

Benefits of Belief XV -- The final message of this series on the Benefits of Belief

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[0 : 00] And if you will keep your place right where you are there in Romans chapter 15, I'd just like to point out a couple of things to you before we move on to some other texts.

In these three or four verses, beginning with verse 9 through 12, there are a half dozen different references to Gentiles.

That ought not to surprise us because the Apostle says that he was raised up of God specifically, that he might be the Apostle to the Gentiles. And here in this passage, he is simply reminding the Gentiles of all that is true of them because of Christ making his life available to them in a way that God was not available in the Old Testament times prior to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

So it is a whole new era that has come and the Apostle is emphasizing that. Also, I want to make mention of something that we have covered many times in the past, but I always feel that it is appropriate to explain it again, and that is the little word hope.

It does not contain any element of question or doubt as the Bible uses the term. Whenever we use the word hope, there is always a question mark associated with it because we are anticipating or wanting something or wishing for something in the future, but we do not know whether it is going to materialize or not.

[1 : 38] So we say, well, I hope that that is the case. I hope it doesn't snow tomorrow, or I hope we have a white Christmas, or whatever. There is always that element of question. But in connection with the New Testament usage of that word, it never has any question mark to it.

It is an exclamation mark. It is a note of absolute certainty. It conveys the idea of complete confidence, so that when Paul said in Colossians 2, Christ is in you, the hope of glory.

It means Christ is in you. That is your absolute ironclad guarantee of glory. No doubt about it.

The word is used, L-P-E-S is used a number of times in the New Testament, and it always means the same thing, confidence. So, reading verse 13, Now may the God of confidence fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in confidence by the power of the Holy Spirit.

It is on the basis of what you know. And what you know is on the basis of what God has been pleased to reveal. How many times have I told you, Christianity is a thinking faith.

[3 : 11] It is that which is built upon not only what God has revealed, but it is built upon factuality. It is built upon reality. It isn't built upon fluff.

It isn't built upon mustering yourself up to try to believe something that you're not quite sure is so. It is based upon historical reality, and the evidence is abundant.

So, when we put our confidence in what God has revealed, we are lashing ourselves, as it were, to the only solid rock there is. If there is anything that should characterize the life of the individual Christian, it is joy, peace, and hope, or confidence.

The presence of joy, peace, and hope are all realized by the believer, understanding their true identity and place in Christ.

And this is precisely why we have devoted the time we have over the past several months to this series of messages having to do with our possessions or our riches in Christ, or the benefits of being a believer.

[4 : 33] This message, I intend to be the capstone for that, and I am going to rather quickly move through today's material so as to allow perhaps a generous period of time for Q&A; because I want your questions or comments to be applicable or to be able to cover all of the messages that we brought over the past several weeks.

So, if you have any lingering questions about those, today would be your opportunity to ask them. This joy, peace, and hope that the apostle is speaking of here are items such as all else pales in comparison to these virtues because they come from being in Christ.

A phrase that is used so many times, particularly in the Pauline epistles, it speaks of being in vital union or connection with Jesus Christ so that no matter who or what is taken from you, whether it is a loved one or your health or your wealth, no matter what it is that is taken from you, if you are in Christ, you are incredibly blessed and wealthy with a wealth that is immeasurable and beyond degree.

This is the position that makes all the difference and the only difference in the final analysis. Does this mean that we put all our eggs in this one basket?

That is precisely what it means. There is no other basket. We vest absolutely everything in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

[6 : 46] This being the case, do you know whether you are in Christ? This is the only really compelling question. Only if you know this, are you then eligible for the peace and the joy and the confidence that these produce.

Spoken of by Paul here in Romans 15 and verse 13. Responses to that question vary. And I want to say, with all of the emphasis that I can muster, that if you are what you might consider an ordinary average Christian, and you would be honest with yourself and with others, you have had your doubts.

You have had your share of doubts. You have had your share of doubts about whether there is even a God. You have had your share of doubts whether you have a personal relationship with Him.

