to turn our mind to those things that are revealed in your word that are of eternity, the things that belong to the most important issues that we can know in life, our own relationship with you, your own rule over us, the way in which you have provided redemption for us, the glorious attributes that belong to you, the way in which we can have our confidence in Christ and know that our life is secure in him.

[6 : 47] We pray, Lord, tonight that you would lead us further into the understanding of your truth, as you have revealed it to us in the gospel. We pray tonight that you would give to us further encouragement, Lord, to trust in you, in a world in which we find so much that discourages us, so much that causes us at times even to feel disconsolate and disappointed and disillusioned.

Help us, Lord, we pray, to find our confidence in you. Help us to come to know that as we trust in you, so you have guaranteed to your people that victory that is especially brought to us in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

And enable us, Lord, as we continue to trust in you, that we may find day by day that your grace is channeled into our lives, that your strength is made perfect in our weakness, that we find the fulfillment of your promises to look after your people even as they go through this life.

Bless us then, Lord, we pray, as a congregation of your people once again as we gather before you. Bless us, we pray, too, in all our other activities that accompany the worship of your name in our experience.

We thank you, Lord, for all that we are enabled to partake of and take part in, Lord, in the course of each week as they go by.

[8 : 19] And we pray that you would bless all that we seek to do in your name with all the different activities and groups that meet from time to time. We, Lord, seek your blessing upon them all.

Again, we pray your blessing for our children, for our young people, for our young adults, for those who, O Lord, receive instruction from your word, and for those who meet also in the upper years of life.

Lord, we pray that you would bless each and all of these activities. We ask that your blessing will be especially upon your word to them. Anchor, O Lord, these young lives, especially in the things of your truth, and give them to be rooted and grounded in Christ himself, so that they have him as their sure foundation, that whatever things lie in a wait for them as their life develops, they may be sure that this is not going to change, that however many changes they may experience in the course of life, they may never find the foundation in Christ himself to be subject to any change or moving or any alteration.

And so, Lord, we commend them to you. We give thanks for the many young families we have as a congregation. We give thanks for the many young people who come to attend the means of grace, the services such as these and other activities.

And, Lord, we pray for them as we commend them to you tonight. We pray that you would go before them, that you would provide nourishment for them daily from your word.

[9 : 56] And we ask that they would indeed come to walk confidently in the steps of faith, trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ. We ask tonight for those who may be struggling with their faith, struggling to deal with the issues that are in their life in providence.

Lord, we pray for them. We know that there are some of us who find it difficult from day to day, who struggle with mental health issues, who find ourselves sometimes bewildered with what's happening in the world around us.

Oh, Lord, we ask that you would grant us this stability that would be from your own guidance of us, from your own spirit at work within us, from that living relationship with you, Lord, that draws all our strength from you.

Remember, we pray tonight, those who are laid aside with illnesses of various kinds, we commend to you, Lord, those who are receiving treatment, those who have been through operation and surgery in recent days.

We ask, Lord, that you'd bless them and bring them back to health and to strength, we pray. We ask, Lord, that you'd bless Marianne as she recovers from her own surgery.

[11 : 10] We thank you that she is recovering. And we thank you, Lord, for all that she has done and continues to do in the congregation, and especially with our young people.

And we pray that your hand will be upon her, that you will know, Lord, your strengthening, your guidance and your restoration of health to her at this time. And we pray, too, Lord, that you'd bless all others like her who are known to us at this time to be suffering from various types of illness, confined to hospitals, those in our care homes, those who are looked after by others at home.

We pray for them, O Lord. We pray for those whose years have now reached the stage where their faculties physically or mentally have begun to fail. And, Lord, we pray for them.

And we give thanks that despite our outward failures, Lord, your word assures us that our inward man is being renewed day by day. And we thank you that the spiritual condition of your people is constantly in your hand.

And that even as we anticipate our bodily decay as the years go on, we thank you, Lord, that there is no decay in the life spiritually that you give to your people.

