

Five Non-Negotiable Truths About Salvation

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Date: 18 January 2026

Preacher: Rich Chasse

[0:00] You know, if you ask the average person on the street about heaven, about salvation, many people believe, and I would think this would be the majority of the people believe that you can kind of custom make your own way of salvation.

That basically you can take of religion and Christianity even and whatever and make it a smorgasbord of whatever you want.

Oh, you like this particular saying of Jesus? Well, I'll take some of that. Jesus said this? Well, I don't like that. Or Gandhi said this? Or Buddha said this? Or whatever teacher that you want to cling to, you could just kind of pick and choose?

And basically what it boils down to is if you're sincere enough, that's what matters. It doesn't really matter what you believe, that basically all faiths, all religions boil down to the same thing.

It'll all work out in the end. Gandhi believed that. He believed that all great religions are fundamentally the same. The great philosopher and theologian of our day, Oprah, believed that one of the biggest mistakes that people make is that there is only one way to heaven.

[1:31] I wanted to introduce you to a fellow that maybe you've never heard of. James Tallarico, the fellow on the right, is running for Senate in the state of Texas.

His primary opponent in the Democrat primary is Jasmine Crockett, who maybe some of you who follow the news might know a little bit more about her than about him.

He is actually leading in that primary. But one of the things that I wanted to point out to him about him is that he is a seminary graduate.

And that fact and his education becomes prominent, at least for him, in terms of how he's presenting himself as a candidate. He recently sat down with Ezra Klein from the New York Times for an interview.

And Ezra Klein asked him about his training in seminary and what he believes about Christianity versus other religions, and particularly the claim of exclusivity for the Christian faith.

[2:47] That was his upbringing. That was his training. Basically, he believes that all religions basically circle around the same truth, that they all point to the same God, but they just speak in different language.

Like you might consider the way he referred to it as if I had a cup of coffee here on my podium, you might call it a cup of coffee in English, but in Spanish it would have a different word, and French and Russian or Chinese it will have a different word for it, but we're all describing the same thing.

And that's what he believes about the world religions, including Hindu, Buddhism, Islam, Judaism. They're all pointing to the same thing.

And there is a group of people in our country who just love that idea because it helps them to promote a particular political agenda.

Sometimes people are concerned about religion and politics mixing, but if religion is very liberal and says that there's multiple ways to God, then they like that and want to include that as well.

[4 : 07] The only issue, and the issue for anyone who's coming at Christianity or faith or religion from that perspective is, you're going to confront someone by the name of Jesus who says something very different to what these folks are promoting.

And some of you are familiar with this. In John 14, 6, for instance, Jesus said this, and this is something that's very inconvenient for them.

And this is where the smorgasbord or the buffet becomes kind of important because there are some things that Jesus would say or do that they would love to claim, and there are other things that Jesus would say or do that they would say, oh, we can't pay attention to that.

And this is one of the ones where, well, we can't pay attention to that. Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. Would you agree with me? That's pretty exclusive.

It is. And Jesus makes a very exclusive claim to what it means to know the Lord, what it means to know salvation, what it means to have access to the kingdom, what it means to have access to heaven.

[5 : 25] And so today we're going to be confronted with another passage of Scripture that is very inconvenient that people would rather kind of skip over.

Or at least some people would rather skip over and say, well, that's not really important. But as we make our way through the text, I want us to consider what he says.

And also I would give a word of warning as well that we would pay attention. We do need to pay attention to what Jesus taught us. This thing about there being more than one way to heaven, if that had any element of truth to it, the one religion that I would reject wholly, if that were true, is Christianity.

In the sense that if all ways, if all religions point to the same God, why in the world would I want to follow a God who would sacrifice his son in such a brutal way if there was any other way to get to heaven?

That makes no sense. It would make our God a savage and completely unfollowable God.

[6 : 45] But the reason why Jesus came and went to the cross, as we're going to see today, was because there is no other way. There was only the one way, and Jesus makes that very clear in the statements that he makes today.

Now, our text, as we pick up where we left off last week, Luke 13, verse 22, he went on his way through towns and villages teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem.

And this is where I come up here to my congos, right, because Jesus is declaring and is preaching the gospel of the kingdom. And that message was very clear.

The kingdom of God is at hand. The kingdom of God is near. The kingdom of God is, as we see throughout the gospels, the kingdom of God is standing right in front of you.

And you have eternity as a choice laid down right in front of you, and he's staring you in the face. And then in chapter 9, verse 51, we read the verse where he set his face toward Jerusalem.

