

20250921_CharlieKirk

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- [0 : 00] By the way, if you haven't been here in a couple weeks, I haven't either. Our family was out in both South Dakota and Iowa at two different family events.
- ! One was a family conference and the other one was called a family camp. And it was a tremendous time of refreshment and encouragement for our family, making new friends for both mom and dad, for Jamie and I, but also for the kids.
- But we are glad to be back home, one in our own beds, but also kind of with our own people here in Ohio, here in Springfield, here at Grace Bible Church.
- But we've put on hold our series through the book of Philippians. We've been studying through the book of Philippians for the last couple of months. We're in chapter 3. The plan was to pick up in chapter 3, but I just couldn't get past some of the events that have happened here in the last couple of weeks regarding Charlie Kirk.
- I know I came to church just as part of the congregation last week as Roger shared a message and just said a few things during the announcements, but I just felt a strong need to really address that whole situation.
- [1 : 20] It's really a cultural moment right now. And I think it's something that's instructive to us, but also a moment that we can take advantage of.
- And so I want to speak to that this morning. You know, there are lots of tragedies all the time happening all across the globe.
- All around us, tragedies here in Springfield, in Ohio, across the nation, and across the world. But for whatever reason, and I think that there's a lot of people that feel the impact of this specific tragedy, but don't necessarily understand why or where it comes from.
- I thought somebody was talking to me. And so, see if I can get back to my thought.
- People don't really understand why the death here of Charlie Kirk really impacted them so much.
- [2 : 37] For a lot of people, they say, I barely knew who the guy was, but I'm finding myself just weeping in tears and impacted so deeply by what happened to him.
- And not just that, but what has transpired in our nation. You know, I think there might be various factors involved in why this has been such an impactful thing for so many.
- Maybe part of it is his youth. He was only 31 years old. Another is his family. Married just for a few years with two small children.
- One and three years old. Part of it, I think, might be the public nature of how this happened in front of an audience.
- Not just there at the university, but those watching over video. The other thing that I think contributes is the evident hatred behind this murder.
- [3 : 43] And there's a culture war going on, if you haven't noticed. And Charlie Kirk was a big part of fighting for the righteous side of that culture war.

And, you know, even before anything came out about who this person was, who the killer was, people had an inkling, a strong feeling, that this happened because of what he stands for.

And for many people, Charlie, because of the platform that he had, that he developed over many, many years, fighting for truth and justice and righteousness in the culture, he was somewhat of a spokesperson for people like you and me, for Christians, for conservatives, for those who don't have as much of an influence in the world.

And he, for many of us, I think he felt like somewhat of a spokesperson for us, representing us and our values. But one of the other things that I think was very disconcerting for many people was not just that individual event that happened, but what ensued in the coming days, in which many people saw, whether it's in social media or the news online, many people just having a cavalier attitude towards what happened to Charlie.

Well, he kind of had it coming, or some even rejoicing and celebrating and laughing because of it. And really, this manifestation of a hatred towards Charlie Kirk and everything that he stood for.

[5 : 41] And really, these are things that we stand for, our Christian values. And I think that this has provided kind of a moment of clarity to the whole country and really across the world, that there's something going on here more than what we see at the surface, that there is a spiritual battle that is underlying all of this.

Specifically, what happened to Charlie, but even beyond that. If you open up your Bibles, open up to Ephesians chapter 6. Ephesians chapter 6.

We're going to read starting with verse 10. Ephesians chapter 6 and verse 10.

Paul's writing a letter to the church at Ephesus, and he's teaching them about how we ought to live as Christians. He just got finished talking about families, how to be a good father and a good mother.

And now he's going to go on to a different topic. He says this, Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

[7 : 13] For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities and against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Therefore, take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for the saints.

We'll end there. But Paul here is speaking to a battle. He says this is a battle that is not involving flesh and blood.

We're all familiar with battles that involve flesh and blood. Our country had a war for independence that involved a flesh and blood battle. We had a war, a civil war between the states that involved flesh and blood.

[8 : 33] We've had two world wars that we've been involved in that involved flesh and blood and many other smaller conflicts over the years.

We're very well versed in battles where we wrestle against flesh and blood. But Paul here says as Christians, we do not battle against flesh and blood.

And we might ask the question, what are you talking about, Paul? There are many battles that we as Christians are involved in that have real weapons.

But there's real bloodshed and real flesh involved. There's many acts of violence out there that require many times action, right?