[12 : 25] Help us to hold on to and to cling to these great truths. We pray tonight, too, Lord, for those who mourn the passing of loved ones. We know, Lord, as each week goes by.

We have pretty much each week that we experience here various deaths that affect families belonging to us as a congregation or in our community.

We pray for them, O Lord, tonight as they seek to adjust to life without loved ones and also those who have lost loved ones in days gone by. We pray for them, Lord.

And we pray for those especially in this week gone by that have had to bid farewell to their loved ones. We pray for Anne Chris as she misses her beloved Neil.

We pray for herself and Martin and Christine and for the whole family. And we commend them to your care and ask that you would uphold her and all who help her at this time.

[13 : 25] And so we pray, Lord, for all others who mourn tonight in this troubled world of ours. And, Lord, we pray that we would never forget, even though they may have disappeared from news items, those in the world who suffer so greatly in various circumstances and conditions that are beyond our understanding and experience, those, Lord, especially who have the devastation of war, of famine, of being outcasts, of refugees.

Oh, Lord, all of these great problems in our world and the management of them and sometimes the mismanagement of them, we, Lord, seek for the gospel to be blessed, for your kingdom to advance, for people to come to know the Lord Jesus Christ himself, for them to place and deposit their lives in his hand.

And so we pray, Lord, for the gospel, for those who take the gospel to various parts of the world and face deprivation themselves and consequence. Oh, remember your people, we pray, as they carry the message of Christ into this world that so largely does not want it.

And we ask for your Holy Spirit, Lord, to come to shine into people's hearts the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. When we read, Lord, in the earliest stages of the world that the Spirit of God hovered on the surface of the waters and that by your Spirit all of these things were kept together and managed, we pray, Lord, for the management of human lives to be brought under the directing of your Spirit, to be brought to know you as a Savior who is able to do so much, Lord, beyond what we are able to ask or even think.

Oh, Lord, we pray for reviving power in our own experience. We pray that our own hearts will be reignited with the flames of your Spirit. We pray, oh, Lord, that you would come in our day and as we complain to you of how we find so little, oh, Lord, of an appetite for the things of God.

[15 : 32] And so we pray that you would re-instill in our hearts that hunger and thirst for righteousness that you tell us characterizes you people. And we pray for ourselves tonight that we may draw, Lord, our spiritual nourishment from you through the gospel.

Hear us then, we pray now. Continue with us, guide us into your word, and pardon our sin for Jesus' sake. Amen. We're singing once again now to God's praise, and this time it's in Psalm 54.

Psalm 54 in the Scottish Psalter, page 284, verses 1 to 7. Save me, O God, by thy great name, and judge me by thy strength.

My prayer here, O God, give ear unto my words at length. For they that strangers are to me, do up against me rise. Oppressors seek my soul, and God set not before their eyes.

Psalm 54, verses 1 to 7, to God's praise. Save me, O God, by thy great name, and judge me by thy strength.

[16 : 59] My prayer here, O God, give ear unto my words at length.

For they that strangers are to me, do up against me rise.

O presence of sin, my soul, and God set not before their eyes.

The Lord, my God, my help, Lord, that for I am bold, He take the heart with every one, that hath my soul of old.

But do my name, and he is the child, may save and ill be paid.

[18 : 53] O Lord, my truth, save but them all, and weep and lead away.

I will have sacrifice to thee, and with thee, and with thee worthiness.

Thy name, O Lord, be cost is good, with grace, with grace I will fordez.

For he hath me delivered, from all my mercilies.

And this desire, my life hath seen, upon my enemies.

[20 : 31] Let's now turn to read God's word. This evening we'll find that in 2 Timothy. The second letter of Paul to Timothy, chapter one. Reading through the whole chapter.

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus, by the will of God, according to the promise of the life that is in Christ Jesus.

To Timothy, my beloved child. Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father, and Christ Jesus our Lord. I thank God, whom I serve, as did my ancestors, with a clear conscience, as I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day, as I remember your tears.

I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy. I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and now I am sure dwells in you as well.