[7 : 55] Basically, he's about finished with his earthly ministry. He's in the north in Galilee, and he's going to Jerusalem for the purpose of going to the cross to pay the penalty for our sins.

He knows why he's going there. He willingly lays down his life. It's not some terrible miscarriage of justice. It's Jesus, of his own volition, of his own choosing, going to the cross.

And he makes his way as he's going from town to village and preaching and journeying towards Jerusalem. And as he is going, that drumbeat gets louder and louder.

The kingdom of God is at hand. The kingdom of God is at hand. The kingdom of God is at hand. My rhythm is terrible. But you get the idea that Jesus and that message is just getting more and more pronounced the closer that he gets to Jerusalem.

And we'll see that again in our text today. So he's doing this. And Luke reminds us every so often in these chapters, starting in chapter 9, we're in chapter 13 now.

[9 : 06] Luke is reminding us every so often, this is what Jesus is doing. He's on his way to Jerusalem. Luke chapter 9 is not even halfway through the gospel, but it's already toward the end of his earthly ministry as he's making his way now to Jerusalem.

And it's urgent. The message is urgent. The choice that is standing in front of you is urgent. You only have so much time to make your decision about what you will do with Jesus.

And someone said to him, someone in the crowd. Now remember, these crowds are massive. Thousands of thousands earlier in the chapter, we saw that people were almost being trampled because of the massive crowds that are gathering here.

Someone says to him every so often, there's a pause in his teaching and someone gets a word in edgewise and is able to ask a question. Someone asks him this question, Lord, will those who are saved be few?

Now remember, Jesus is speaking to Israel. He's almost exclusively, there's only the one time he even steps outside of the territory of Israel into a Gentile area.

[10 : 20] He's speaking to Israel and he's offering this kingdom to Israel. And so these people, when they're asking these questions, they're asking the question from the perspective of, as an Israelite, I would consider myself one of the few.

Remember, they were taught, the Pharisees taught them that if you are a child of Abraham, if you were an Israelite, you're in. Listen, you're good. Just by the fact that you're Jewish, just the fact that you're an Israelite means that you're good.

And when it comes to those that are outside, yeah, there will be a few Gentiles who will come to faith in Yahweh, in their Lord God, who will follow the Ten Commandments and who will join the initiation rites to become Jewish followers.

But basically, it's us few and very little more. And so the question is asked from the perspective of Jesus, can you confirm this?

That it's us few Jews who will be saved and that's pretty much it. But Jesus doesn't answer in the way that he would have expected or really most anyone in the crowd would have expected.

[11 : 40] He said to them, strive to enter through the narrow door. Now, we're going to come back and break this down a little bit. But strive, he says, to enter through the narrow door.

He says the entrance to the kingdom is narrow. It's a narrow door. What does he mean by that? We'll get to that. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter, but they will not be able to.

Many are going to want to come in, but won't be able to. What does he mean by that? Does he mean that the doorway is so small and there's a crowd of people, but you can only kind of get in one at a time and the crowd is too much?

Is that what he means or is there something else to that? When once the master of the house has risen and shut the door and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door saying, Lord, open to us, then he will answer you, I do not know where you come from.

Now, remember, he's speaking to Jews. He's speaking to the nation of Israel. He's speaking to a group of people who basically heard all their life. You're in. And now he's saying, oh, there's coming a time and the narrow door is perhaps more about time than it is about the size of the door.

[13:04] There's coming a time, he says, when the master will rise and shut the door. And when that time comes, your time will be up and you will be left standing outside of the kingdom looking to get in, but you won't be able to.

And then you will begin to say, but wait a minute, Jesus, we ate with you and we drank with you in your presence. And you taught in our streets. But he will say, I tell you, I do not know where you come from.

Depart from me, all you workers of evil. Now, again, to the average Israelite, this idea of depart from me, you workers of evil, would have been foreign to their ears.

That would have been stinging for them to hear that Jesus, the Messiah, this rabbi in their eyes, would consider them workers of evil.

That didn't fit their worldview. In that place, there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. When you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves cast out, the idea that they will be able to see into the kingdom, but they will be themselves on the outside, and they will see the people reclining at table is the phrase.

[14:30] It's how we picture communion, reclining at table, the idea of people preparing for a meal. Remember when Jesus fed the 5,000 and he told the people to sit.

It was the same verb he uses here, to recline at table, to recline because a meal is coming. Prepare for a meal.