You have had your share of doubts as to whether Christianity is really the only valid faith, and if there isn't something to be said for other ways to God, and maybe there are other ways, have you had your doubts about that?

You have probably had your doubts about a whole lot of things. Do you know what that is? That's very normal. That's very ordinary. That is very human.

[8 : 22] Doubts, reservations, questions are all indicative of a thinking mind. Don't apologize for it.

Don't feel guilty about it. Don't feel guilty about it. Don't feel guilty about it. Even our faith, the Christian faith, your faith personally, in all likelihood, is something you have doubted from one time to another.

I well remember as a new believer. Let's see. I came to know the Lord in December of 56, and I think it was, yes, it was the following summer after I had been a Christian for about seven, eight months.

I don't know what it was that brought this into my life, but I had a period that lasted for several weeks of deep, lingering doubt about Christ, about the Bible, about its authority, about its accuracy, about its origin, about my life, about my decision, about my putting my faith and trust in Christ.

I had all kinds of doubts. And let me tell you, it was agonizing. It was terrifying. And the reason it was is because I knew enough to understand what was at risk.

[9 : 42] Folks, this is the kind of subject matter that you cannot afford to be wrong about. And it doesn't make any difference what you've got right.

If you don't have the person and work of Jesus Christ right, it doesn't matter what you do have right. Nothing else matters. This is the very focal point of all history and of all the universe.

It is all resident within this one individual, this God-man who became flesh and dwelt among us, who revealed his glory.

He is what everything is all about. He is the focal point of all human history. And when it comes to people being able to relax and be comfortable and enjoy their salvation, I suspect that there might be fewer Christians who were really able to do that than you might think.

Now, we who are in Christ have all the reasons in the world for rejoicing and relaxing in Him.

[11 : 11] and just living a thankful life. But we all know of Christians, and sometimes you or I have qualified for that, of being anxious, upset, disappointed, angry, joyless, hopeless, despairing.

We've all gone through those things. And the reason we do is because we tend to forget what we have already learned.

Or, we tend to allow present circumstances and its accompanying pain to overshadow what we have always believed.

because nothing gets our attention so much as personal, present, pain, whether it's emotional or physical.

And emotional and physical pain can crowd out and minimize the greater issues that we have already settled and placed our confidence in.

[12:30] because this thing is so much with us when we are going through these deep, difficult, painful waters, whatever they might be. If we were to take a poll, I suppose people's responses would vary from well, I think I am in Christ, but sometimes I don't act like it.

And that makes me wonder. Is there anybody who hasn't been there? Someone else may say, I used to think I was in Christ, but now I am not sure.

I used to be sure, but I am not sure anymore. I used to think I was in Christ, but I no longer do. I do. I do. I don't think I have ever been in Christ, and I am not at all sure of what you are even talking about.

Some may say that. All of these responses simply reveal an agonizing uncertainty. Next to actually being in Christ, nothing is more important than knowing that.

Because there are people who are in Christ. Their faith, their trust, their confidence is in Christ for their salvation, for their eternal destiny.

[14:09] but they sorely lack the assurance of that. And these people are robbed of the benefit.

They are robbed of the peace and the joy and the hope that comes from believing. And it may well be that when they wake up in heaven, they are going to say, wow, what a surprise.

They weren't at all sure they were going to be there. And the reason they weren't sure is because they didn't know what they needed to know. They knew what they needed to know to be saved.

They put their faith and trust in Christ. But they knew absolutely nothing about their exalted position in Christ and what it means to be in union with Him.

They knew nothing about positional truth. They knew nothing about being locked up securely in Him and His love so that they belong to Him forever.

[15:13] And nothing can ever change that. They don't know that. What that means is they simply are not a candidate for the peace and the joy and the confidence that comes with that package because they just have not entered into that.

and it's tragic because they are living a substandard Christian life compared to what it could be and should be. Jesus Christ did not die for your sin and make Himself available to you for eternal life so you could go around wringing your hands, worrying and fretting and stewing as to whether or not you really know Him as your Savior.

That's not why He died. He died to provide for you peace and joy and confidence. To be able to relax in Christ does not mean that you live a sloppy life, unattending and uncaring.

