

The Difficult Sayings of Jesus #18

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Date: 13 November 2011

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[0 : 00] It is really interesting that our Lord chided or even rebuked Nicodemus for not being able to understand what he was saying. And it must have been a rather embarrassing situation for him.

Because Nicodemus was a Pharisee and he did enjoy a significant status in the community of Israel. And Jesus kind of put him on the spot when he said, you mean to tell me that you are one of the chief teachers in Israel?

And you don't understand this? That's amazing. But 2,000 years later, there is still an enormous misunderstanding as to what this means about being born again.

I think it was Jimmy Carter when he was running for president in the 1970s that gave a new emphasis to the title or to the idea of being born again.

And it wasn't long when he was using that in some of his campaigns and he even said that he was a born again Christian and was very open about it and everything. And the phrase born again started surfacing anywhere.

[1 : 18] Wait until you see the new Cadillacs. It has been born again. Everything and everyone was born again. It just kind of became a catch-all for anything that represented a kind of new beginning.

And it was a pickup on Jimmy Carter's being born again. Of course, what he had in mind was that he had received new life as an individual because of his faith in Jesus Christ.

And yet the term is still grossly misunderstood. Even it is grossly misunderstood even by a lot of people who have been born again.

They still don't understand what it was that happened to them. So what we are going to do in this session, and this is our 18th in a series of the difficult sayings of Jesus, we are going to examine, look at this subject at its root, and that will require our dealing in to the constitution of your human personhood.

How are you constructed, put together? What is the basis of the human constitution? Several months ago, we gave considerable time and attention to this, to our Wednesday evening sessions, as we engaged an in-depth study on the subject of the soul and the human spirit.

[2 : 38] And I'm going to repeat some of that content because it's necessary to explain the text here. But of course, it will not engender nearly as much as what we had considered.

But for starters, let me just say this. You and I as human beings are composed of two basic, what shall I call them, components, I guess.

One is the physical, and the other is the non-physical. One is the material, and one is the immaterial.

One is fleshly, and the other is spirit. Everything that makes you what you are is made up of either the material or the immaterial.

There is nothing about you that is neither. There is nothing about you that is both. The human soul is comprised of a human spirit and a human body.

[3 : 48] We are told in Genesis chapter 2, and I think it's verse 7, that after God had formed Adam from the dust of the ground, he breathed into Adam the breath of life, and Adam became a living soul.

The soul is comprised, as best as I can understand this, the soul is comprised of the human body plus the human spirit.

If this is true, I believe it is. If this is true, it means you do not have a soul. You are a soul. You are a soul in the totality of your being, and in your souliness, you possess a physical body and a non-physical spirit.

Those who deny the existence of the spirit, we would refer to as materialists or physicalists or empiricists.

There are many in the scientific community, people who wear the white lab coats, who do not subscribe to the existence of the human spirit.

[5 : 10] And they insist that the only thing that has objective reality is what you can put in a test tube or on an examining table, and you can measure it, and you can weigh it, and you can see it, and you can handle it.

And that is the source of science. That is what science is all about. And that's the venue to which they are limited. And anything beyond that is referred to commonly as metaphysical.

It is beyond the physical. And we would say that this is where the human spirit comes in. In the passage that was read earlier, the apostle addressed the issue of the human spirit, and he says that what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of a man which is in him.

Your human spirit, and by the way, every human being has a human spirit. Not to be confused with the Holy Spirit. Only believers possess the Holy Spirit.

But every human being has a human spirit. It is part of what makes you human. And in this spirit, the true you really lives.

[6 : 33] Nobody's ever seen the real you. Nobody has any idea what spirit looks like. Remember when Jesus was resurrected, and he appeared to his disciples, and they were terrified.

Because they thought they were looking at a spirit. Well, one of the characteristics of spirit is you don't look at it. You can't see it. It's not available to our five senses.