For this reason, I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God gave us a spirit not of fear, but of power and love and self-control.

[21 : 44] Therefore, do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor 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 Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, for which I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher, which is why I suffer as I do.

But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me. Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you. You are aware that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes.

May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains. But when he arrived in Rome, he searched for me earnestly and found me.

May the Lord grant him to find mercy from the Lord on that day. And you well know all the service he rendered at Ephesus.

[23 : 21] And may God once again bless to us our reading of his holy word. Let's now sing once again, before we turn to this passage, Psalm 125 on page 419.

Psalm 125, the whole of the Psalm. We are going to be looking later in a moment at what Paul referred to as his own security in Christ Jesus, his Saviour.

And here's a reminder, a Psalm that reminds us how the Psalmist found an illustration of his protective, God's protective care and his security, even in the physical creation, as the mountains around Jerusalem stood in such a grand, immovable way.

And so he found that as an illustration of the security that he himself had in God as his Saviour. They in the Lord that firmly trust shall be like Zion Hill.

which at no time can be removed. but stand by the Lord that shall be like Zion Hill. then the Lord that firmly trust shall be like Zion Hill.

[24 : 54] which at no time can be removed. which at no time can be removed.

but stand the death was still. as round about Jerusalem, the mountains and the way.

I find the commandments God is where one nation can bring forth to him. The mahdoll What ill men shawed upon the Lord of just men shall not lie, lest righteous men set forth their hands unto iniquity.

Good power to all, O Sáad, be good, thy goodness stormed in part, and do thy good to all, O Sáad, a bright within their heart.

But as for Son has turned aside, after their crooked way, God shall be poor, when wicked men on Israel these shall see.

[27 : 38] Now please turn with me to 2 Timothy chapter 1. 2 Timothy chapter 1, and especially words you'll find there in verse 12.

He's been talking here about how as a called apostle of God and preacher and apostle and teacher, his sufferings that he's endured are so keyed into this particular way in which he has served God.

But he says, But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me.

Now one of Paul's great concerns in writing these letters to Timothy is that Timothy not only will be encouraged, but also prepared to meet with the difficulties that will still come in his way, and especially so when Paul himself is no longer in this world, and when he will no longer be receiving letters from the beloved apostle.

As we see in this epistle itself, Paul is saying to Timothy, I'm now being poured out in verse chapter 4, and the time of my departure has come.

[29 : 04] I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. So he's alerting Timothy to the fact that his own future is safe in the hand of God, but he is going to actually face difficulties as he continues to serve the Lord Jesus Christ in this world.

Which is why he says that both he and Timothy together must be partakers of the afflictions of the gospel. They must willingly take to themselves the share that God has appointed to them in whatever afflictions come their way as apostles or as servants or preachers of the gospel.

And now he comes to bring Timothy's mind to what is actually foundational to his confidence and encouragement as he would go ahead and go on serving the Lord.

He brings him really to the ground of confidence, the ground of confidence, indeed the only ground of confidence, which is Christ himself. He says, these are the sufferings I am suffering, but I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me.

Or we can translate it as we'll see what I have entrusted to him. So he's really putting it in the form of a brief personal testimony to Timothy. Paul is saying, this is my testimony.

[30 : 31] This is what I'm convinced of. This is what I'm leading you to actually keep in place for yourself as well. And of course, at the end of anyone's life in this world, if we know that somebody wants to speak to us, especially somebody who's been a faithful Christian over many years, and they call us and we go to see them and they speak to us, well, it's a situation, as you know, where you take more careful note than usual, probably, of what they have to say.

Because when they know that they're on the verge of eternity, their words have added significance. And most of us, of course, have maybe come to, some of us at least come to that position where we've seen somebody just reaching the end of the course of life in this world, and the things that they say to us, what they believe, the kind of life they've lived, the advice that they give us, that is even more significant in these consequences, in these circumstances.

And that's really what Paul is doing here. He's giving some very direct encouragement to Timothy, but it's in the light of his own departure, in the light of the fact that he's not got long to live.