From the righteous. Criminals that must be stopped. Warring nations that we have to defend ourselves against.

[9 : 35] And so what does Paul mean that we don't battle against flesh and blood when in reality we do need to battle with flesh and blood at times anyway?

I think what he is getting at is that there is an ultimate battle. There is an ultimate war that undergirds everything that we see with our eyes.

And it's a spiritual battle in which there are hosts of wickedness, invisible forces at play. There is a real battle between good and evil.

And many of the things we see with our eyes, right? We see the impact of the good and evil. But underneath it lies something that we cannot see.

Paul refers to them as we wrestling against principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this age and the hosts of wickedness, even those that are in heavenly places.

[10 : 42] And so we need to keep in mind as Christians that that is the ultimate battle that we need to be focused on. And I think as Christians we need to be aware that, you know, the world is watching how we react to things like this.

And will we react in the same way that the world does? Focusing primarily on the physical. Reacting based on just our raw emotions like so many in the world do.

Giving way to just our base inclinations for vengeance. Will we focus primarily on this temporal world? Or will we fix our eyes on eternity?

On the spiritual? On the eternal? You know, it is natural for anyone, for any human being to desire justice in the world.

When innocent people are victimized, we want to see justice. We want even vengeance. And you know, even vengeance is a God-given desire.

[11 : 58] To see that the wicked are punished. But it really does matter how we seek after that vengeance.

How we seek after justice. God has provided a means to establish justice in the world. It's not through personal vengeance.

And there are people, I've seen clips online of people who are on the right side. You know, I'm talking about left versus right. You know, and I think most or all of us in this room would identify ourselves on the right side as conservatives in this cultural battle.

But there's those who would be on our side who are creating videos and shaking their fists and saying, we're going to come after you guys. But that is not the way of what, that's not what the scripture teaches.

That's not how we ought to respond or act. Not through mob violence, right? We've seen that here in this country just five years ago when we had different things going on and there were riots in the streets and burning of buildings.

[13 : 20] Not through hate-filled screeds that are posted online. I think about groups like Antifa who are making lots of, causing lots of violence in the streets years ago and I guess still do, maybe not as commonly or as often today.

But still doing those kinds of things even today. And you know, there are many who would love to see Christians respond in the same manner.

They would love to foment more violence. And in many parts of the world that's exactly what happens. When you have partisan issues, people on two sides of some kind of issue, cultural battle, political groups, whatever it might be, when an act of violence happens on one side, what happens?

The other side rakes out and does a tit-for-tat, bringing violence to bear in a similar manner. And that's happened, it happens today in many countries of the world and throughout most of the history of the world.

It's very, very common. But as Christians, we cannot and should not take that bait. Would you turn to Romans 12 with me? We're going to see what God has to say about vengeance.

[14 : 53] You know, the Bible speaks to just about anything you can think of that has to do with our lives. Romans 12 and we're going to start in verse 17.

Romans 12 and verse 17. Paul says this to the church in Rome.

He says this, Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. And if it is possible, as much as it depends on you, live peaceably with all men.

Then he says this, Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath. For it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.

Therefore, if your enemy is hungry, you should feed him. If he is thirsty, give him a drink. For in so doing, you will heap coals of fire on his head.

[16 : 04] Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. And so Paul here is teaching, he says, he's saying, hey, listen, there are bad things happening to you.

One of the contexts here in the book of Romans is them being persecuted for their Christian faith. he's saying, listen, it's not your job, it's not your role to take vengeance when things like this happen.

On a personal level, we are to seek peace with all men, even those who hate us. We are not to return evil for evil, and we're not to be overcome with evil, overcome with rage and hatred like we see so many do.

We cannot be overcome by the evil. Instead, he says here that we need to overcome evil with what? With good, doing good to others.

And we'll talk about that more in just a moment. However, does that mean that we should never seek justice when things like this happen, when crimes are committed against us?

[17 : 26] That we just bless people and say, you know, go on your way. Does that mean we let assassins get away with murder? No.

When Paul here says to give place to wrath, he's saying, listen, I have put together a, how do I say this?

When he says give place to wrath, he's saying, I have put something in place to accommodate for issues of injustice.

And he actually continues on and speaks to it. So if you continue on here in Romans chapter 13, he talks about it. How we ought to seek justice God's way through the means that he has provided.

It says this, Romans 13 1, let everyone be subject, or let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.

[18 : 28] Therefore, whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil.

Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid.

For he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is God's minister, or servant, is what that word means. An avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.