And therefore, some discount it altogether and say that it doesn't exist. But Jesus responded to his disciples by saying, Handle me and see.

For spirit has not flesh and bones as you see me have. So Jesus clearly was not a spirit or a phantom or a ghost.

He was there in his physical, literal body that appeared to them. And they were able to handle him. And they were able to eat broiled fish with him.

[7 : 38] So, when Paul addresses the issue of the human spirit, he says that nobody knows what is really inside of you.

Nobody knows your thoughts, your dreams, your fears, or anything else. Nobody knows them but you. You have a private spot in your life into which no one else can come.

Nobody else has access. Only you. And it is in that human spirit that the real you resides. We are of the opinion that the human spirit consists of all of the things that make you who and what you are. In your human spirit resides your personality, your temperament, your creativity, your intelligence, your IQ.

All of these are intangible. They are all non-physical things. But they all have objective reality. Nobody has ever seen creativity.

[8 : 53] We see what creativity does. But nobody has ever seen creativity. Yet it resides in you. And your body is used to express what is in your spirit.

That's how we know things about you. If you didn't use your body to tell us through your spoken word and through your body language, we wouldn't be able to know anything about you.

But when you talk, you reveal something coming from your spirit. It is the spirit that animates the body. It is the spirit that contains the life principle that God breathed into Adam.

James tells us that the body without the spirit is dead. This means at physical death, the human spirit vacates the body, but nobody sees it leave.

A corpse is vacated. It's just nobody's home anymore.

[10 : 06] They vacated the premises. And if they are a believer, they are absent from the body, present with the Lord. When Jesus was on the cross, last thing he said was, Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit.

And he exhaled for the last time and he didn't inhale. About five and a half years ago, when I was holding Barbara in my arms, her breathing became more and more shallow.

And I remember saying to myself, one of these times, and pretty soon now, she is going to exhale, but she won't inhale.

She will not take another breath. And her breathing became further and further apart. And I knew it was coming. And as I held her and caressed her, that time came.

She... And that was it. She was gone. She was really absent from the body, present with the Lord.

[11 : 36] So many in our world and in our culture today do not give proper recognition at all to the spirit.

And you've heard people say things like, ah, when you die, you die like a dog. That's the end of it. It's all over. No heaven, no hell, no nothing. It's kaput. You're non-existent.

You are... You are just... You cease existence when you die. No, you don't. You just change your place of residence from this physical body to that which God has prepared if you are a believer.

And this is what Jesus is chiding Nicodemus about. Who ought to know better? He says, you mean to tell me that you are a master, a teacher in Israel, and you don't know the essential components of the human being?

Where were you? Didn't you ever read Genesis 2-7? God breathed into Adam the breath of life and he became a living soul? And have you not read that the spirit at death returns to God who gave it?

[12:47] What do you mean? Nicodemus asking me a question like, can a man enter his mother's womb and be born again the second time? Well, if man is nothing but physical, that's a perfectly legitimate question.

But Jesus wasn't talking about the body being born again. He's talking about the essence of your personhood being born again.

And when you receive Christ as your personal Savior, whenever that was, whether you knew it or not, the spirit of God entered your body and operated on your human spirit, he regenerated it.

He made your human spirit alive to God. Now, it was already alive because you were alive. But it was dead toward God.

That's what spiritual death means. In fact, that's what death means. It means separation. It does not mean ceasing to exist.

[14:03] That's not the definition of death. Definition of death is separation. If it is physical death, it is separation of the human spirit from the body.

You die. James 2.17 The body without the spirit is dead. That's physical death. Spiritual death is the separation of the spirit from God.

And that will be described in the book of the Revelation as the second death. And by the way, it's very permanent. So, what this whole passage is talking about here in context and as we attempt to allow the Bible to interpret itself because I've often said, I am not competent nor capable to interpret the scriptures and neither is any other human being.

God must be his own interpreter. that's why we have to insist that the Bible shed light upon the Bible. And when you use the Bible to interpret the Bible, we compare spiritual things with spiritual things.