And they're on the outside looking in. And people will come from east and west and from north and south, and now he's beginning to say that, hey, because Israel is rejecting its Messiah, now the doors are going to be thrown open to all the Gentiles, as it should have been from the beginning, as Israel was meant to be a light to the Gentile nations, and instead they twisted that and perverted that and said, no, we're the only ones in all you Gentile nations.

You're all terrible people, and you hate God, and you're pagan worshipers, and because of that we reject you. The story of Jonah, who did not want to go to Nineveh, because he did not want the people there to be saved.

He knew that God was just, but he also knew that God was merciful, and knew that if he went there with a message from God, the people would repent, and he did not want that to happen, so he ran.

[15:58] And so that was the mindset of the typical person in Israel. But Jesus says people are going to come from the east and the west and from the north and the south, and you know who that includes, right?

Us, right? We're from one of those distances away from where Israel was at, and we'll be able to recline at table in the kingdom of God.

And behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last. And he's talking about the Israelites who were considered first in the kingdom, but will be last now, versus Gentiles who would have been considered last now, first, openly invited to come and be a part of the kingdom.

So what we're going to talk about today are five non-negotiable truths about salvation. And that title alone is exclusive. It's inconvenient.

People like this James Tallarico would look at my view of Christianity and my view of the scriptures and say, well, you're pretty intolerable. No, I'm just reading the scriptures from a literal perspective, and I see what God has said, and I believe what he says.

[17:14] That's basically what it boils down to. And I'm not going to play religion or try to reinterpret or re-understand what God has said. And here's the first thing that we need to understand, that we come to God on his terms, not our own.

Where do we get this idea? Where do we get this thinking in modern society? And I think it's probably society down through history, too, that I can figure out my own way to heaven.

I can do it the way I want to do it. I can design God how I want to design him. I can make God in my own image.

It's idolatry is basically all it is. That's what it boils down to, that I can do it my way. It's the old Frank Sinatra song.

I did it my – every time I hear that song, Frank – I like Frank Sinatra. But that particular song, I'm thinking, do you realize what you're saying when you say that phrase, I did it my way?

[18:20] Well, congratulations, your way, my way leads to hell. It's not a good thing to say or to think that I can do it my way.

God is the God who created us. He designed us. He made us. In his image, I think it would make sense for us to think, okay, if he is my creator, I ought to ask him.

I ought to go to God and say, okay, how do I need to come to you on your terms, on what you have said, not what I create what I think in my own mind.

Now, back to this phrase that we saw at the beginning here, strive to enter through the narrow door. There's some misunderstanding with this word strive, the way that it's sometimes translated even.

The New Living Translation uses the words work hard. The Good News Bible says do your best.

[19:28] The God's Word Translation says try hard. Most of the better translations are using the word strive here, and that's a good translation for that word. But it's not suggesting that we somehow need to work our way to heaven.

And so the idea of working hard doesn't fit because the clear record of Scripture tells us that it's not about working our way to heaven.

The Greek word here, every once in a while I like to tell you a Greek word, not because I want to impress you with my knowledge of Greek or whatever, but because the Greek word sounds like an English word, and in this case it does.

It's agonizomai. We get our English word agonize. So the word strive here is to agonize yourself. And it's talking about focus. Like an athlete focuses in training to prepare to win the prize.

Like someone who is seeking treasure focuses on how to get to that. Like an academic focuses on study in order to learn what he needs to learn.

[20:36] That's what we're told to do here, to focus, to strive, to enter through that narrow door. Striving here is not a word that suggests that we work our way to God.

That's a bad way to say that, to translate that idea, that word here. Ephesians 2, 8, and 9 makes this very clear. There are other passages, but this is probably the clearest of all.

For by grace you have been saved through faith. This is not your own doing. It is the gift of God, not as a result of works so that no one may boast. If I'm working my way to heaven, if I'm trying to be good enough, that means that I'll be able to get to heaven's gates.

And someone might say, well, Rich, how did you get here? Basically, I'm talking about myself. Well, I was a good person, and I gave to the poor, and I studied my Bible, and I prayed.

And think of all the first person words that you hear there. I'm just talking about myself and how wonderful I am. That's not how it's going to work. That's just not how it's going to work.

[21:40] We don't get to heaven based on our own effort. It is completely a gift of God so that no one is able to boast. When I get to heaven, it's all going to be pointing to Jesus. The reason I'm here is because of what Jesus has done for me, the work that he accomplished for me, nothing that I've done in and of myself.

So it's more like this word is more like being on a quest. It's more like someone who is hunting for treasure. And so there's a sense of focus there and a sense of urgency there.

