

# Ephesians part 2 - Understanding God's will requires belonging to Christ

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[ 0 : 00 ] from verses 1 through to 6. This week we're going to read from verse 3 through to verse 14, but we're going to concentrate from verses 7 through to 14, seeing that we concentrated on the first six last week. Just as you're finding your way there, it's interesting to note that from verse 3 to verse 14 in the Greek is one complete sentence. There is no punctuation in the Greek. It's done through contextual use. It's done through, I'll use a technical term, but it's done through something called a chiasm. A chiasm is this, that if I tell a joke, then hopefully if it's a good joke, there's a punchline, and that makes sense of the joke leading up to it. Well, a chiasm is God has ways of pointing out certain things without highlighter pens or making the letters in bold or without punctuation marks, and he does it via repetition and by putting things in the middle, not at the end, by putting things in the middle. And so here, you wouldn't know it from the English, but in the Greek it is one complete sentence without stopping breathing. I'm not going to try it. So we'll pick it up in verse 3. Now hear God's word.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace with which he has blessed us in the beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us in all wisdom and insight, making known to us the mystery of his will according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

Well, may God bless his word to us. His word is blessed, and may he bless it to us this morning. We're going to come back to the message on that word after this next hymn.

Ephesians chapter 1. As you turn in there, let me pray for us this morning. Father God, we would ask your grace upon our lives this morning, that you would enlighten our mind, the view of changing our heart.

[ 3 : 46 ] Father God, we recognize, Father, that darkness doesn't just exist in the ignorance, but it can exist in our will, in our heart, towards you.

And Father, that we want to see the mystery of your will that you have revealed to us. But we recognize, Father, that sin is a blind spot.

It can hinder us from noticing your great promises, and therefore lead us away from you. So, Father, we pray this morning that as we come to your word, that it would be clear, and that you would make it clear by the person and work of your Holy Spirit in our lives this morning.

For Jesus' name's sake. Amen. Amen. Well, this, if I can begin this way, is the second message on Ephesians, the first being last week.

And I said that Ephesians chapter 1, at least the first part, this lengthy sentence, someone referred to it as holding, it's a bit like holding a loaded weapon not on safety.

[ 4 : 57 ] That you have to be careful with the text. And last week, we dealt with things like election, being chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and being predestined to salvation.

This is a wonderful promise, but something that some people can take years to get their head around. The often objection is, why me and not them?

And as we saw last week, that you're starting in the wrong place. Because the choice was made before the foundation of the world, before any you or me or I existed.

God's plan and purposes was pre all of that. And what we now live in is the fulfillment of his plan and purposes coming together.

And that is something to rejoice in. But it's something to rejoice in carefully. We don't want to become arrogant in the fact that we are chosen and others are not.

[ 5 : 58 ] We don't want to become sort of disillusioned with prayer or the purpose of the gospel or any of those things.

Rather, we ought to rejoice in this, but I recognize that given its content, it's something that can take years of perhaps personal struggle with.

Because we're just not used to seeing things from God's point of view. We filter everything through our eyes rather than faith.

We interpret everything through how we see things rather than how it is revealed to us in the scriptures. So, if you've ever had that experience where you read God's word and then you look at the world and go, well, that can't be true because this is what I see.

Well, your reasoning is back to front. You are choosing one authority, your eyes and what you perceive, over the revealed word of God.

[ 6 : 59 ] And if our lives are to be directed in this world, what are they going to be directed by? You're going to choose, even if you don't make a choice. You're going to choose.

The issue here is that the mystery of his will, as we've read into now, is something that's being revealed to us. The mystery of God's will is revealed to us.

And this gives me great assurance, as it should do you, because the gospel cannot fail. The gospel succeeds everywhere, according to the mystery of his will.

Now, you'll notice that in all of these verses, it is to do with the praise of God's glory. You know, why has God ordered it this way? Why has God done it this way and not a different way?

Well, it's because this amounts to the praise of God's glory. This is what brings God the most glory. This is the thing that causes us to praise God for what he has done.

[ 8 : 00 ] And therefore, the absence of any contribution of us is a key example of why praise should go to God, not to us. If two people did a job, then praise would go to both parties, because they have both done it.