It doesn't mean that at all. But it means you're not worried about your eternal destiny. You know you are in Him and you derive wonderful emotional benefit and mileage from that.

And I've likened it to the same thing to a marriage. And I think there is a definite parallel there. I do not think there is anything that a husband and wife need more in a marriage than to know that they are absolutely secure in their mate's love.

[16:53] There is no question where they stand with their mate. That means you can relax and enjoy the marriage relationship.

Not be on pins and needles as to whether you're going to be served with papers next week. Who wants to live in a relationship like that? Do you think it is any different with God?

Do you think? Some people actually think this. They actually think God doesn't want you to be certain. Because he knows that if you are, you're going to lay down the job.

You're going to say, well, I've got it made. I might as well just cool my heels and just sit back and let the rest of the world go by. And I don't have to involve myself in anything.

I don't have to be concerned about what I do or don't do. I can just drift on to heavenly dreamland.

But, God doesn't want you to feel that way, so he keeps you on edge.

[18:04] So, you don't really know whether you're in or not. And that's designed to make you try harder. That is nothing but flesh written all over it.

Because you never did gain acceptance by trying. You never did gain favor with him on the basis of your performance. It was all on the basis of grace.

And your being kept in him is on the same basis of grace, not on the basis of your performance.

There are going to be a lot of Christians in heaven who lived a lousy Christian life while they were

here on earth.

You know that? Is there any of us who never entered into the sphere of Christian lousiness? I dare say none of us.

I know I've spent my time there. I spent my share there. Sometimes still do. God knows everything about you.

[19 : 06] And he still loves you. And that isn't going to change. And it can't change. And the reason it can't change is because he can't change. And you are in him.

It is just an incredible position. It is that which provides peace and joy and confidence. And if you don't have it, you have unrest, lack of joy, and despair.

Those are all opposites. Nobody has to live that way. And nobody should live that way who is in Christ. Christ. We do not become in Christ by mustering up by a positive thinking, peace, joy, and hope.

Rather, these spiritual commodities of peace, joy, and hope are a result of being in Christ and knowing that you are.

they are byproducts of being united to him. Multiple believers are devoid of peace, joy, and hope because the realization of these priceless pearls is contingent upon their knowledge and assurance of their salvation.

[20 : 31] They need to know their true position in Christ. and how many Christians would have to answer, do you know that you are in Christ?

Is heaven your home? Are you certain of that? The most you will get from them is, I hope so. But they don't mean hope the way the Bible uses the word hope.

They're using hope with a question mark. Boy, I don't know. I just don't know. And very often, it comes from a lack of understanding what grace is.

And the reason they say, I don't know, I am not sure, is because they look to their performance.

They see how many times they fumble the ball. They figure that God is keeping score, and he puts these black marks against their name. And when they really mess up, boy, that's another one. I don't know how many of those black marks I've got, and I'm not sure how many it's going to take to keep me out.

[21 : 38] What a terrible way to live. Do you think God wants that? Do you think God wants you to keep trying hard? This is all man-made stuff.

And they say, people say things like, and you can hear this in churches of major denominations all over the country, and I'm sure you can hear it from some Bible churches too.

do you know that you are in Christ? Well, I just hope I've done enough. I hope I've proven myself worthy.

You aren't worthy! You never were! You never will be! Deal with that! I mean, that's the beginning point. There is no worthiness about you or about me.

That's what makes this so incredible. The fact that we're not worthy, God does it anyway. But do you know, the first criteria is you have to confront your unworthiness and admit it.

[22 : 40] As long as you think you are worthy, you can't have this grace. Grace is only for those who acknowledge their unworthiness.

Remarkable thing. Just remarkable. if you are in Christ, you can say, I remember I put my faith and trust in Jesus Christ as my personal Savior, but I'm still not really sure that I have this relationship. I'm just not certain. And I'm not sure in the final analysis that I'm going to make it. Let me ask you a question.