You want to be the first to get to the treasure. You want to be the first to complete the quest. You want to be the first to win the prize. Unfortunately, what we see a lot of in our world today is a lot of disinterest.

Many people, when it comes to the subject of salvation, if you ask them, have you trusted Christ as your Savior? Do you know the Lord Christ? Their eyes kind of glaze over and it's like, oh, let's change the subject or let's talk about something else.

Or let's talk about something really important like the weather or the lions or something like that. And it's like, well, wait a minute. This life lasts only for so long.

[23:01] Isn't that something that we should be interested in? Isn't that something that we should seek to resolve in this life? So Proverbs 2 talks about this.

Kind of the same idea of striving here. If you seek wisdom like silver, search for it as hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.

So that's the mindset when it says to strive to get this figured out. Jesus talked about the way being narrow. But it's not so much, again, the size of the door.

Time is an element. But there's also this is true as well. The singularity of it. It's about the singularity. It is exclusive.

There is only the one single way that we get to heaven. It is only through Christ. And Jesus himself taught that. And so if Jesus taught that, and I'm going to reject that, what kind of teacher does that make Jesus to be?

[24:09] A false teacher. If I'm going to say, well, you know, there's other ways to heaven other than Jesus. And then Jesus said, no, there's just the one way. And it's only through me. Boy, we're going to say that Jesus was quite bigoted.

Or he was quite intolerant. Or what do we do with that? Well, the way that liberal theologians deal with that is they just say, well, Jesus never said that.

That's just legend. That was just added to our Bibles or whatever. And again, it flies in the face of so much that Jesus said.

The idea that this is legend. The idea that the apostles would die for something that wasn't true. You don't die for something you don't believe is true. You don't die for something you know is a lie.

And so the apostles gave their lives for this truth, this exclusive truth. Jesus said it again in a different place here. I am the door.

[25:13] If anyone enters by me, he will be saved. We'll go in and out and find pasture. It is only through Christ. That's the first non-negotiable truth.

The second is that there's a time limit on this thing. There's a time limit on your personal invitation. And Jesus here speaks of it in a little bit different terms than what you and I would be used to.

When once the master of the house has risen and shut the door and you begin to stand outside and knock, you can't get in. And again, he's speaking to the nation of Israel.

The specific invitation that he's speaking to is for the nation of Israel to accept that Jesus is the Messiah, is their coming king.

And they rejected him. And so that's the time limit. His time limit is Jerusalem. When he gets to Jerusalem, are they going to accept him as king?

[26 : 22] Are they going to say that Jesus Christ really is the Son of God, the true Messiah, the one and only? Or will they reject him and crucify him? And, of course, we're standing in the benefit of hindsight.

We know exactly what happened. Now, for you and I, our time limit happens to be the length of your life. We're living in a different age, right?

We're living in the church age. And for us, it's the length of your life. And that's a basic way of saying it. There may be some people who their time limit is even shorter than that in the sense that they reject so often and so hard the message of the gospel, that their heart becomes hardened and they won't ever trust Christ as Savior.

But basically, for most people, you have the length of your life, and there are even people who, on their deathbed, will come to faith in Christ.

And the Lord will accept that. The Lord, anyone who believes in the invitation is extremely open. But once that door closes, and for us, that's when we breathe our last breath, once that door closes, then it's over for us.

[27 : 42] We have to make that decision during our lifetime. A third truth here, non-negotiable truth, that being familiar with the things of God does not make you a member of the family of God.

And they were arguing, well, hey, wait a minute. You were here in our presence. We ate and drank with you. We shared a meal together. You taught us.

Doesn't mean that they believed it. Doesn't mean that they accepted it. But, hey, Jesus, you did this. But understand that mere acquaintance with Jesus is not sufficient to save us.

Just because you were raised in a Christian family, for instance, does not mean that you are saved. Just because you attend a Christian church does not mean that you are saved.

It's have you made the decision for yourself to trust Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. That's what matters. Not your mere closeness to where things have been taught.

[28 : 56] And so it's identification with Jesus. Identification with Jesus in terms of accepting what he has done for you. And that's what it means to enter through the narrow door.

Another way of saying that is hearing the gospel is not the same thing as believing the gospel. Just because you've heard the gospel being presented, that doesn't mean you've trusted him.

The fourth non-negotiable truth is that ignoring God's invitation will have eternal consequences. And Jesus said it here in verse 28.

In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Now, when we read this phrase, we can know what he's talking about here, right?