And as he stands on the threshold of eternity, he's really saying to Timothy, this is the only fail-safe foundation that you've got. This is what you need to come back to again and again when so much changes around you, when you see so many fears in yourself, when you find yourself questioning things, you have to come back.

He's really saying, pretty much saying this, you have to come back to this, that he, this Savior, this Jesus, is able to look after things for you and to look after yourself especially.

[32 : 21] So he's saying, I know whom I have believed. And so because he's able to say that, he has that confidence, he's convinced about Jesus looking after all of his possessions and all of his confession and all of his person as he looks to the future.

I want to look at two things that arise out of this. It's a wonderful passage. First of all, the issue of knowing Jesus. I know whom I have believed.

I know whom I have believed. There is a confident note in the apostle and Paul's testimony here to Timothy. I know whom I have believed.

The second thing is what we can call a safe investment when he comes to say that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me.

And we're going to take that the way the AV puts it. I'll explain that in a minute. And when we come to it, he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day.

[33 : 31] So here's first thing of all. First of all, knowing Jesus. Now, together here, you'll find knowing and believing. I am not ashamed for I know whom I have believed.

So the knowing and the believing are locked together. They're not alternatives. They exist together. They belong together. They're in partnership in the experience of those who actually have a saving experience of Christ.

It's a mistake to actually think somehow that you have to separate faith or believing from knowledge, from knowing. That the working of your mind is somehow detached from what you're doing when you believe.

You'll find that idea that is sometimes thrown at us for believing in a Jesus that we don't physically see and that we believe things that the Bible tells us about him, that we believe what Christians have believed down through the centuries.

And people will accuse us of really, you know, you're believing in something you cannot verify. You've never seen this person and yet you claim that you believe in him, that you trust in him, that you actually find him the basis of all your hopes.

[34 : 47] How can you do that? Well, because believing and knowing actually go together. It's not simply a matter of believing in Christ. It's also knowing Christ.

And our believing, in any case, is not a leap in the dark. It's not as if you're just jumping off a spiritual or moral cliff and somehow hoping that you're going to land safely without really knowing what's ahead of you.

That's not the kind of thing that faith is. Tonight, if you're a believer in Christ, you're not believing blindly. You're not believing in something really that you don't know much about.

Because, as Romans 10, verse 17 tells us, faith comes by hearing and hearing the word of Christ, the truth of God. Your faith, as you place your faith in Christ, is not a blind faith.

It's not a launching out into the dark as if you don't have any access to what's true at all. You believe because God has revealed things to you to believe.

[35 : 48] You believe because you are convinced that this Bible is God's revelation to you and it's reliable as well as being authoritative. And so, when you come to believe in Christ, it's not a Jesus you know nothing about.

It's not a Jesus that's somehow hiding in the shadows from you even though you can't see Him physically. He's not hiding in some sort of moral or spiritual shadow that you can hardly make out.

He is actually revealed in all His beauty and His glory as far as we can actually follow it at least in these wonderful pictures of the gospel, these descriptions, these things that make up the truth of God.

I know whom I have believed. You embrace Christ as He's offered in the gospel willingly by the grace of God.

And always remember that when somebody comes to you and says, you know, I don't really think you've got a ground for believing what you believe or trusting in this Jesus when you can't tell me that you've actually seen Him at any point.

[36 : 56] No, but you actually say to Him, well, I believe certain things but I believe them not just because they're written in the pages of the Bible which I regard as the truth of God. I believe them because I know Him as well as what's written in the Bible and what's presented in the gospel.

That's the second thing here in terms of knowing Jesus. There is a knowing along with a believer. You know what He's saying here? He's saying, I know whom I have believed.

See, the apostle here is not saying I know what I have believed. And he's not saying I know what I believe about Jesus. He's not saying I know things about God and I believe these things to be true.

He's saying I know whom I have believed. I know this person. I know this person of Jesus for myself. I don't just believe blindly and I don't just believe because I've got a Bible to believe.