But let's just stretch the example a little. Perhaps you've been in the situation where you have tidied a room. It's been very untidy. Or you have done something.

And someone, sort of five minutes into you finishing, comes in and picks up a couple of things. And then somebody else walks into the room, okay, and starts praising the other person.

Oh, thank you for doing this. They have no idea that 90% of the time and 90% of the work was done by you. It was, you know, but they praise you equally or they praise the other person more.

How do you feel? Well, on a human level, if you're a praise seeker, then you're going to be outraged. But if you desire the truth to be known, you at least want the truth to be known.

[ 9 : 04 ] That actually, this is how it is. And it's exactly the same with God. If all praise is to go to God, what Paul is doing here is he's explaining very clearly who were the contributors.

Who were the contributors to bringing you to salvation, to bringing you to God? How did it happen? And what Paul gets to at the end, especially into chapter 2, is that we didn't contribute a single thing.

Well, you say, well, I seeked after God. No. Yeah, you seeked after God because God was seeking you. And if you've ever been in that position where you actually come to God, you come to God because God has first come to you.

God is the one who's drawing you into him. And that's the type of thing that should give you huge assurance. Now, the other thing which doesn't mention here, but I'll mention it to you, that in the book of Revelation, just in case you're thinking election seems a little bit hard done by, election seems like this small group of people that occupy heaven.

And it's terribly unfair. Clearly not, because if you read the book of Revelation, John can't even number the amount of people. Okay? He gets to several thousand, and then he goes, well, he's done well to get to several thousand.

[ 10 : 22 ] But then he goes, there's a whole host, there's a whole other number that I can't even get close to numbering because they're too numerous. So the idea that this is a select few of people at the expense of everybody else clearly isn't the case.

It is simply to state that God knows best. That God knows best. So here's the summary of verses 13, 3 through to 14.

You'll notice here that we are chosen by God, we are saved by the Son, and we are sealed with the Holy Spirit. So we have the triune God at work.

We're chosen by God before the foundation of the world, okay, which is in the first few verses, verse 4. We are then saved by the Son, verse 7, and we are then sealed with the Holy Spirit, verse 13.

So the triune God of Scripture is at work in our salvation. Salvation, verse 9, is actually God making known to us the mystery of his will.

[ 11 : 28 ] God making known to us the mystery of his purposes. In other words, what Paul is clearly pointing out is that nobody's going to truly appreciate what God does unless they appreciate it from the point of view of actually belonging to God.

You can't get to see it any other way if you're going to find a little bit confused. There's two reasons. One, it does take learning. But two, it takes belonging to Christ first.

We must belong to Christ in order to understand the mystery of his will. Following this, there's a list of additional blessings. There are blessings last week.

There is a list of additional blessings this week. Verse 7, redemption. You are redeemed. And because of redemption, your sins are forgiven.

Completely forgiven. Another blessing, verse 9, as we've stated, God makes known to you the mystery of his will. In other words, he lets you know what has happened, what is happening, and what is going to happen in the future.

[ 12 : 33 ] Verse 10, God's plan, this is what he's letting you know, is to unite all things together in heaven and on earth.

Okay? Now, that is just tremendous. Verse 11, you get to inherit. Christians receive an inheritance.

In Jesus, we receive an inheritance. Verse 13, we get to hear the gospel of salvation and are sealed with the Spirit.

I'll explain what that means in a moment. Verse 14, having been sealed with the Holy Spirit, we are there guaranteed every single one of these blessings now and the fact that we will take possession of it in the future.

Okay? Now, as when you handle a text like this, you've got to be able to show you're working out, right? If I stood here and said 2 plus 2 is 5, the first thing you're going to say to me is, well, show you're working out.

[ 13 : 36 ] How did you get to that conclusion? And the thing is, you know, and I know, because I know what 2 plus 2 is, it's not 5, that I'm never going to be able to show my working out. Okay? I'm going to try to avoid it.

Yeah, but it says here, it says there. Yeah, but I wanted it right. And I'm going to try to avoid it. It's absolutely crucial that if you hold a view, okay, of Scripture, then you need to be able to show you're working out, because that's the only thing that gives you assurance in the view that you hold, rather than, well, so-and-so told me.