All right. Suppose you did make a genuine decision and you put your faith and trust in Christ, whenever that was. What is it then that could possibly reverse that God say to you, oh, yeah, well, you were okay at one point in time, but you really messed up, you fumbled the ball, and you forfeited heaven.

What would it be that could cause that kind scenario to happen? I suspect you've come to the same conclusion that I have.

[24 : 21] The only thing it could possibly be would be sin, right? Is there anything that separates man from God other than his sin?

sin? Now, let me ask you this question. What sin? How big a sin? How many sins?

At what sinning point do you forfeit your salvation so that even though you were a Christian, you aren't anymore? Because you blew it.

How many sins can you get by with and still go to heaven? Which are the big ones? Can you answer that? You know, the Bible doesn't have an answer to that?

Because there isn't one. There is no answer to that. Other than the fact that if there is one minuscule, one minuscule sin on your account, sin, in God's book, one.

[25 : 40] Not talking about a biggie. I'm talking about the kind of sin that won't even raise anybody's eyebrows. But what is sin? Sin is anything that is contrary to the nature and character of God in thought, word, or deed.

God is the need. God is the need. And if you have even the slightest, that's it.

That's all that's needed. Why is that? God is because we are satisfying the demands of holiness absolute.

Where there is no room for any taint, no room for any infraction, however small, God is absolutely perfect and absolutely holy.

And if you aren't, you're sunk. You're just, you're done for. So you can see in and of yourself, this is our true plight before this holy, righteous God.

[26 : 48] And this is the whole point for Jesus Christ's coming. This is what it's all about. He who knew no sin was made to become sin on our behalf that we might be made the righteousness of God through him.

If you do not have the righteousness of God, your righteousness is unacceptable. All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, Isaiah tells us, none of which are acceptable to God.

So, if you think you can forfeit your salvation, you've probably already done so. So have I.

But it isn't a matter of what sins we've committed, or how many, or how big, or how little, or anything else. What matters is the sufficiency and the efficacy of the blood of Jesus Christ to cleanse us from all sin.

And we are told in Colossians that he has forgiven us all trespasses. This refers to our position.

This is our standing before God.

[28 : 14] Paul said, he did not want a righteousness which comes by the law, but the righteousness which comes by faith in Christ. This is God's own righteousness, Christ's own righteousness.

This means that Jesus Christ puts to your account something that you do not deserve via his grace, his righteousness. And he withholds from you what you do deserve, which is his judgment and his condemnation.

That reflects on his mercy. This is our standing. This is our position in Christ. And if you are in Christ, this is what you have, whether you feel it or not.

Whether you believe it or not. It's just that if you don't believe it, you do not derive any benefit from it. It's true of you, but it's just like a check that's made out in your name and you don't even know it exists.

You can't cash it and get the benefit from it. When you are in Christ, you are in Christ. And the body of Christ is not going to be fragmented.

[29 : 28] It is going to be presented pure and spotless and whole. There isn't going to be anyone missing. Many people have great difficulty with this and they refer to it as once saved, always saved.

What a damnable doctrine. That means that once you are in Christ, once you are saved, then you can go on and live like a hellion and do whatever you want.

It doesn't make any difference and you can send up a storm because you know you are going to heaven in the final analysis, so it doesn't make any difference how you live. You live a life of licentiousness and looseness and a libertine's life and all of that is to simply say anybody who advocates that or proposes that as an argument has demonstrated they haven't a clue as to what grace is all about.

And I would be the first to admit that grace is subject to abuse, no doubt about it. Grace is subject to abuse.

You can take advantage of God's grace. Many Christians do. I'm satisfied that I have on times. Why do we do what we do?

[30 : 46] What is our motivation? Is it to stay saved? Or are we motivated simply out of a sense of gratitude and thanksgiving for who we are in Christ and what was done to procure our salvation?

We are so overwhelmed with being a recipient of God's grace, we just want to spend and be spent for Him.

We serve Him not because we have to, because we get to, because we want to. After all He's done for me, how can I do less than give Him my best?

After all He's done for me? The idea of licentious living for those who believe they are secure in Christ is probably the most frequent heard argument against the security of the believer.