This is a reference to hell. This is a reference to an eternity apart from him in this terrible place. It's a place that he created for the devil and his angels.

[30 : 08] It wasn't even created for us. But because people reject Christ as Savior, it's where people choose for themselves to go.

This is not what Jesus wants. And this reference here, the weeping is the idea of sadness. Sadness. Sadness. And then the gnashing of teeth is just this anger.

This anger towards God. Because from their perspective, he did this to them. Okay? This is what people will experience in this eternity apart from Christ.

And again, this is not what God wants. The idea that God is like, oh, here's another one I get to send to hell. Ha! That's great. Let's send them off to hell.

That's not God's perspective at all. Do we forget what he did? He loves us so much. He wants us to be saved.

[31:11] He wants us to be with him in eternity. And so he sent his son. He sent himself. What other religion has any other kind of component like that?

That God himself would come and take on the form of man, born in a human body, that he is both fully God and fully man at the same time.

He is without sin, meaning he's qualified to make the payment for our sin. He's the only one qualified. The whole Old Testament sacrificial system points to this, the idea of sinlessness paying the penalty for sinners.

And then he willingly went to the cross, shed his blood and died, payment for our sin, and then rose again from the dead.

And that proved he is who he says he is. He is God. And that by faith, simple faith.

[32:20] There's no extraordinary works that I have to do. There's no, none of that. It's simply me just humbling myself. And that's a big part of it.

To humble myself enough to say, I can't do it. I can't earn it. I can't be good enough. So the only hope that I have is through what Christ accomplished for me on the cross.

And when we do that, he saves us. And so when he saves us, he's not saving us from a position of neutrality.

That's a lot of where people think that they're at in terms of their standing before God. That, well, I haven't rejected him completely.

I'm just kind of disinterested. I haven't said no. And I haven't said yes. So I'm just kind of in neutral ground here. I'm in the Switzerland of spirituality. And that is wholly a foreign concept to the scripture.

[33:32] What we fail to understand is that we're already born into sin. And we're already bound for hell as our original state.

And it's only when we come to faith in Christ and we step out in faith and say, yes, I trust Christ as my Savior, that he reaches into that existence.

And we cross the line from death to life, from hell to heaven, from a child of Satan. This is biblical.

To a child of God. And he literally, I mean, rescuing us from neutrality? No. He rescues us from hell.

And he gives us his name. And he gives us his identity. And he says, you're a child of God now.

[34:33] You're a member of the family. You are now a son or daughter of the king. With all of the rights and privileges and inheritance that comes with that relationship.

You get it all. I haven't done a thing. No, you haven't. He's done all of the work. And all he asks is that we say yes.

I trust you. I trust you with my life. That's a God who loves us. Who wants to save us.

But to reject Christ in this life is to be rejected by him on that day.

You might have heard of the gospel being called the good news. And it absolutely is good news. It starts with bad news, though. You can't get to the good news until you first hear the bad news.

[35 : 42] The bad news is I'm in sin. I've sinned against the righteous and holy God. And I stand condemned in my sin. And the only hope that I have then is then what we normally call the good news.

And it is better than good news. Jesus died for me. He rose again from the dead. And that by simple faith in him, I can be saved.

And there are many millions who will be saved. Anyone and everyone can accept God's invitation.

No matter who you are. No matter what you've done. It doesn't matter. It doesn't matter who you are.

It doesn't matter what you've done. The invitation. If you're alive and breathing and you can hear and listen and respond. You can absolutely.

[36 : 53] The invitation is for you. To accept this gospel message. This good news. And it doesn't matter what you've done.

What you think you've done. Who you are. It doesn't matter at all. The floodgates.

The people will come. East and west. North and south. Recline at table in the kingdom of God. Again. That's a picture of multitudes of people.

Coming to faith. In Christ. In the 2,000 years since Israel rejected Jesus Christ as their king. And that's exactly the testimony of history.

The testimony of multitude upon multitudes of believers. Who said yes to Jesus. I trust you. As savior. Many of you are sitting here today.

[37 : 54] And could give testimony to yes. I have trusted Jesus Christ as my savior. So the question. The original question.

Hey. Is there only going to be a few. The question isn't about the number. How many will be saved. That's. It's not the right question to ask. The right question to ask. Is this.

Will I be. One of them. Will I be one of them. Romans chapter 10.

Paul is. In this. In this. Chapter. And. Previous chapters. Is going through. This. Incredible.

Piece of theological. And doctrinal. Work. About all. That's. That salvation entails. Lots of detail. Lots of.