Well, who told you? And are they correct? And I gave the illustration several weeks ago that I thought I was pretty smart in secondary school with Mrs. Horton, who I'm still frightened of.

And I didn't know any of the answers, so I thought, well, he does. I'll copy him. And so I did. And Mrs. Horton let me do it.

But she realized that the issue wasn't copying. She realized that the problem that I had wasn't that I was stealing somebody else's work. It wasn't the fact that I was copying somebody else's work.

[ 14 : 40 ] The real issue was is that I couldn't do my own working out. I looked at the same problem, okay, but because I was prone to copy, because I looked at the problem and didn't know how to do the working out.

And Paul doesn't want, the whole of Scripture doesn't want any believer to be in that position, okay? You need to be able to show you're working out, because it is the very thing that undergirds what you believe to be true, rather than just saying, well, we do it this way because it's always been done this way, right?

Or we believe because it's always been believed this way. Or I believe this because my dad taught me, or my mom taught me. Well, that's fine, but even mom and dad are not beyond being questioned, okay?

God is, because God reveals it to us. So the issue here is not about being right as much as it is knowing what is true, okay? The issue is about knowing what is true and being secure in that.

What God, therefore, does in the world, okay, is known by you. Whatever is happening in the world, you know what God is doing, according to Paul.

[ 15 : 53 ] Whatever is happening in your life, whatever it may be, in the great big picture, you know what God is doing, because he has revealed to you exactly what he's doing. Everything is moving towards a unification.

Everything is moving towards being united, okay? Being together. Being together in a way where it is not just found together, but it actually fits together like a perfect jigsaw piece, okay?

You can have a box of five different jigsaws in a cupboard, okay? And you can take the pieces out of their boxes, out of their boxes, and mix them all together, stick them in one big bag, and someone can say, well, where's the jigsaw pieces?

You can say, well, they're together in the bag, okay? But when it actually comes to what fits together, when it actually comes to work out what actually belongs together, some things will belong with one jigsaw, and others will belong to another.

The kind of unity that God is promising here is not a unification of everything, where everything fits. No, the only things that are united are the things that fit, okay?

[17:03] Not everything fits. It's what fits in Christ. And so the central point here is that Christ is the key to everything fitting. If you want to fit into heaven, Christ.

If you want a new life, Christ. If you want to be forgiven, Christ. Redemption, Christ. Doesn't matter what you come up with, the answer is always going to be Christ.

Christ is the one who unites all things. Unity only happens in Christ, okay? And this is the point that Paul is making here.

So whatever is happening in the world, okay, I can tell you in a simple form, if you imagine the world to be like a bag of ten jigsaws, then the unity that is going to happen is God is in the process of arranging now.

And one day, okay, in the new heavens and new earth, there'll be the unification. And what doesn't fit into God's plan and purposes in Christ.

[18:07] What has not repented and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ is therefore not part of the body of Christ, okay? Those who have not repented, if you want to just talk about the salvation of people, those who haven't repented and believed in Christ, okay, will not belong to the final unity, okay?

And it's exactly the same with many other things in the world. You know, I think that when we actually get to sing songs in the new heavens and new earth, I imagine how great is our God will make it, okay?

I'm not too sure about Milli Vanilli or some of Michael Jackson's songs, or perhaps any of Michael Jackson's songs, however good and what a good beat that they are.

Some things are going to make it, okay, and they're the things that we need to be invested in now. We need to have the type of discernment to understand what do I invest my life in? What do I invest my children's life in?

And we need to invest our things in the things that are going to make it into the new heavens and the new earth. Why? Because the purpose of God, the mystery's been revealed, that's what God's going to do.

[19:15] And I suddenly don't want to be a person who's doing something contrary to what God is actually doing at the present time. God is letting us know. So here's the movement from beginning to end.

You'll notice in verse 3 and verse 4, and you'll notice in verse 13 and 14, or even a little bit before that, that there's a movement from eternity past, before the foundation of the world, to eternity future, the new heavens and the new earth, the unity of the new heavens and the new earth.

There's this movement from one end to the other end, if we can put it that way. And how we become part of that is through redemption, verse 7.

Now, redemption means to purchase, to redeem, to buy. And the way God is explaining your salvation here is that you were bought with the blood of Christ.