I know this person that I believe in and trust myself to. That's what He's saying. I know whom I have believed. You see, Paul is on personal terms with this Jesus.

[38 : 13] He's not believing in this person because he knows him as the founder of a religion that he respects such as you find in the major world religions of today founded by whether it's Muhammad or Buddha or whoever else it might have been that have founded or established these great religions.

But they're gone. They're dead. They've passed from the scene of time. They're no longer living as Jesus is living. But here is Paul saying, I know whom I have believed.

I know the one that I've placed my trust and confidence in. I know him because he is still living. Because he's risen from the dead. Which is why you find him dealing so much and so foundationally and so centrally with the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

He has brought life and immortality to life through his resurrection. And Paul is saying, I know him. God has brought me into a living relationship with him.

I'm not following a dead founder of a religion. Nor am I following the gospel as a mere system of belief. Such as you might find people following a creed or following a system of belief founded by whoever it is and continuing to actually follow that kind of system of belief or that creed or other.

[39 : 45] No, he says, I'm not following a system. I'm not following a religion. I'm following a person. I believe in this living person. I know this living person.

And really that's how you've got to look at it yourself. What is it that distinguishes a person who is a Christian in a living sense? I'm not talking about a Christian in the sense of, you might say, the formal sense because you follow the Christian faith rather than Islam or Buddhism or whatever.

Well, in a sense, that makes you a Christian, of course. If you're following the Christian faith, you're a Christian in that formal outward sense. What I'm talking about here is a Christian in the living sense of living in dependence upon Christ, living in a relationship that you know is live with this living person.

Is that you? Is that you tonight? Are you a Christian through knowing Christ?

You're surely not just saying, I'm a Christian because I'm different to a Muslim, because I follow the teachings of the Bible. Wonderful. That's so important.

[41 : 05] That's so crucial to you. true. But what makes you a Christian in the living sense is that you know Jesus, that you know Christ for yourself, that you know he lives, that you know he has conquered death, that you know he has forgiven your sins, that you know he's your daily companion, you know whom you have believed.

need. And then he says, and I am convinced. You see how it grows out of this knowing of Christ. He's saying, I'm not ashamed, I will not be put to shame, I will not be shunned by God, I will not be rejected.

All of that comes into what he's saying, I'm not ashamed. It's not just a feeling of being ashamed. In the New Testament, being ashamed is tied up with being rejected or being judged and found wanting.

that's not going to happen to me, saying, I'm not ashamed and I will not be put to shame, for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced. You see, from his knowing of Jesus, he comes to be convinced about certain things, about him, and about the truth as it is in him.

You might say he's got an assured believing from knowing Christ. Now, you're to ask Paul, well, Paul, how can you possibly be sure about these things?

[42 : 32] How can you be convinced about things? How can you actually say that this is, in fact, certain for you, and that this is not just the truth for you, but it is the truth?

Well, he says, I know, I'm sure, I'm convinced because I know him, because I know himself. And when you know himself, it doesn't matter what somebody says to you and tries to convince you otherwise.

It doesn't matter what doubts the devil or somebody else might try and instill in your mind. It doesn't matter how much somebody might try to shake your faith and bring you back to the kind of ideas you find in the world that tells you you're stupid, you're a fool to believe something you've never verified scientifically or whatever, I know whom I have believed.

I know himself. That's why I'm convinced. I'm convinced about these things about him. See, Paul, you guys put it this way, Paul is not searching for the truth.

This is one of the great fallacies of today, isn't it? When you find people who are established churchmen sometimes saying, you know, you can't actually possibly believe that Christ is the only way to God, that he is the way, the truth and the life, as John's gospel puts it.

[44 : 00] You've got to have an amalgamation and a conglomeration of all sorts of different religious ideas and it's as you weld these together, as you actually bring all of that together and as you walk along with people who believe in other systems of belief and as you join all that together and as you try and worship together and engage with each other, then you're involved in a search for the truth.

You're involved in a progress onwards until eventually at some point or other you're going to come to the truth hopefully. Paul is saying, nonsense, rubbish.