[38 : 57] Lots of instruction. There. There. But. Basically. It boils down to this. It says. If you can. If you confess with your mouth. That Jesus is Lord. And believe in your heart. That God raised him from the dead.

You. Will be saved. The statement. Is exclusive. But it's also. Very certain.

There's a certainty. To this. It's not. A might. Or a maybe. Or I hope so. Or it's not wishful thinking. There's a certainty.

To what's being said here. That. That if you confess with your mouth. Okay. I believe that Jesus is Lord. Lord here is not just a title. It's his position in your life.

That he is the Lord. He is the master of your life. That. I'm not. Designing my own way anymore. I'm not. I'm not doing this on my own. That I'm going to surrender.

[39 : 55] To the one who is in charge of me. He is my Lord. My master. And I believe in my heart. That God raised him from the dead. It's not just head knowledge. There's that 18 inch connection.

Down to the heart. That's. Yes. It's sincere. It's genuine. You. Will be. Save.

And then. In verse 13. Just to make sure that we get this. For everyone. For everyone. Is Christianity exclusive. It's exclusive in the sense that there's just the one way. But man. It is a wide open invitation to anyone. And everyone. To respond. If you're.

[40 : 57] If you're sitting here. And you're. Warm and breathing. The invitation. The invitation. Is for you. You have an invitation. Sitting in front of you.

Right now. Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord. Will. Be. Saved. Man. The certainty. Of that. Ought to. Like. Wow. Thank you Lord. So that we can know. Someone might say. Well Rich. Do you know that you're saved? Do you know that you're going to heaven? And I would say. Yes. Absolutely. And to some people. That sounds very. Arrogant.

Well how can you believe that? I would argue. It would be arrogant. Not to. Believe that. It would be arrogant.

[41 : 54] To question. The very word of God. And to say. Well who am I? Some of you.

May know. This guy. Scott Adams. Came up in the news. This week. Because he died. Cartoonist. Anybody know.

The cartoon character. Dilbert. Yeah. Cartoon character. Well Scott Adams. Died. And before he died. He. Started a podcast. And.

People began to follow him. He was famously. Not a Christian. And. And. But he had cancer. And it was terminal. Terminal. Prostate. Cancer.

And so he knew. That his time of death. Was coming. And. And it was on display. For. Anyone who wanted to follow him. And. And.

[42 : 52] And read what he was saying. Or listen to what he was saying. And. And. And it was quite remarkable. That. He came to the end of his life. He just passed away this week.

But. He put out a final statement. And. And in that final statement. Was. A profession. Of faith. In Christ. Now.

It was. What I would call. And. And perhaps. What many people would call. An imperfect. Perfect. Profession. Of faith. I would agree with that. That statement.

It was. Imperfect. And I want to share with you. His profession of faith. And then. Talk about it for a moment. This is what he said.

Tell me. Tell me what you think of what he. Said. Many of my Christian friends. Have asked me to find Jesus. Before I go. Before I die. I'm not a believer.

[43 : 48] He spent his whole life. As. Not a believer. I'm not a believer. But I have to admit. The risk reward calculation. For doing so. Looks attractive. Would you agree.

That. That's true. That it looks attractive. Still. Little question mark. So here I go.

I accept. Jesus Christ. As my. Lord. And Savior. And I look forward. To spending. An eternity with him.

Praise the Lord. Right. The part about me. Not being a believer. Should be quickly resolved. If I wake up in heaven. Oh.

Are you a believer or not? Are you believing or not? I won't need any more convincing than that. And I hope I'm still qualified.

[44 : 50] For entry. Now. When I said imperfect. I meant.

Imperfect. And his. Theology is. Very much. So. Off.

But it was a very simple. Profession. Of faith. Might. Might. I. Remind us. Of someone else. Who had a very simple. Profession.

Of faith. And also. Someone who had a very. Immature. Theology. It was a man who hung on a cross. Next to Jesus. And he simply said.

These words to Jesus. Remember me. When you come into your kingdom. Not a lot of theology. In that statement. Not.

[45 : 52] Not a lot of anything. In that statement. But do you remember the promise. That Jesus. Made to him. Some of you are very familiar.

With this next little video clip. That. I want to show you. And Chad. I didn't tell you about this. But I got a video clip. Coming up here. This is Alistair Begg. On what is.

Perhaps. One of the best. Little. Two minute segments. Of. Of. Christian preaching. Ever. I don't. How do you qualify that?