That at the cross, God was purchasing you. What was he purchasing you from? Okay? Why is the purchase price even necessary?

[ 20 : 30 ] Well, the history here is that everyone is bound in sin and death. There is no way that they can come to God of their own volition, of their own will.

They are held captive. And the blood of Christ is the purchase price. This is what happens in salvation. You're released because Christ has bought you.

God has bought you with the price of Christ's blood. You are released from sin and death. You have been purchased from it. Everything that held you captive from coming to God before no longer holds you captive from coming to God because you have been bought out of it.

To put this another way, in 1 Corinthians 6, Paul puts it this way, that you are not your own. You have been bought with a price. Okay? And there, what's being explained here is ownership.

Ownership. Okay? When you rent something, you understand that you don't own it. Okay? It may be nice to rent a flashy car for a day if you're into that kind of thing and drive it around town pretending that it's yours.

[ 21 : 36 ] Okay? But you're just hoping that nobody sees you the next day when you're walking. Okay? You won't believe it, but it's in the garage. You know, you have to, you know, something like that.

The issue that you have is because you understand the difference between renting and purchasing. When something is purchased, what is actually being expressed here is that it is now owned by a new owner.

Okay? You have a new owner. So when God is explaining here redemption, he's saying that I am becoming your owner. Okay? The world owns you.

Sin owns you. Death owns you. You know, all of this stuff owns you out there, but I'm going to be your owner. Okay? I'm your creator. I made you.

I made you beautiful. And I am owning you now. So you are not your own. You were bought with a price. God is not owning you in an oppressive sense, but owning you in the sense that he...

[ 22 : 36 ] In other words, you're worth paying for in God's eyes. I want you to think about that. You are worth paying for. You're worth the death of his son in his eyes. I mean, what would you pay for yourself?

What would you pay for one of your friends? What would you pay for the person you don't like? What would you do? How much would you pay? Okay?

It all depends. I mean, if it depends on them, it's... Okay? A good day or a bad day, right? Did they do something to me?

Nice to me? Yes, whatever. But God here is the creator God who is... He is owning you. And the purchase price is the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, because of this purchase price, then what this means is that your life will no longer end in an eternal separation. There's no eternal darkness. It will no longer end with you owning nothing.

[ 23 : 34 ] God owns you, and you own God. Because God purchases you, you obtain an inheritance, is what it says here in verse 11. You get to have something because you are a son.

Verse 6. Verse 5. Do you remember how you were adopted into the family? Well, if I can put it simply, sons and daughters receive their father's inheritance.

Okay? The next-door neighbor's kids don't. They might if you want to extend your will. But generally speaking, the way a son or a daughter receives an inheritance is if they are a son and a daughter of the father or the mother or, you know, the family above them.

And this is exactly the same thing being expressed here. Okay? God owns you. You're brought into his family. And now that you're in his family as a son or a daughter, you get an inheritance.

God has more to give you. Much, much more to give you. Unity to come. Blessings now and in the future.

[ 24 : 41 ] A separation from the world. A separation from sin. A separation from death. A separation from guilt. A separation from a whole number of things that you know that you would rather God take away.

In other words, I've often said that there's two ways of looking at it. What do you want God to do for you? Well, you may come up with one or two things. But if I put it a slightly different way and said, is there anything that God could undo for you?

Well, I'm sure you'd have a pretty long list. We've all got things that we would want God to undo. Well, the God of forgiveness undoes.

That's the whole point. The separation that you experience by belonging, which is a strange way of putting it, but it's exactly what's happening. You belong to God via your separation from the world.

You belong to God via your separation from guilt. Your separation from sin. Your separation from death. From all of these things. And God wants you.

[ 25 : 46 ] Okay? You know God wants you because you know deep in your heart that God is in need of nothing. God doesn't need you. And therefore, God wanting you. I'd much rather be wanted than needed.

Okay? And I'm pretty sure that you sat here would much rather be wanted than needed. Well, good news. God wants you. Doesn't need you. Okay? That's good news as well.

Okay? But he wants you. This then brings us on to the fact that this is a mystery that is being revealed. In other words, you wouldn't know it. You wouldn't know any of this to be true unless God is making it known to you at this present time.