Therefore, you must be subject, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience sake. He's saying, listen, you need to give place to wrath.

You need to subject yourself to the authorities, those who have been given the jurisdiction by God to handle issues of injustice. You imagine, and this has happened throughout history, when the people rise up and they take justice into their own hands.

[19 : 33] And what usually happens? Just utter chaos. Usually ten times worse than having a corrupt government. And so God's instruction to us is to, you know what, give place to the governing authorities for them to handle this.

Now, do they always handle it? No, sometimes they don't. Sometimes the guilty go free. But, as we seek after justice, we can pray, one of the things that Paul teaches is to pray for those in authority, right, that they might establish justice, that the right people would get into power, that those who have that power would establish real justice in the world.

And the other thing that we can do is we can petition those people, right, as citizens of this nation, to do what is right, to bring criminals to justice.

We can petition these rulers to do their job, what God assigned them, which is to be an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.

Now, in this case, when you have a murder, the Bible says that those who commit murder ought to be put to death. Back in Genesis, right after the flood, the waters receded, Noah came out, and God spoke to Moses and gave him a few instructions.

[21 : 10] One thing is he said, hey, you know, you just, before you only ate vegetables, now you can actually eat meat, and I'm giving all the animals to you to eat for food.

That was actually a difference, that was a big change. This is the other thing that he said, this is in Genesis chapter 9. He said to Noah, whoever sheds man's blood, by man, his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God he made man.

And so this is God's instruction to the world on how to handle injustice. If there is someone who commits an act of violence and bloodshed in this world, no matter their religion, no matter what nation they belong to, it is the job of nations, those who are in authority, to bring to justice those who shed innocent blood.

And why? He says here, for in the image of God he made man. Every person is someone created in God's image.

They have human dignity, worth, and a right to life that cannot be taken from them in their innocence. for those who do, their life will and ought to be forfeit.

[22 : 37] Now thankfully in this situation from what I've read, the state of Utah and even the current administration is looking for that kind of justice for this individual.

And we hope and pray that that continues. You know when there is a lack of justice in a nation, it really has an impact on that nation. I remember living for a short while in the nation of Cambodia.

Cambodia was a nation that was just ravaged by violence back around the time of the Vietnam War. And you know, of all the bloodshed that happened, about one-third of that whole country was killed.

One-third of the entire population of Cambodia was killed through violence. And do you know how many people were brought to justice? About zero. There were about zero people who were brought before a court who actually saw any kind of justice for that.

There was only one man, and I'm not sure how it ended. I remember when I was there back in the early 2000s, who was actually on trial. This was years later, right? That happened in the 70s. This was in the early 2000s, so 30 years later.

[23 : 45] The only reason that he was on trial is because he had become a Christian. And he went and he decided the right thing for me to do because of all the people that I killed, and my involvement in that is I need to turn myself in and submit to the justice of the Cambodian government.

And he did, and he was put on trial. Again, I'm not sure how that turned out, but it was a Christian man. He was the only one who was willing to submit to God's righteous judgment on the earth anyway.

Anyway. But, as we all are aware, this kind of earthly justice doesn't always happen. It doesn't always happen in this country.

It happens even less in most of the other countries in the world. Back to Cambodia, I lived there for several months and watched with my eyes as people just passed money to police officers as bribes or payoffs for whatever.

And so, the only way you could get justice as far as I could see in Cambodia was if you had enough money. But, if you don't get justice here, that earthly justice here, then what is our hope?

[25 : 13] Well, there's another form of justice that God is involved in. And even though criminals may be allowed to run rampant all over the world, even here in this country to a certain degree, we still must give place to wrath.

Even when our own government does not do their job, does not do what they ought to do. And what does it mean to give place to wrath if the government isn't doing their job?

Well, ultimately, there is a day that the Bible calls the day of wrath that is coming. A day of judgment, a day in which all men will stand in the courtroom of the judge of all the earth.

And even though there are some criminals in this life who will escape justice, there will be no one who will escape on the day of judgment.

This is referred to as, in the Bible, as the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. That's Romans 2.9. A few verses later, in Romans 2.16, it's described as the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ.

[26 : 31] In 1 Corinthians 4.5, it's described as the day in which he will reveal all the secrets of men's hearts. Many people, they haven't pulled a trigger, but they wanted to really, really bad.

They just didn't have the, quote, courage to do so. But on that day, even the murder that is in people's hearts will be judged because the secrets of their heart will be revealed.