We let the Bible tell us what the Bible means. And when it says one thing in one place, it will shed light upon that in another. And that's the whole essence and nature of Bible study.

[15:29] You're going through the book, comparing scripture with scripture. So, in doing this and looking at this passage in John 3, if you would come to it for a moment, I'm going to skip the introduction part and we'll just get in right to verse 3, where Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Now, right away, we've got a little bit of a problem with the translation. Because the word in the Greek that is translated here again really doesn't mean again.

It means from above or above. Jesus is telling Nicodemus, except a man be born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven.

And, I have here before me a 26th translation New Testament to which I have appealed many times. And the RSV says, unless one is born anew, well, that's not a whole lot better.

The Reims-Due version, which is the Roman Catholic official version, has it right. It says, except a man be born from above.

[16:48] Basic English says, except a man be born again or without a new birth, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

And, all of this, the birth thing, I think, is what really throws people off. And, it's what threw Nicodemus off. He said, well, this is weird.

I'm a grown man. You can't enter your mother's womb and be born again. Pretty ridiculous question, ridiculous concept. And, Jesus is saying, hey, you ought to know better than that.

That's not what we're talking about. We're talking about being born from above. You see, Nicodemus, you have already been born from below. The earth.

Physical parents. That's the earthly birth. You need a heavenly birth. A birth from above. You've had the birth from below. But, if you haven't been born from above, and what he's saying is this,

your physical body is evidence that you have life, and you have been born into this world.

[18 : 04] But, you have a spirit, and this spirit needs to be regenerated. Passage in Titus, I think it's Titus 3.5, says, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, he hath saved us by the washing, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.

And, there's no water in that washing. When your human spirit is regenerated, you are dry cleaned. There isn't any water there.

And, there isn't any water in John 3. But, a great many people insist on seeing water in it, because Jesus said, accept a man be born of water, and the spirit.

And, immediately, that sends up the flag, and says, ah, you've got to be baptized. And, the only question is, how are we going to do it? Are we going to immerse them three times forward, one time backwards, sprinkle them, or hold them by their heel, and dunk them in head first, like the Orthodox baptized their babies, sprinkle them, or what?

There's no water in this either. But, he's talking about a physical birth. And, Jesus constantly makes reference to the physical and the spiritual.

[19 : 30] And, you see this so many times in John's gospel, especially in John's. In chapter four, when he talks with the woman at the well, he says, he who drinks of the water that I give him shall never thirst again.

and this dear girl, all she could think about was magical H₂O that you drink it and you never get thirsty again. Think of all the trips that would save me to the well and carrying those buckets and everything.

Why? I'd really like, and Jesus said, no, no, no, he's not talking about that kind of water. He's talking about spiritual water.

water. Well, what's spiritual water look like? I haven't a clue. Nobody's ever seen it. But it exists. It doesn't look like anything, but it has a reality to it.

It has an actual existence to it. And our problem is we are so fixated on our five senses and we use them repeatedly all day long and we just tend to think that that's all there is.

[20 : 42] Well, that isn't all there is. And I wouldn't call the human spirit ESP or sixth sense or anything else, but I think that it has an objective reality just as much as our physical body does, that it is real.

And Jesus is using the spiritual all the time. When he referred to himself as the light of the world, light, what is he, a big bulb, a big candle?

Of course not. He's not talking about that kind of light. He's talking about spiritual light. But spiritual light is just as real as a 60 watt light bulb is real physically.

And then there is spiritual bread. Physical bread, spiritual bread. This is precisely what our Lord meant when he said, man shall not live by bread alone.

Now, if all you have is a physical body and that's it, then that's all you need is just physical bread. Forget about anything else. Just be concerned about where your next meal is coming from.

[21 : 51] But he went on to say, he shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. What's that? That is spiritual content.