I know the truth because I know Jesus Christ. I know the truth because I know the Son of God who is himself the embodiment of the truth as he came into this world to reveal the truth of God to us.

I know whom I have believed. Some people would say, you know, that's really being pretty arrogant, isn't it? I'm pretty arrogant towards other faiths or other systems of belief.

If you're saying to me tonight that, and they might say to you, if you're saying to me tonight that Jesus is exclusively the Savior and the way to know God and to come into a living relationship with God and to have the righteousness that God requires of us and live the kind of life that God is pleased with, how can you say to me that only Jesus can do that for you or only through Jesus can you come into that relationship with God?

[45 : 34] Well, I can say that because I know Jesus and I know this is what Jesus himself believed and said. Am I going to actually trust the word of someone whom I know to be my Savior?

Or am I going to simply say, well, you know, we've got to add to that, we've got to change that in the world in which we live. We've got to add to that other kinds of ideas and especially as the world has progressed technologically in terms of finding things out and affirmations from science as to how things work and all the rest of it.

It doesn't matter. You don't have to understand many of these scientific discoveries or how the analysis is made of life as you know it in this world.

All you need is to know him. I know whom I have believed. Paul's not searching for the truth. He doesn't need to.

He knows that he's got that in Christ. He knows that what he has in Christ is God's supreme revelation of himself. He's the light of the world.

[46 : 47] He is himself the way, the truth, and the life. He is the resurrection and the life. He's all of the things he claimed to be. And although Paul himself, of course, was adamant at one time that the last thing in the world he wanted was to give his life over to this Jesus, he regarded him as a fraud, regarded him as somebody who was being peddled by his followers as somehow or other a representation of God on earth until he was making his way as an enemy of Christ, to Damascus with further intentions in his mind to cast more of the followers of Jesus into prison and so on.

And then he met with this person. He was arrested by this Christ himself who turned his life around and put everything upside down for him, or rather the right way up for him.

And now he's saying, I know whom I have believed. And all the things that I once held on to as so essential for earning the favor of God, of coming to gain God's approval, as he says in Philippians chapter 3, I now count these as worthless rubbish.

He's not being disparaging of what he once believed in a sense, but he is rejecting it as the basis of his acceptance with God. I count him, he says, as worthless so that I might gain Christ and be found in him and have the righteousness as of God by him.

I know whom I have believed. You know, Paul would really look out over those folks who claim that Christ is not enough, that you've got to add to Jesus himself or to the gospel where Jesus is set forth as the Savior exclusively.

[48 : 46] People, as we said, will say to you, that's really not enough. You've got to move ahead nowadays. You've got to progress. What will Paul say to that? Paul said to that, you've got a big problem.

You've got a massive problem. And the problem is you don't know Jesus. And you don't know Jesus as God's exclusive, wonderful, sufficient Savior of sinners.

So here's for me the question tonight. Do I know Jesus? Have I been standing in pulpits for well over 30 years and still don't know him for myself?

I hope not. I trust not. I believe not. Do you know him? Do you know him as your living companion?

Are you in a daily conversation with him? Do you know him in such a way as would say, you know, if everything else was taken out of my life, and that's a very difficult thing to say, I would still have Jesus and my life would be secure.

[50 : 00] I know whom I have believed, says the apostle. And for you and for me, it's not just a matter of believing in Christ, believing God's word, believing what it says there about him.

Believing means a knowing of him, a coming to live in a living relationship with him, where you have, as Paul himself had, personal terms with Christ every day.

I know whom I have believed. But then he says, and I am convinced, rising out of that relationship that he has with Christ, this knowledge that he has of Christ, he's saying I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me.

Now, I've said that personally I prefer the old AV rendering of it there. It's perfectly possible grammatically to render it either way, either like this.

He's able to guard what has been entrusted to me, by which the translators here have been really, their view is that he's talking about the gospel, the message of Christ.

[51 : 14] Whereas the AV took it in the other way that, again, is possible grammatically. I am convinced, he says, that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him.