In Acts 17.31, Paul says this, he's giving a speech, he's talking about the gospel of Jesus Christ. He says this, because he has appointed a day, talking about Jesus or the Lord, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he has ordained.

And he has given assurance of this to all by raising him from the dead. We have an assurance that one day God will bring ultimate justice to the world.

And so we will petition our leaders, our rulers, our governing authorities to do what is right and to do what is good, to execute wrath as they ought to.

[27 : 45] But even if they fail us, we will not despair. We can turn to the Lord. We can hope in his promise. We can cry out to him looking forward to that day.

I think about the saints. There's a description of the saints in the future. During the tribulation era, the Bible describes the end times in which there will be seven years of intense violence.

The Bible says that it's more violence than the earth has ever seen in all of its history. There will be many believers who will be killed at that time. And there's, as part of John's revelation of what's going to happen, he describes a scene in which many of these saints who were killed are in heaven and they're crying out to the Lord.

And this is what they're saying. Romans 6, excuse me, Revelation 6, verse 9. When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.

And they cried out with a loud voice saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, until you judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth? They're looking for vengeance.

[28 : 59] also in Psalm 94. As you read the Psalms, many of them are crying out to the Lord because of persecution or suffering.

In Psalm 94, the psalmist says this, O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongs, O God, to whom vengeance belongs, shine forth, rise up, O judge of the earth, render punishment to the proud.

Lord, how long will the wicked, how long will the wicked triumph? They utter speech and speak insolent things. All the workers of iniquity boast in themselves.

And they break in pieces your people, O Lord, and afflict your heritage. They slay the widow and the stranger and murder the fatherless. Yet they say the Lord does not see, he does not, nor does the God of Jacob understand.

Understand, you senseless among the people and you fools, when will you be wise? He who planted the ear shall he not hear? He who formed the eye shall he not see?

[30 : 11] He who instructs the nations shall he not correct? He who teaches man knowledge. The Lord knows the thoughts of man that they are futile. As the nations rage and think that they will get away with it, God says ultimately, I will put down all of it.

And no one will get away with their wickedness. But I want to ask another question. Do we only look for justice?

Or is there something even greater than justice that the Bible speaks to? The prophet Ezekiel speaking to the wayward and perverse corrupt nation of Israel.

This is in Ezekiel 33. Ezekiel 33 verse 11. And this is what God told Ezekiel to say to the corrupt and wicked nation of Israel.

Say to them, as I live, says the Lord God, that I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways, for why should you die, O house of Israel?

[31 : 32] James, this is in the New Testament, in speaking about judgment, says this, that mercy triumphs over judgment.

And isn't that really the story of the Bible? That mercy triumphs over judgment. Judgment and justice is good. But there's something that's even better.

Mercy, forgiveness, love. Our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, when he was on the earth, was giving a sermon. And he said this, this is Luke chapter 6, verse 27.

But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.

Love, do good, bless, pray for. That was Jesus' instructions to his disciples.

[32 : 45] And we see, did Jesus just ask us to do that? Or did he demonstrate the same kind of love in the life that he lived?

1 Peter 3, 18, Peter describes what Jesus did along those same lines. 1 Peter 3, 18, For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just or the righteous for the unjust, the unrighteous.

He suffered for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but made alive by the Spirit.

Jesus died for the sins of the world, that he might bring people to God. And Peter tells us in the same passage, chapter 3, 1 Peter chapter 3, that we ought to have that same kind of redemptive attitude towards the world, even towards those who hate us.

Go ahead and turn there, 1 Peter chapter 3. 1 Peter chapter 3 and verse 13. 1 Peter 3, 1 Peter 3, 1 And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good?

[34 : 14] But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled, but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and with fear or sobriety.

Having a good conscience that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but made alive by the Spirit.

Jesus is our example. The righteous died for the unrighteous. And you know, there are lots of people in the Bible who have turned to the Lord.

Some people at a young age who've, you know, done done little wrong. And others who have been murderers, murderers of not just one, but many people.

[35 : 42] Even Paul himself, the one writing many of these scriptures that we've read, held himself responsible for the murder of many, many Christians before he came to faith.

And you know what? It's probably not likely, but it is possible that Charlie's assassin, I forget his name, that he might trust in Christ.

Not likely, but it is possible. And it is certainly available that he would turn to the Lord and trust in Jesus Christ.

And you know what? If that happened, if that happened, do you know who would be the first one to celebrate the redemption of his soul?