It is truth communicated in words that you can't see, that you can't hear, and wonderfully, you see, the human spirit works with the human body and enables you to assess and evaluate and reach conclusions.

Because when you hear information, you take it into your mind, and your mind, by the way, is involved with the human spirit, the brain is not.

The brain is involved with the body. It's physical, but the mind is not. And the mind and the brain work together in some incredibly mysterious, wonderful way.

Nobody has ever been able to discover a bridge. bridge. And that's what just drives us up the wall. Because there is a bridge, and we can't find it, between the physical and the non-physical.

[23 : 03] And when you hear something, when you learn something, you learn it through your senses. You hear things, and you see things, and those go into your brain through your eyes and your ears, and it works with your mind, and you begin thinking about what you hear.

You have a certain amount of comprehension, and that grows with age. Little children don't comprehend very much, they don't understand very much, but as they mature and get older, they start understanding more and more and more.

And the more you learn, this is why learning is so important, the more you learn, the more you have to learn with. If you don't learn anything, you don't have anything to learn with.

That's called stupid, or ignorant. Was it John Wayne that said, life is tough? And if you're stupid, it's a lot tougher.

Well, it is. And how, what makes people stupid and ignorant? It's lack of information. So when you get the information, you process it, and you begin thinking about it, and you evaluate it, and you either accept it as true and desirable and something you want, or you reject it.

[24 : 21] Say, I don't believe that. And you scrap it. You don't give any more mental attention to it. Or maybe you say, oh, I don't know, I never thought about that. There might be something there.

I'll have to give that some thought. And we call that, you put it on the back burner. you don't reject it, you just kind of log it, so that maybe when you get more information, you can put it with that and reach a conclusion.

And this is exactly what happens when people believe the gospel. And we were talking about this a little bit in our Sunday school class this morning, that people are exposed to the gospel, they hear the gospel in bits and pieces, they just get a little bit here, a little bit there, and it doesn't make much sense to them.

Maybe it just sounds like religious talk, and that's all. But the more they hear, and the more they are exposed to the truth, the more information they have, next thing you know, things start adding up.

They start connecting some dots. And when they come to the point of truth, which is the point of salvation, where they can make an intelligent decision, because they understand the gospel.

[25 : 35] It is a light that goes, aha, and that's your moment of truth. That's when you come to faith in Christ. And most of us, many of us, I won't say most of us, but many of us aren't even aware when that happens.

We don't know what's happened. But what happened is you're believing the gospel, the spirit of God entered your life, and renewed your human spirit, made your human spirit alive to God.

It was alive before, but it was dead to God. Now it's alive to God. Now you have a new capacity. This is what Paul meant when he said, if any man be in Christ, he's a new creation.

Old things have passed away, behold, all things have become new. It means you've got a whole new apparatus. It's just like starting life all over again. Only this time, it is with some really important information.

And this new important information allows you to see the world from a different perspective than you did before you were a believer. It allows you to see your mate in a different perspective.

[26 : 54] You see yourself and you see the whole world. we call this a biblical worldview where you assess everything on the basis of its comporting with scripture.

That regeneration, and by the way, the word regeneration, of course, is linked to our word gene and genetic, and we're more and more familiar with genes and chromosomes and all of those wonderful things that are passed on through the DNA code and all of that good stuff.

And to be regenerated literally means to be re-gened. And it is a spiritual operation.

We don't know what the Spirit of God does when he changes the human heart and regenerates the human spirit. We don't know how he does that.

but when he finishes, we are a different person on the inside. And if we are consistent, that's supposed to be reflected on the outside from what is in us.

[28 : 07] Now, apparently, Nicodemus didn't have a clue about any of this. And Jesus chides him forth and says, here you are, a master in Israel, and you don't even understand the basic essential difference between physical and spiritual?

And he uses this kind of terminology in a way that I think is just marvelous. Let's look at this, if we may. Here in John 3, when Jesus says, Jesus says in verse 5, truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Well, what's the water? water. And again, I emphasize it is not baptism in any form. This is the water, I think the context requires this, this is the water of the human, physical birth.