And you see it's, you find later on there the verse 14, by the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, he's saying to Timothy, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.

And I think it's from that that this translation itself has come to translate it this way, to guard what has been entrusted to me. Now, do you see, verse 14 there is really saying the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, you, Timothy, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.

But what he's saying here in verse 12 is it's something that he has entrusted to Christ, something that Christ is going to look after. It's not Timothy who's looking after it here, it's Christ who's looking after what he says here in verse 12.

It's literally in the Greek text of all it says is he's able to guard the deposit. My deposit. And what is this deposit? Well, I believe it's better taking it as Paul speaking about entrusting himself, his life, his apostleship, his present, his future.

[52 : 32] After all, he's talking here about death being imminent. He's not far away from the end of his course in this life. And he's encouraging Timothy to continue to trust in this God and to continue to entrust himself to Jesus because he says, I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that he is able to guard, to keep until that day what I have entrusted to him, what I have given over to him to be secure in him.

In other words, it's Paul's own, if you take it that way, he means his own life. He means his person. That's what he's deposited in Christ's hands. And so that's really, in a sense, what fits in with many references in the Bible to God being a refuge.

And 1 Peter, for example, chapter 4, which is a letter really, as you know, that's written largely to suffering Christians, persecuted Christians.

In chapter 4, the last verse there, he says, therefore, let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful creator while doing good.

He's talking about entrusting themselves to this living Savior. And that's how we're taking these words of Paul to Timothy as well. I am convinced, I am persuaded, I am fully convinced that he is able to guard, to look after everything that I've placed in his hand, including myself, until that day.

[54 : 08] So really, your faith, your living relationship with Jesus is not just, of course, a formal assent to his truth. It is, as we said, knowing Jesus in a personal relationship.

But it's also in the actings of your faith. And it's not just once and for all. It's really on an everyday, ongoing basis. It's entrusting yourself to Jesus. Isn't that how you begin every day?

That you actually pray, Lord, please look after my life again. I'm placing myself in your hands. And as I place myself in your hands, Lord, whatever happens on this day, look after me.

Guard me. Keep me. Be my guard. My guardian. Be the one who looks after me as I entrust myself to you.

Entrustman to a person. And there's the question again for yourself and for myself. Is that how you find your own life? You know the gospel.

[55 : 16] You know the Bible. You know the message of the gospel. You know other Christians in this place tonight and elsewhere. But here is the question following on from do you know him yourself, for yourself?

Have you entrusted your life to him? Have you given over your life to this Jesus to be your Lord as well as your Savior?

Have you deposited, if you like, to use the words of the apostle here, this deposit, my deposit? I have entrusted my deposit to him. Have you deposited your own life into the hands of Jesus?

There are few questions as important as that in your life. This is why, friends, God has given us the gospel.

Not so that we would have a mere intellectual knowledge of who Jesus is and what Jesus has done. Wonderful though that is. It's so that we will be persuaded that we need this Jesus as our own personal Savior.

[56 : 33] And that knowing that we need this Jesus by the grace of God, by the power of his Spirit, we will deposit our lives into his hand. We will entrust ourselves to him to look after us all the way through life and into eternity itself.

And let me say to the young folks here tonight, you don't think of yourself as too young to do this. I don't know if you've still got a bank account.

Some of you probably have. But if you have, you know what you do when you have a savings account. You deposit some money in that. And you expect the bank to look after it for you and not lose your money.

Then you can withdraw it whenever you want. You can go and take some money out of it. But you've left it in the bank. You've put it there. You've deposited it there for safekeeping. That's what Paul is saying about himself.

He has put himself in the hands of Jesus for safekeeping. And what he's saying is when you do that, your life is safe. You can't guarantee whether you're young or old in this life.

[57 : 40] You can't guarantee that everything will turn out well just by hoping for the best. Paul is saying here he's able to guard this deposit until that day.

What I have entrusted to him, he's going to look after it until that day. And by that he means the day of Christ's return. The day of judgment. The day when Jesus comes back to this world.