And it is just an admission that they simply do not understand what grace is. Because the grace of God has appeared unto all men, teaching us, teaching us, teaching us that denying worldliness and ungodliness, we should live soberly and righteously in this present world.

[32 : 15] If the grace of God is not teaching you, you've never received it. I don't think the grace of God can exist in any human heart without teaching them something.

That's just the nature of it. And the more you are bathed and steeped in grace, the more your index of appreciation will rise, the greater your gratitude and thanksgiving will be, and the more you will want to spend yourself for Him.

I've told the Lord more than once, and when it came time to come back here to grace and resume a ministry, all I could think of was, Lord, I would be delighted to wear out.

I just don't want to rust out. What motivates me? I can assure you I'm not doing all of the pastoring and all of the work that I can because I hope to make it to heaven by and by.

If I've done enough, oh, good grief. we had a neighbor years ago, Barb had coffee with once in a while, and she was a Christian woman, most neurotic woman I've ever known in my life.

[33 : 34] and they were talking about something in the newspaper or some event that happened over a coffee clutch that she and Barb were having and this gal, just as sober and serious as she could be, said to Barbara, well, I've hung on to my salvation this long.

I'm not going to let it go now. Oh, good grief. Isn't that sad? It really, we laugh at it and it is humorous, but it's tragic.

It's tragic. This poor woman, and we knew her, she had kids like we did and had problems like everybody's kids have and this poor woman was just in a constant state of frenzy.

I mean, she was just neurotic, bouncing off the walls, hand wringing, floor pacing and all of this and you're at a loss to know where to start.

And you know what? And when Barb tried to explain to her the wonders of his grace and the assurance, the joy and the peace that comes from believing that she could have, you know, the most that she could muster was this.

[34 : 50] Barbara, I really wish I could believe that. I really wish I could believe that.

But she couldn't. You know why she couldn't? She was scared to death that if she believed that, it would put her salvation in jeopardy because she might stop trying to please God.

Do you think you could please God in the flesh? Your puny offerings or mine? Do you know what is pleasing to God about us?

we are accepted in the beloved. That's what pleases God.

It is a transfer. It is a substitution that pleases God. That passage that talks about Ephesians, I think it's too, about being acceptable to him means means that God approves of us.

[36 : 21] Think of that. God actually approves of you. Why does he approve of you? There's just one reason that God approves of you.

One reason that God approves of you, and that is this. God approves of you.

God approves of you. God approves of you because he approves of Jesus. And if you are in Christ, guess where that puts you on God's list of approval?

Your approval comes through him. It doesn't come through you. It comes through him. That's what Christianity is all about. That's what substitution and sacrifice is all about.

We are accepted in him. If you're counting on being accepted just because of who and what you are, forget that. If you could do that, if anyone could do that, there would be no point in Jesus Christ dying.

[37 : 27] He died because he did for us what we couldn't do for ourselves. This is the remarkable thing about it. And this dear lady, who was always fretting and stewing over one thing or another, had no concept of the sovereignty of God, had no concept of the assurance of her salvation.

She was always in a quandary, always worried, always upset, always fretting, always stewing.

What a horrible way to live. Life is too short to live it like that. We need to know we can settle down

and relax and be at peace and have the joy and the confidence that God provides through being in Christ.

What an incredible blessed position. Is there any wonder Paul said we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ?

That he who spared not his own son but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? God, that is first class living.

And you know something? This is intended for and available to every single person who is in Christ.

[38 : 53] Are you in Christ? Do you know that you have made that commitment, that you have entrusted yourself to what Jesus Christ did for you?

Are you assured of that at some point in time in the past? If you know that was your decision, if you have a heart that is open and pliable and available before God, you don't have to worry about, well, did I have enough faith?

Did it really take? Did I do the right thing? Was it just an emotional decision? These are all common doubts that most of us have had at one time or another.

And what it all boils down to is this. Can you believe what God said? Is that good enough for you?

Or will you put more confidence in your feelings and in your fears than you will in what God said?

Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.