Have you ever heard about a pregnant lady rushing to get to the hospital in time? And she says, and just as I got out of the car, my water broke. What does that mean?

That means Junior is on the way. When that water breaks, it's like the dam breaking. This is the amniotic fluid that is surrounding the baby.

[29 : 33] The baby is encased in this and is not even breathing with its lungs. It derives all of its nutrients and everything while it is in that water sack.

And once that water sack breaks, then theoretically the baby is at risk because its supply for everything is coming to an end.

And all it has left is that whatever it receives through the umbilical cord, and when the baby comes out and the umbilical cord is cut, what is the very first thing that baby needs?

It needs a big breath of air. It needs to fill those lungs for the first time. And this is why so many preemies have real problems with respiratory.

Their lungs are not matured, fully formed, and they may be a seven month old preemie. And what they really need is air, oxygen. And you've seen the proverbial picture of the doctor smacking the baby on the butt, and it takes that big deep breath of air and starts crying.

[30 : 50] It's one of the sweetest sounds in the whole world to hear a newborn baby start crying. It's alive. It's breathing. That's born of water.

It could also be B-O-R-N-E of water. Because it kind of paves the way. The water breaks and the baby starts its exit. That's being born of the earth, being born below, being born of water.

Jesus said, unless a man is born of water and the spirit, he will not see the kingdom of heaven.

Because only part of him has this spiritual, only part of him has life, and that's physical life.

But there is a part of him that has spiritual life, but it is separated from God. And it needs to be brought to the creator.

And that is through the new birth, or this regeneration. And when he says, unless one is born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

[32 : 02] And the way this works, Jesus says, is because, verse six, that which is born of the flesh is flesh. That's the water birth. But that which is born of the spirit is spirit.

So, do not marvel, do not be amazed that I said to you, you must be born from above. This is the meaning, I think, of the text.

And to be born from above means to be born of God. This is the spiritual birth. This is your human spirit being activated and made alive toward God.

And only the spirit of God can do that. So, what triggers it? And by the way, he goes on and gives an illustration here in verse eight. He says, the wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from and where it is going.

So is everyone who is born of the spirit. And the reason he's using this analogy, and he keeps going back and forth between the physical and the spiritual. And you've got to keep that in context and see the contrast that he is making between the one and the other.

[33 : 14] And all Nicodemus was thinking of was the physical. And Jesus says, you're only thinking about half the person. You're forgetting the other half, the half that is alive toward God. In your physical body, you are alive toward other people.

In your spirit, you are alive toward God. But that spirit needs to be regenerated. Otherwise, you are dead toward God. Everyone who has not experienced this is dead in their human spirit toward God. They are alive in their human spirit toward their body, and they use their spirit to animate their body. Your body takes directions from your spirit.

That involves your will, your volition, and when you decide you want to do something, you want to pick up a book, without even thinking about it, when I reach for this Bible, I have the thought first. I tell myself, I want to pick up that Bible. And I just reach over, and my spirit tells my mind and my brain what it wants my body to do.

[34 : 27] And my body says, okay, arm, hand, extend yourself, reach over there, and pick up that book, fingers, grasp it, and hold it like this.

And my body says to my spirit, yes, sir. And it does that. But, there can be problems develop.

There can be injuries or malformation in the physical body, so it isn't able to work in concert. We call this disease.

There are things like paralysis, stroke, that render part of our body inoperable, or damaged nerves, or blood supply is cut off.

So, you see, it is absolutely amazing. It is stunning what is going on right now in your body, and you don't even know it.

[35 : 32] And you don't even feel it. But you are incredibly dependent on it. Wouldn't it be a real nuisance if you had to feel and listen to your blood circulate all time?