What a momentous day that's going to be. We must all, as Paul says to the Corinthians in his second epistle, we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that we may all receive the things done in this body whether good or evil.

Paul doesn't need to be afraid that somehow or other things are not going to turn out well for him on that day because he has entrusted his life to Jesus, because Jesus is looking after it for him, because he's put himself in the hands of Christ, because that's where the deposit of his life is.

He is safe. Nothing's going to actually change that. The only way that can change is somehow or other God the Father finds something wrong with Jesus.

[58 : 56] And that's never going to happen. And there's your wonderful assurance tonight that however weak you might say your own faith is and however many times you fail the Lord, however many times you know that you've not been as you should be, you've not done what you should have done, or you've done things you shouldn't have done, you're conscious that you sin against God every day, that you need his forgiveness, all of that is there.

But if you've entrusted your life to Christ, he's looking after everything for you. Your life is secure. you've made your deposit. You've deposited yourself into his hands.

Now is that your outlook tonight? Is that how your life is situated? Is that what's underneath your present and your future?

It's Jesus himself. F.B. Meyer, who was a Baptist minister in England from the mid-1800s, he died, I think, in 1929.

But in his writings, he gives the following account of two Germans who wanted to climb the Matterhorn, and you know the Matterhorn mountain itself, one of the big mountains in Europe, a very steep mountain, very icy in parts of it.

[60 : 20] Well, there were two Germans who wanted to climb the Matterhorn, so they hired three guides, and the three guides would take them, they hoped, safely up the Matterhorn as far as they could at least.

And very soon, they reached the steepest and the most slippery part of that mountain, and they had roped themselves together in this order. First of all, a guide went ahead, then a traveler, then a guide, then a traveler, and then a third guide at the end, at the rear.

As they went up the mountain, the one bringing up the rear, there the last man, actually lost his footing and slipped. But he was able to hang on because the others had little toe holes in the ice that they were climbing up the ice wall.

They had toe holes in the ice, so they were able to hold tight the weight of this man until he regained his footing. But then there came a moment when those ahead of that man also lost their footing.

And they pulled down everyone ahead of them except the guide who was going at the head of the procession, of the climb. And he stood firm because he had driven his spike deep into the ice.

[61 : 40] And so all of those who were coming after him were depending on that spike holding, which it did. And they were able again to regain their footing because this one guide, the guide at the front, had the spike deep in the ice and was able to hold things steady until they recovered.

And this is what F.B. Meyer said, I am like one of those men who slipped. But thank God I am bound in a living partnership to Christ.

And because he stands, I will never perish. May God bless his word to us. Let's sing to his praise in Psalm 73.

Psalm 73, page 316, verses 23 to 26. Nevertheless, continually, O Lord, I am with thee.

Thou dost me hold by my right hand and still upholdest me. Thou with thy counsel while I live will me conduct and guide and to thy glory afterward receive me to abide.

[62 : 52] So 23 to 26 of Psalm 73. Psalm 73. Psalm 73.

Thou dost me hold by my right hand and still upholdest me.

Thou with thy counsel while I live will be conduct and guide and to thy glory afterward and to thy glory afterward receive me whom I desire to abide.

Thou have have died in the heaven's night but thee, O Lord, our Lord, and in the air whom I desire whom I desire whom I desire and in the air whom I desire whom I desire besides thee there is none.

my flesh and heart doth faint and fail but what doth fail me never for God for love my heart God is the strength and love my heart God is the strength and portion for heaven.

[65 : 44] forever I'll go to the main door after the benediction. the benediction. Lord, our gracious God, we pray that you would bless your word to us once again.

We ask also that you would bless to us the preparation made for us for our bodily needs of the fellowship. We thank you for that food prepared. We pray that you would bless Jackie as he gives an account of his own spiritual experience and his testimony to your grace in his life.

And we ask that you would uphold him and bless Scott too as he leads the meeting. And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you now and evermore. Amen.

Thank you.