But it's wonderful. And it's talking about. The man. On the middle cross. If you answer that. And if I answer it.

In the first person. We've immediately gone wrong. Because I. Because I. Because I believed.

[46 : 47] Because I have faith. Because I am this. Because I am continuing. Loved ones. The only proper answers. In the third person. Because he.

Because he. Think about the thief on the cross. And what an immense. I can't. I can't. Wait. To find that fellow. One day. To ask him. How did that shake out.

For you. Because you were. You were. You were. You were cussing the guy out. With your friend. You've never been in a Bible study. You never got baptized. You never. You didn't know a thing.

About church membership. And yet. And yet. You made it. You made it. How did you make it? That's what the angel must have said.

You know. Like. What are you doing here? Well. I don't know. What. What do you mean you don't know? Well. Because I don't know. Well. You know. Did you.

[47 : 46] Excuse me. Let me get my supervisor. Think I'll get the supervisor angel. So. So. Wait. Just a few questions for you. First of all. Are you. Are you. Are you.

Are you. Are you clear on the doctrine of justification by faith? The guy said. I've never heard of it in my life. And. And what about. Let's just go to the doctrine of scripture immediately.

This guy's just staring. And eventually in frustration. He says. On. On what basis are you here? And he said. The man. On the middle cross. Said.

I can come. Now. Now. That's the. That is the only answer. That is the only answer. It is.

The only answer. Now. When I see someone. Who wants to interrogate. Scott Adams faith.

[48 : 48] Put him on the stand. And say. Was his faith real? Was it genuine? The picture. The picture I have in my mind. Is the older brother. In the story of the prodigal son.

Remember the prodigal son. Asked for inheritance. I had a time. Ran away. Riotous living. Lived like garbage. Finally realized.

That it was. So much better. At his father's house. Came back. With a prepared speech. And his father. Seeing him.

Off in the distance. Stood back. With his arms folded. And waited for him. To get there. That would happen.

No. He took off that. Off that porch. Ran down. To meet his son. His son. Started into his.

[49 : 46] Prepared speech. And he couldn't even get. Part of the way through it. And his father. Threw his arms around him. And said. Welcome home. It's time to celebrate.

But the older brother. The older brother. Said. Wait a minute. Why are you letting him back? Why are you letting him in?

Jesus told the parable. Of the landowner. Who. Went at dawn. And hired some workers. And told them. Hey. Come work for me for the day. I'll pay you a denarii. Came back at noon.

Hired more workers. I'll pay you a denarii. For your day's labor. Came back again. Toward the end of the work day. Hired some more laborers. At the end of the day. He's. Getting ready to pass out.

Their pay for the day. And he's giving a denarii. To. Everyone. The ones who were getting there. Late in the day. And the guys who were there. Earlier in the day. Well I'm going to get more than a denarii.

[50 : 47] I'm going to. I'm going to get more. And he passes out. The same. Coin. To each of the workers. And they begin.

To grumble. And complain. And the landowner's. Statement. At that time. Was. Am I not allowed to do. What I choose.

With what belongs to me. Or do you begrudge. My generosity. We think of someone like a Scott Adams.

Or the thief on the middle cross. And they come at the end of a life. That's lived hard. And lived. Wantonly. And lived in sin. And they get in.

And they get the inheritance. And they get all of it. And someone who from a child. Serves the Lord. Someone who went to the mission field.

[51 : 47] And maybe even paid. With their life. For their faith in Christ. As a martyr. And they get the same reward.

The same. Benefit. Same inheritance. And. Maybe the issue is with my heart.

And what I think about God. And. His. Generosity. His grace. You know.

If I had to answer the question. Was Scott Adams. Saved. I. I can't answer that. I can't answer that for any.

One else. And you can't answer that for me. But I know the scriptures.

[52 : 53] And the scriptures tell us that everyone. Who calls on the name of the Lord. Will be. Will be.

Saved. However imperfectly. Because I tell you. When I'm standing. With some angels. In heaven. And.

My guess is. They're going to be like. Rich. This is where you had it wrong. On theology here. And this. And. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Every one of us.

Every one of us. Do I want to be. Wrong. Do I want to be sloppy. In my theology. Do I want to be lazy. Of course not. But the gate.

Is narrow. But it is not locked. I know what Jesus promised. The thief on the cross. I know what.

[53 : 59] The. The. The. The. The prodigal's father. Did. In response to when he saw him out in the distance. He came running. I know what the landowner gave.

To all the workers. And so I'm going to pursue it. I'm going to strive. Right. Because narrow. Is the door.