Put a stethoscope on your chest and you get to go, boom, boom, boom. Wouldn't you like to walk around all day listening to that? So, God has just marvelously, wonderfully engineered our bodies so all these things operate and function, and you don't even know it.

You're not even aware of it. You just go on about your business. You eat food and you don't say, boy, I sure hope I'm going to be able to digest. Well, maybe you do, though. Some foods, some problems, but I've often said, if there is any verse in the Bible that is an understatement, it's the psalmist that said, surely we are fearfully and wonderfully made.

You don't know the half of it. We are constructed and put together in such an unbelievably incredible way. The mathematical possibility of an entity like yourself ever having come into existence through evolution or shm evolution or anything else is a number that is so astronomically large you can't even begin to pronounce it.

Everything had to be in place. Everything had to be just right. And there was, of course, that great orchestrator behind the scenes who was putting it all together. absolutely amazing.

[37 : 12] Just amazing. And Nicodemus was really out to lunch. And Jesus is cluing him in. And he says, he says in verse 6, that which is born of the flesh is flesh.

That which is born of the spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, you must be born again.

And then he says the wind blows where it lists. And you hear the sound thereof.

But tell me, have you ever seen the wind? No. You're not able to say, there goes the wind. You see what the wind does, it blows leaves and grass, and if it's a tornado, it blows about everything.

But you see what it does, and yet, you cannot see the wind any more than you cannot see air. And all air is, is wind in motion.

But you don't see it, you look through it, don't you? And yet, air has properties, and it contains gases, nitrogen, oxygen, all that stuff.

[38 : 26] But nobody goes around, hey, look at, there goes the oxygen, and there's some nitrogen. Well, maybe these things don't really exist. I mean, you've never seen them, but we've been able to demonstrate, haven't we, scientifically, that yes, oxygen does exist, nitrogen does exist.

22% oxygen, 78% nitrogen, and 1% of a couple of other things, but nobody's ever seen it.

So how do you know there is such a thing? Well, we know, don't we? And Jesus says, you haven't seen it, you don't know where it comes from, or where it goes, but nonetheless, it is there.

You cannot tell from whence it cometh and whither it goes. So is everyone that is born of the Spirit. Nobody's ever seen that verse take place. Nobody can look at someone and say, aha, there is a human spirit that is being reborn.

You don't know that. Now, you can say, there is a human being that is being born as it exits its mother's body. You can see that and hear it crying, but nobody ever sees the spiritual birth take place.

[39 : 45] And Nicodemus answered and said to him, how can these things be? Jesus said, are you a master of Israel and knows not these things? Wow. And then in verse 12, he says, I've told you earthly things and you believe not.

How shall you believe if I tell you of heavenly things? I think what he is saying to Nicodemus is, Nicodemus, what I have just shared with you has to do with some of the most basic understanding of our human personages and the way we are put together and you don't even have a handle on that.

You couldn't begin to handle heavenly truth. And you know what? I am convinced that Nicodemus got the message and it was not coincidental that of the two men who went to Pontius Pilate and begged for the body of Jesus so they could lovingly tenderly care for that body, they took it down from the cross.

One of them was Joseph of Arimathea and the other was Nicodemus. I think he came to some new light after this conversation with Jesus because you know what?

What Jesus told him, he received as information. Nicodemus took it into his mind and he began processing it and thinking about what Jesus said.

[41 : 10] And as he started putting it together with what else he already knew and what else he was learning, this fit, this fit, this fit, this comes into place, aha, now I have a peg to hang that on, now I have a niche to fit that in, this makes sense, it all comes together.

And that's the moment of truth. Have you had that? Have you had that moment of truth?

Maybe it's when you were three or four years old, or maybe you never have had it. But unless you are born from above, you cannot see the kingdom of God.

And unless you are born from above, you cannot be acceptable to God. Because when you are born from above, God declares you to be righteous.

And God clothes you with the righteousness of Christ. He makes you a new creation on the inside. God and this doesn't have anything to do with church.