You just wouldn't know it. You couldn't work it out by yourself. What is God doing? You have to be told. And you are sealed with the Holy Spirit. Now, this is really, really precious.

You are sealed, verse 13. And then verse 14, the Spirit is the guarantee. This has to be looked at in a couple of different ways. So let's try it.

[ 26 : 49 ] There are two things that need to be present for you to receive an inheritance. Okay? Okay? One, your mum, or in other people's cases, dad or dad and mum, okay, have to have something to give you.

But if they don't have anything to give you, then there is no inheritance to pass on. It's as simple as that. So my mum could pass away.

Unless Christ returns. She will pass away. Okay? Okay? Okay? Okay? And not that I'm looking for anything coming. But, you know, there's seven brothers. And, you know, we're brought up in a house where, you know, we talk with our fists more than we did with our mouths, which was not ideal.

But what do you do? And a woman of five foot two in stature and a wooden spoon was able to sort us all out all the time. Okay? But, you know, inheritance is one of those things that can cause family feuds.

It's good when there is no inheritance. There's nothing to fight over. Not that you would anyway. Well, not that I would anyway. Who cares? I mean, we have a much better inheritance to look forward to. But the inheritance has to be there in order for you to receive it.

[ 28 : 02 ] But something else has to be there. And if that's not there, you don't get the inheritance. So let's imagine for a moment that the father is extremely rich. Or the mother is extremely rich.

Or both parents are extremely rich. And here they are. They're in retirement. You know you've got this big house here coming to you. You're the only child. This big house here coming to you. They've got a couple of holiday places around the world as well.

They've got all of these blessings. And then as you see all this coming to you, you've even seen the will that this is coming to you. Next year you die. You don't get to receive the inheritance.

Not because there isn't an inheritance. But you don't get to receive the inheritance because you're not around to receive it. So there are two ways here that have to be overcome.

Or there are two things here that have to be understood in order for you to receive your inheritance. Firstly, the inheritance has to exist. It has to get to you. But secondly, you have to get to the inheritance. Because if you don't make it, you don't get the inheritance.

[ 29 : 04 ] And this is the thing that Paul is expressing here. God doesn't just promise you receiving an inheritance from him. The promise here is that you'll make it.

The promise here, being sealed with the Holy Spirit, is not just that God keeps an inheritance for you, but he keeps you for an inheritance. In other words, he keeps you alive.

He gives you new life in Christ. And that new life in Christ is something that can never be taken away from you. Why? Because it's eternal in Christ Jesus. And so the reason you are guaranteed to receive this inheritance is not only because the inheritance is there, but because you will make it.

And you will make it because you have been sealed. You have been guaranteed to make it. Another way of looking at this, importantly, would be the fact that we are God's purchase.

That every single one of our lives here sat here if we belong to Christ Jesus, that we are the purchase of God. God has to take out.

[ 30 : 08 ] If you buy something, you take it home with you, hopefully. If it's able to be taken home. If you buy it, you take it home with you. And if God has bought us at the cross, okay, what does he want to do?

Well, he wants to take you home with him. He wants to take you all the way home with him. And how does he do it? Well, by guaranteeing, by giving his spirit to guarantee safe delivery.

Okay? To use a slightly odd illustration, but I think you'll get the point. Okay? You ever bought something that's never arrived? Okay? You've purchased it?

Okay? And then you think, well, we're so used to things arriving. But there has been the odd occasion where it hasn't arrived. And you purchase it. And you think, well, I've bought it. It's mine.

I own it. Okay? And you should have arrived by now. And then it should have arrived by now. And it just never, ever comes.

[ 31 : 07 ] There's been a problem with the delivery. Okay? It's got lost. It's got destroyed. Something's happened. Well, when God seals you with the Holy Spirit, what's happening is that he is guaranteeing the delivery.

He is guaranteeing the fact that you will make it home. And the reason for this is, as Paul explains in Romans 8, we live in a world where there's a lot of time between now and then.



And there's a lot of things that can happen to us between now and then. An awful lot that can happen to us between now and then. But as Paul says in Romans 8, that there is nothing between now and then that can separate us from God.

Okay? There is nothing between now and then that can separate us from God. Meaning that God will take safe delivery of what he has purchased.