Yeah, Charlie Kirk would be the first one to celebrate. You know, speaking a little bit about Charlie Kirk, he's most well known as being like a political or a social activist going to universities and other places and in a very public manner, debating, engaging in public debate with people about the issues of our day.

[37 : 07] Issues of primarily right and wrong. But you know that he was more than just a political or a social activist? He was a Christian.

Still is a Christian. And he was an evangelist. And from what I understand, just different things that I've read over the last couple of weeks, his evangelism and his public events became more pronounced and a regular theme in the events that he did over the last few years.

People have said that, you know, he's been at this since he was, I don't know, a teenager, I think. Well over 10, maybe 15 years. And over the last few years they said, increasingly, constantly going back to that gospel message that Jesus died for the sins of the world and making that clear.

As he engaged in these battles of ideas, he would always bring to bear the gospel. He was a Christian, an outspoken one. You know, and not like many politicians or maybe other conservative activists who kind of make appeals to religion or God as just a way to appeal to their base, right, that happens.

He was legit. He was for real. He really cared about the souls of people, even those who hated him. and he pointed them to Jesus Christ.

[38 : 40] He pointed to Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection for their sins. And I've seen many videos of him making plain the plan of salvation, that all you have to do is put your trust in Jesus Christ.

There's no works that you have to do. You just have to turn to him in humility and tell him that you want to receive the gift of salvation that he's provided through his grace to all men.

From what I understand, even on that morning that he was killed, just moments before, minutes before, he had shared the gospel of Jesus Christ with that crowd.

I want to get back to talking about the spiritual battle. You know, there is a real devil. There's a real Satan. There's real demons.

There's real spiritual wickedness in the earth and in the heavens. The Bible speaks to it. And what I have observed that in this time and place in which we live, Satan has a strategy that is different from other places in the world and other times in the past.

[39 : 54] In our culture, his strategy, I believe, is to stay in the shadows. He doesn't want people to focus too much on him. I think in times past and even today across the world, there are people who openly worship demons and they give gifts to them and in history even offered sacrifices, even human sacrifices to those demons in order to get unholy favor from those demons.

But because we live in a more secular age, I think Satan is involved in these lies. Western culture has been duped into more of a materialist worldview.

It's just atoms and molecules bouncing around and that's what we are. We're just atoms and molecules randomly bouncing around the universe. There's no real good, no evil, no right, no wrong.

And that's despite the impossibility and the absurdity of such a claim or an idea. But that's the predominant worldview.

And so Satan is happy to just live among the shadows, influencing the world in discreet ways, trying to point people away from God and towards more of a materialistic view of things.

[41 : 12] But this time, I think Satan really screwed up. I think he overplayed his hand.

Because the events of last week and then the fallout after that in the culture has really opened up people's eyes to something that they did not see before.

to the reality of what we're talking about, this spiritual battle that is undergirding all of this. I want to read to you a few posts from social media.

And many of these have garnered millions of views. Here's one. This person says, I'm going to church today for the first time since I was a child. I'm closer to becoming a Christian today than I've ever been.

Here's another one. All right, Christians, help an ex-atheist and a former Democrat out. Can I just walk into a church and sit down? What about mass on Sunday? Is there anything I need to do in advance?

[42 : 15] I don't want to start a denominational argument, but where do I go? My family needs to go to church. Here's another one. I'm an atheist, but I'm going to church on Sunday.

I don't know why I've had this sudden urge. I just want to be around community. That's not divided and sing along to hymns like I used to in school assembly. Here's another one.

Sitting here in front of a church, I've never even stepped foot in. Sorry, sitting here in front of a church, I've never even stepped foot in. In front of a church a week ago, I'd never even have considered going to.

Some feelings are welling up. anxiety, fear, hope, anger, peace, all feelings happening simultaneously. The events of this week have changed the world and I'm not immune from that.

Evil has been seen and it cannot be denied. So as I sit here, I reflect on what it can, on why it can take something like this to promote and require change.

[43 : 24] Charlie preached for all to come to God. I never listened before. I agreed on nearly everything else he spoke on but just didn't think that part applied to me.

Of course it did and I won't ever forget him. Every time I pull up to a church, possibly this one, I will remember Charlie. Here's another one. I've never been a religious person because I don't know if God is real.

But I'm becoming more religious every day because I know that evil is real and I want to be on the other side of it. Another one.

I'm not going to lie, with everything going on, I'm feeling the pull to go to church and give my life to Jesus. The older I get, the more I understand why people cling to Jesus and God.