[40 : 08] Wow. It doesn't get any better than that. This allows us to just relax and enjoy the secure peace, freedom, the life that Christ provided for us.

I hope that is your portion this morning because if it isn't and you are in Christ and you don't have this, you are really, really short changing yourself.

Questions or comments? Anyone? Do we have our roving microphone available there in case somebody wants to? So, Harleen?

Harleen? Marvin, I know what you said today.

And I just like to say they can't lose it. Even that woman that was talking to Barb, she was still saved.

[41 : 25] Whether she felt that she wasn't or that she had to do all this different stuff, she was still going to heaven. We're saved despite ourselves.

Right. Yeah. Yeah. Absolutely. And once you understand grace, I've made this point before. Let me make it again.

People who do not understand their security in Christ, it isn't that they don't understand the issue of security. It's that they don't understand the issue of grace. Once you understand what grace is all about, the security issue solves itself.

It becomes apparent, becomes obvious that you are in Christ and incapable of being separated from him. While we've got another question, I want you to turn your Bibles to Romans chapter 8 and I've got another verse or two for you.

I saw another hand somewhere. Over here, Dave. I just wanted to relate something a little bit kind of funny.

[42 : 29] Our society is so performance oriented. I was at work the other day and it was like only a Monday or Tuesday and I got irritated about something. One of my co-workers who knew I attended church every Sunday said, is your church warranty out already for the week?

It was like Monday or Tuesday, you know, so it was just kind of a funny statement. Your church warranty. Anybody else?

Phil. Ron and then Phil. I think grace is sufficient. We need not add anything to it.

And on CNN this morning, there was a poll that was done that 63% of all Christians have some interest in Eastern or New Age beliefs.

And that was a shock to me. Yeah. Well, I've been looking at this material of late, polls and things that people believe.

[43 : 39] And many of these polls are taken from people as they exit churches on Sunday morning. And sometimes it's just absolutely tragic.

Phil? Would you like to address blasphemy of the Holy Spirit? I know you've talked about it in times past, but just because that's the only non-pardonable sin. So, would you like to take a couple minutes and address that?

The blasphemy against the Holy Spirit? All right. I'd be glad to. I won't turn to it, but you will find it mentioned in all of the synoptics. That's Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

It's mentioned in all of those. And Jesus said, all manner of sin shall be forgiven unto men, but blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

And there is no possible way of understanding that other than taking it in its context. And in its context, it is abundantly clear that the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit was the attribution of the power and the miracles that Christ performed to the power of Beelzebub or to the power of Satan. [44 : 55] Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ performed the miracles that he did in the power of the Spirit of God. And to say that he actually performed, well, we know how Jesus, the Pharisees and scribes said, we know how Jesus performed those miracles.

He did it in the power of Satan. That's how he did it. That is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. And the context reveals that that present generation that was guilty of that in the religious leadership and the headship of Israel at the time had actually committed that sin.

And that was that for which they were not forgiven. You see, let me just be as brief as I can about this, but the religious leadership of Israel had already, before John the Baptist and Jesus Christ came on the scene, they had already been negative toward God the Father.

The religious hierarchy of Israel, Judaism as it existed at the time, was thoroughly corrupt, right to its very core, and the priests were all involved in it, and the temple rip-offs and all the rest of it were just an indication of that.

They were already in a negative rejection mode of God the Father before John or Jesus ever came on the scene. That created the climate.

[46 : 34] That previous negative attitude created the climate for an ongoing negative attitude toward John the Baptist, which they had, toward Jesus Christ, which they had, so they just continued in the same rejection mode of the divine.

God the Father, and here's God the Son. And in Acts chapter 7, what was it that Stephen accused the leadership of Israel of doing as they were about to rain stones down on his body and martyr him right on the spot?

You do always resist the Holy Spirit. So, they had blasphemed the Father before Christ ever came, they blasphemed Christ when he did come, and they blasphemed the Holy Spirit when they offered their final rejection of God's redemptive plan.

sin. And the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit was the coup de gras for Israel. That's when they were set aside in unbelief, in a state of unforgiveness.