[42 : 31] Doesn't have anything to do with being good or trying harder or making promises. It has everything to do with believing that Jesus Christ came into this world to be your Savior.

And he died to take a death that you deserved. And he did it in your place. And when he was on that cross, God took all of the sins of all of humanity and dropped them on the shoulders of Jesus. And then God damned him, condemned him, judged him, poured out his wrath and fury and righteous indignation on Jesus.

Why should he do that? Well, he shouldn't. But he did. He shouldn't because we didn't have it coming.

We didn't deserve that. We deserve what Jesus got. That's what we deserve. But God in his grace makes this incredible gift of eternal life available to us as a free gift.

[44 : 05] And can you believe there are people that turn up their nose at that? And they say, well, I don't think I'm that bad. I think I'm good enough.

I think I'm better than most people. And on and on and on. Pathetic. Just pathetic. God went to the most extreme length to which he could go in providing his son just so he could require from us the very least that we could provide.

God and that is just to believe him. That is amazing grace. Utterly amazing.

Before I close in prayer, do you have a question or comment? Anyone? Anyone? We've got five minutes left and I don't want to get in the habit of letting you loose early.

That's a bad habit. Up here in front. I just want to save out the new members. Oh, okay.

[45 : 26] Thank you. You don't have a question. You were just reminding me. Okay, very good. Anybody with a question or comment? Yes, we do want to recognize our new members. Anyone? Well, you had your chance.

Now, I don't feel guilty about not giving you time for Q&A.; We will ask, and thank you for the reminder, Ron, we will ask our moderator to come up and conduct this delightful but brief item of business that we had to conduct.

So, Ron, come right ahead. Well, this is a enjoyable time when we can invite new members into our church.

And we have two that we would like to introduce to you today, and the board has recommended that they become members of the church. One is Jennifer McCaukey, who has been walking around here ever since she was about right there.

So, we welcome Jennifer, Jennifer, and she's become an adult, and she wants to commit herself to Grace Bible Church, and we really appreciate that, Jennifer.

[46 : 43] And, of course, we have Marla Beck. I know Marla from our childhood days, so I called her Camel, but it's Marla Beck. And she used to live here around South Charleston in the Springfield area, and she's been in Mississippi for the last 20 to 30 years, and she has come back to live here in the Springfield area, and she wants to become a member of Grace Bible Church also.

They have spent a few weeks with Marv in the membership class. They met with the board last week, and the board wants to recommend that Jennifer McCaukey and Marla Beck become members of Grace Bible Church.

And we need to take a vote on that as a congregation, and that's what we'll do at this point. So do I have any nominations? Not nominations, but from the floor.

Keith has made a motion that we accept these two into our membership here at Grace. Do I have a second to that motion? And Gary has second that motion. Any comments before we vote? All those in favor, please raise your right hand.

All those opposed, welcome. to Grace Bible Church. Thank you, and let's pray.

[48 : 06] Loving Father, how grateful we are for the truths that you have been pleased to reveal in your word, and we are fully aware that there is much that we have missed, because this book is inexhaustible, and we are so finite in our ability to grasp it.

So we pray that what we have learned, you will be pleased to use it as one more thing that we can put together in our human spirit and add it to what is already there that will enable us to make more and more right conclusions decisions and decisions based upon what you have revealed.

Thank you for the privilege of being a human being and possessing the marvelous faculties that you have built into these bodies and spirits.

We love you for it, and we look forward to the time when we will be able to more appropriately and directly thank you for life itself.

Thank you for these new additions to our church fellowship. May they continue to be the blessing to us that they already have been, and us to them as well.

[49 : 24] We thank you in Christ's name. Amen. Marla and Jennifer, if you would come up front here, we want you to be able to receive the hand of fellowship, so come right ahead.

Those of you who are members, if you will just file by and give them a word of greeting and welcome into Grace Bible Search, we'll appreciate that. You are dismissed.