In a world where evil seems to grow louder every day, faith becomes a refuge, a light that refuses to be swallowed up by the darkness. I see now that belief isn't just about religion, it's about hope and strength and the promise that goodness will have the final word.

[44 : 33] God. And then one more, this is from a guy who I've actually followed for a little while, who recently just started going to church. Wasn't a Christian, but just felt like he needed some kind of moral community.

He has hundreds of thousands of followers, by the way. He says this, I'll be honest, I've been struggling with the Christian concept of resurrection for a while. I've talked about this with a few people.

I put that in the beautiful story box of Christianity, something I wanted to believe but just couldn't. I've loved church, the community, the moral teachings, the concepts of love and kindness and generosity.

These are the reasons we decided to go back. But my goodness, I have struggled with believing the gospel story, rising from the dead. I don't know, it was something I just haven't been able to get past until today.

I just got past it. Not blindly, I'm not covering my eyes and running, but I'm trusting that I cannot see, not a blind faith, but a compelling one.

[45 : 47] Faith that looks at the hunger for justice that I have wired into me and says, that didn't come from nowhere. Faith doesn't ask me to ignore reality, but rather demands I face all of it in its most terrifying forms and still step forward.

So I do not have, so if I do not have the resurrection, I have nothing. No justice, no reunion, and the story just ends.

And today, I just refuse to believe. the story ends there. You know, when something momentous like this in the spiritual battle heats up, violence breaks out like we saw a couple weeks ago, we can do one of two things.

We can cower in fear, we can run, we can hide, we can shut up, or we can take courage and inspiration from the brave like Charlie and run to the spiritual battle.

You know, the spiritual battle involves many things. Charlie himself, he was known for bringing God's truth to bear in a corrupt culture. He exposed the darkness of abortion violence and sexual perversion and abuse of children and socialism and economic injustice.

[47 : 16] You know, the Bible tells us that exposing all of those things is appropriate and right and good. Ephesians 5.11, have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose or rebuke them, the Bible says.

It's appropriate for us as Christians to do, to bring the Bible to bear on issues of truth and justice in the public square. But I want to go back to that passage in Ephesians where Paul speaks about the spiritual battle.

he concludes that passage asking for prayer for himself. So if you go back to Ephesians 6, Ephesians chapter 6, we're going to look at verse 18 at the end of that passage.

Because this is what he does, he asks for prayer, he speaks of the spiritual battle and he asks for prayer for himself, the great apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ. And he asks this, he prays for courage, for boldness to speak up.

That he would be faithful in the spiritual battle. Vying for the souls of men. Here's what it says, Ephesians 6, 18. He's saying, hey, praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.

[48 : 31] And for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that in it I may speak boldly as I ought to speak.

He was praying for boldness to keep his mouth open, to keep speaking regardless of the response, regardless of people who wanted to hear it or not. You know what?

We ought to do the same. That gospel message which he heralded, Paul, 2,000 years ago, is the only hope of the world.

It's that story that that guy mentioned, that story, that while it is difficult for many to believe the resurrection of a God who was made flesh, who died for the sins of the world, and who rose from the dead to provide for our salvation so that we might have eternal hope in God, so that we might have salvation for ourselves, for all who are willing.

Many find it hard to believe. But you know what? If we keep telling the story over and over again to those who are willing to hear and maybe sometimes even to those who aren't willing to hear, some, I think, will finally realize that the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God the Son, his death and resurrection for the sins of the world, is really the only thing that actually makes sense of the world.

[50 : 11] And really the only thing worth putting our hope in. So let's keep telling the truth, just like Charlie did, about right and wrong, about good and evil, about justice and injustice, but also just like he did, share the hope of the gospel as we do so.

And like Paul, let's ask the Lord this morning to give us the courage to do so. Father, we need courage, we need boldness.

It's hard. Every single day, there are probably opportunities to share that message of the gospel, to just speak up on behalf of you, the scriptures, the Bible, but specifically that message of the gospel that Jesus died for the sins of the world.

We have so many opportunities, some that present themselves, some that we could just take that aren't even presented to us, we're just going to go take them. I pray that you would give all of us in this room boldness to speak, boldness to speak up, boldness to hand out that track, to be bold about the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Do not run to the battle and not start from it. We thank you for all this in Jesus' name. Amen. Tell you what, can we sing that amazing grace real quick?

[51 : 44] Just the first verse. Amazing grace, how sweet the sound That saved a wretch like me Amen.