That was their blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Today, it isn't even possible for us to commit that sin. And people wonder about whether they've committed the unpardonable sin.

[48 : 00] Most don't even know what it is. But, scriptures make it very clear that that sin was a dispensational thing, and it was peculiar to that situation, and it doesn't even exist today.

But people think that they can't possibly be in Christ because they've done some pretty terrible things in their day. And God would not be interested or able to forgive them because of their sin. Well, you must understand, first thing that does is it greatly depreciates the work of Christ.

The death of Christ for sins that men have committed is sufficient except in my case, mine was too big for him to handle. What arrogance!

What self-centeredness! We believe that we can out-sin the grace of God. We believe that our puny efforts negatively, whatever they are, or however many there may be, can somehow overwhelm the grace of God so that God looks down on you, a particularly vile person, and he says, oh, my grace has its limits, I can't handle you.

[49 : 21] I can't forgive you. That's nonsense. It's arrogance and it's ignorance. And arrogance is nothing but ignorance with an attitude. There's a lot of that around too.

Other comments or questions? Anyone? Clear in the back there. Mike. Mike. I think that people confuse blasphemy with grieving the Holy Spirit.

Can you explain what grieving the Holy Spirit means? Well, I think expressions are used blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, which is a form of cursing.

And by the way, you cannot blaspheme another person. You can only blaspheme deity. You can curse another person, you can sin against another person, but you cannot blaspheme a human being.

Only God is capable of being blasphemed. Blasphemy is a character of deity. Two expressions are used in particular when it comes to the Spirit of God and the life and ministry of a believer.

[50 : 40] And one is grieving the Holy Spirit. We grieve the Holy Spirit when we refuse to let him have his way in our life.

And I suspect we've all been guilty of that. And maybe multiple times. Grieving the Holy Spirit. And when we quench the Holy Spirit, that means we refuse to follow his leading or we refuse to respond to what the Spirit of God is bidding us do, particularly as revealed in his word.

It's just like a fire has been kindled and is burning and you pour cold water on it. It means the Spirit of God may be calling or wooing or trying to get you to do something and it isn't that he can't make you do it.

He doesn't want to make you do it. He wants to utilize your willingness. The Holy Spirit is very tender. He does not operate with a club.

He operates with a request. You can quench him and you can grieve him. God has given you that power. Both of those are entirely different than blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

[52 : 05] Does that help? Someone else? Yes, Roger? Would we not be blaspheming the Holy Spirit if we draw our final breath rejecting the calling of God or the salvation or the grace of God?

Well, I wouldn't use the term, I guess technically I wouldn't use the term blasphemy. I would just say that we are rejecting a gracious invitation of the Spirit of God.

Yeah. I do think that the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit was limited to that generation of Israelites. It didn't exist before that or after that.

I think it was a very peculiar thing. And the time period that Christ had ministering to Israel for about three or three and a half years was utterly unique in all of human history and in all of Israel's history. And it was a one-time proposition and I don't think it can be carried over into any other generation. Other comments or questions? Feel free. Okay.

[53 : 19] Let's close with a word for it. Loving Father, once again, we admit that in the midst of all that we have covered and expressed, there is still a great deal that we don't understand because you've given us information that very often exceeds our ability to comprehend and it's just the nature of your being the infinite God that you are.

But for what we are able to comprehend with these finite minds of ours, we are able to enter in to a sphere of appreciation and gratitude and thanksgiving that can and should forever characterize our life, our attitude, our manner of living, we thank you so much for it.

And we thank you especially that this being the all consuming, all compelling issue, nothing else in life matters, no matter what or who has been taken from us, nothing else matters compared to the exceeding, abundant, love and knowledge that we have from embracing Christ.

Thank you so much for that. Now unto him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before his throne with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior be glory, majesty, dominion and power, both now and evermore.

Amen. Good Uraniumini, to the affordable earth, love and appreciate Julia coming.

[55 : 17] Maybe may keep dir what are on that Budd and here in aiers big and evitar homogeneous our hand could hurt anywhere especially a hundred