So strive. Answer that question for yourself. Don't settle for a while. I don't know. I'm not really interested. It's not a good place to be.

Answer that question. Pursue. That question. Stop. Auditing. Someone said it this way. Stop.

Auditing the dead. Were they saved? Were they not? Did they have the right words? Did they say them in the right order? I don't know. Instead.

[55 : 04] Marvel at the grace. That allows. You in. That allows me. In. Now.

We're not quite done yet. One more little section here. And then we'll be done. Verse 31. At that very hour. Some Pharisees came and said to him.

Get away from here. For Herod wants to kill you. Were they being truthful in this? Or was this more games on their part? Because the Pharisees.

They wanted to kill Jesus themselves. Maybe not all of them. So maybe these were more. Earnest. And genuine. In their walk with the Lord. We don't know.

But that warning. And Jesus says to him. Go tell that fox. Go and tell that fox. And. He knows.

[55 : 59] What that fox. Herod did to John the Baptist. Took his head off. He knows. Behold. I cast out demons. And perform cures. Today and tomorrow. On the third day.

Finish my course. There's a little prophecy in there. Right? I'm going to do my business. I'm going to cure people. I'm going to preach the gospel. Right? This is. This. This was what the Messiah is supposed to do.

And on the third day. I'm going to finish my course. Be risen from the dead. Nevertheless. I must go on my way. Today and tomorrow. And the day following. For it cannot be. That a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem.

In other words. He has set his face to Jerusalem. He's going to get to Jerusalem. And Herod or not. Is not going to stop him from getting to Jerusalem. To fulfill. His mission. Dying on the cross.

In Jerusalem. And then notice the compassion. Oh Jerusalem. Jerusalem. The city that kills the prophets. And stones those who are sent to it.

[56 : 58] How often. Would I have gathered your children together. As a hen gathers her brood under her wings. If you were not willing. How that must have tore at his heart.

Not willing. Behold your house is forsaken. Israel. And I tell you. You will not see me until you say. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Do you know. There is coming a time. When Israel will say those words. It's in Revelation. The end of the tribulation. When Israel's eyes will be opened.

And they'll recognize Jesus as Messiah. And many of them will be slaughtered for their faith. During this time. But they will say. When Jesus steps through those clouds.

And comes to the earth. Blessed is he who comes. In the name of the Lord. What a day that will be. Three quick things. I'm going to let you go home after this. Serving the Lord faithfully.

[57 : 59] Like I really can keep you here. Serving the Lord faithfully. Will not eliminate enemies or critics. That's true today. It's true back then. Anyone who's faithful to preach the gospel.

Is going to continue to have enemies and critics. Number two. Opposition should not. Redirect our mission. Nor revise our message. Just because someone threatens.

We keep faithful. We stay faithful. And thirdly. Hostility and hatred should not extinguish a spirit of compassion. For those who remain lost.

Those who are lost need the gospel. They're victims of the enemy. And we need to be compassionate toward them.

And with all that being said. I want to go back to this idea of your salvation. Have you trusted Christ as your savior?

[58 : 59] Have you made that decision? Don't go another day. I don't place that.

That kind of a time frame on someone. Willy nilly. We don't know what tomorrow holds. And so I would encourage you.

To make the decision today. While it is still called today for you. And trust Christ. As your savior. If you would like to talk with someone ever about that.

Myself or Tom. We'd love to be able to talk with you about that. Or maybe someone who brought you. But let's. Let's not. Delay.

That decision. Let's go to the Lord in prayer. Lord thank you so much. For your word. For it teaches us clearly. What is the truth.

[59 : 54] I pray that our hearts would be drawn to you. For those who have trusted Christ as savior. Some who have been trusting you for many years.

Some who have been trusting you for perhaps just a few weeks. Or even days. I pray that you would continue. To help us to look to you. To grow.

To have our minds transformed. Away from the way the world thinks. And toward the way that you think. As we study your word. As we. Learn and grow.

By your word. And for those who have not yet made that decision. To trust you as savior. Lord I pray that. Even today. Lord that they would come to this decision.

That they would decide that today is the day. Yes Lord. I will trust you. With my life. I give it to you. I accept this free gift of eternal life.

[60 : 53] By placing my faith and my trust in you. The rest of my earthly existence. And my eternal destination. Lords. Lord they are in your hands.

My life is in your hands. I trust you with my life. Thank you again. And Lord we love you. And we praise you in Jesus name. Amen.

Amen. Amen.