There's a lot of things that can happen to us, but nothing, nothing that can stop us from being obtained, brought home to God.

[ 32 : 07 ] So don't forget and remember what Paul is doing here. Paul is explaining to you the past, the present and the future. Paul is explaining to you exactly what God has accomplished.

Paul is explaining to you that what is yet to happen in the future is absolutely guaranteed in the triune God of Scripture.

So here's a few considerations as we close. Firstly, Paul is speaking to a group of Christians at the birth of the church. And here we are 2,000 years on.

And yet Paul knows the word of God clearly can speak to both people in both situations. What we're receiving here is an assurance that we cannot receive anywhere else.

Whatever is happening in the world, we know that it's according to the mystery of God's will and purpose. So whatever is happening, even if we can't figure out what's happening, we know, we know on the grand scale, the direction that everything is moving in.

[ 33 : 16 ] And what that means is this, sadly, that until the time we get to live in the world where there is perfect unity between heaven and earth, and that unity happens, until that point we get to live in a broken world.

And redemption is not just about restoring broken lives. It is about restoring broken lives. But it's the unity of everything. It's about restoring a broken world.

Okay? God's concerned about everything. Not just us. Okay? We are His... We're created in His image. We are meant to worship Him. That matters. But the issue here is that God is concerned about everything.

Absolutely everything. So here's the exhortation. Only by understanding who God is and what God has done are we able to give adequate, proper praise to Him.

It is possible in this world to give someone praise who doesn't deserve it because you're saying things about them that are not true, or you're saying things about them that they've not accomplished. Well, the same is true about God.

[ 34 : 29 ] If you say things that are not true, then it's not praise. Praise is... True praise is what? Praise is reflecting in words and actions the things that are true about God.

That's true praise. In other words, if praise is to come out of your mouth, whether it be in song, whether it be in words, whether it be in conversation, wherever you are, if it is to be true praise of God, then it must reflect God as He is revealed in His Word.

If it doesn't, then it cannot be considered His true praise. And therefore, to understand election, to understand predestination, to understand being sealed with the Holy Spirit, chosen by God, saved by the Son, sealed with the Spirit, to understand this, is the very means that God uses in order for us to praise Him properly.

And only when we understand these things properly are we able to praise Him properly. And the reason being is because praise is a reflection of who God is, whether it's in word or actions or whatever it is.

And we shouldn't allow anything else to take place of that, ever. Okay? Now, I understand there are people in the church who just let things pass. It doesn't matter. Well, it doesn't matter to who.

[ 35 : 53 ] It doesn't matter to the meeting. It doesn't matter to the event. Does it matter to the person who's receiving the praise? My argument is it does. That if we're to praise God truly, and if everything is to the praise of His glory, then it must reflect the truth of God in thoughts, words, and deeds.

Here's the conclusion. God is your source of comfort. And you can have no other comfort in this world other than God.

God is your only source of security. God is your only source of continual assurance. Even in the midst of doubt.

Christ is the sensor person. Point. Christ is the key. You get to receive everything that God has promised you.

Not because you're able to make it there under your own steam. But because God's word concerning you tells you that you will make it there without fail. Okay?

[ 37 : 05 ] I understand that many could be sat here in this room knowing exactly what I've said, but still wondering whether or not they're going to make it. Well, here it is.

No, you're not. You're not going to make it. But you will make it because God will make it for you. Okay? The reason you will get to be with God, the reason you will get to receive the inheritance, the reason you will get to receive everything that God has promised you in the future, is because you've already received in the present.

If you belong to God now, then you'll belong to God in the future. That's how it works. No one gets, okay, no one gets to be in the new heavens and new earth with God who doesn't want to belong to God now.

Okay? To put this in a simple evangelistic form, if I was to put it this way, if you don't want to belong to God today, on the day you die, God will not force you to.

Okay? If you don't want to belong to God today, on the day you die, God will not force you to belong to him. The way it works, is that those who belong to God in the end, belong to God now.

[ 38 : 17 ] So lift your head in assurance. Lift your head out of your contribution, your failures, to what God has promised.

And what God has promised, is that he has sealed you with a guarantee, for your safe arrival. Amen.