

*** An In Depth Look at PERSONAL SALVATION

Part 2 ***

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[0 : 00] The message that we delivered last week having to do with some of the basic understandings regarding the doctrine of salvation. And I think it is important for us to revisit this issue, maybe once or twice a year, just to refresh our thinking regarding it and this great, great transaction that takes place between the Creator and the sinner.

It is something that is the actual focal point of the entire universe so far as humanity is concerned.

And to just briefly review what we talked about in our last session, we have those three key words that have to do with the embracing of the truth that leads to the salvation of the soul.

And you will recall that we introduced these simple three words as being the levels of belief.

This has to do with the kind of mental transaction that goes through one's mind as they are contemplating the truth of the gospel.

[1 : 17] And the truth of the gospel, very simply, is what the Apostle Paul said when he delivered it to the Corinthians in chapter 15, when he said, And everything, of course, is according to the scriptures.

And let me inject this concept again so that you will never, I hope, forget it.

Everything that we are talking about, all the spiritual values, all of the salvation, all of the coming to Christ, all of the faith, all of the grace, all of the everything about this, all hinges upon one word, authority.

Whatever it is that you accept as your final authority, that is that upon which you base your decisions.

You know what it is for most people? Themselves. Which leaves them, of course, very, very lacking. But they often don't realize that because they think that they are their own authority.

[2 : 38] That is the self-centeredness that is part of the fallout from the fall of Adam and Eve that was transmitted to every succeeding generation. We are all cursed with this thing called self-centeredness.

We tend to think the sun rises and sets in us. And that is a basic human problem. We are all afflicted with that disease, and it is referred to in the scriptures as sin.

But God has graciously moved to counteract our foolishness and our self-centeredness by providing a way back to himself.

And this is referred to throughout the Bible as redemption. We start out in Genesis with paradise created. Everything is wonderful. God pronounces his creation not just good, but he says very good.

And then disaster occurred in chapter 3, and it all came crashing down. The dominion that had been given to Adam and Eve to literally dominate the earth, to be lords of the earth, as it were, were forfeited.

[3 : 50] And the keys to the globe were handed over, if you will, to Satan. And he is ruling the planet today. I know a lot of people find that hard to believe, but it is true.

And Jesus referred to that, as we told you earlier, in John's Gospel, chapter 12, chapter 14, and chapter 16. He described Satan. Jesus described Satan as the prince of this earth.

And Paul talks about it in Ephesians and describes him as the prince of the power of the air, the authority of the power of the air. So Satan is a spiritual being, and he has devices and schemes that we need to learn.

Paul says we are not ignorant of his devices. And he also said that Satan is the god of this world, and that he blinds the minds of those who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel, which is the image of God, should shine unto him.

And that's what we're trying to present right now, is this glorious gospel. And that can break through the mental cobwebs that we all tend to have, and allow the light of Christ to show through.

[5 : 05] And then, other scriptures, too numerous to mention, but Paul talks, or Peter talks about, be vigilant, your adversary, the devil, walks about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

We don't know exactly how he does a lot of the things he does. We know that he has considerable reign over the earth, but it is as if God is at the other end of his reign, and he allows Satan whatever latitude he wants, which is considerable.

It is considerable. Yet there is a limitation placed upon what Satan is able to do. Much about him we don't understand.

We don't understand exactly how it was at the Last Supper. When Jesus was gathered with the apostles, and his crucifixion was just hours away, we are told that Satan entered in to Judas.

And he went out in the night, and found the chief priests, and closed the deal with them to hand over Jesus for 30 pieces of silver.

[6 : 17] We don't understand or know just how it was that he entered into him. But he did, and the text says that. We do not believe that Satan has the ability to just enter anybody that he wants, anytime he wants.

But it does appear that there are some ways in which individuals can make themselves vulnerable, open, available to do business with Satan.

And he works with his minions. These are all spirit beings. We're told that his principle methodology is deception. He is a master at deception.

And we have told you in time past that he is so good at deceiving people, a lot of people think that he doesn't even exist.

He's just a myth. He's just a made-up fairy tale that doesn't have any objective reality. But I can assure you of this. When Jesus Christ had a confrontation with the adversary in the wilderness that went on for 40 days, he was not dealing with a myth.

[7 : 28] He was dealing with a real person. You and I are no match at all for Satan. He is so far above us and beyond us in intelligence and in power.

Don't even think about doing business with him or tangling with him. In fact, even Michael the archangel, so far as we know, is one of the most supreme beings that God ever created.

Durst not to debate or to struggle with Satan over the body of Moses. I don't understand what that was all about. But I do know that Michael is one of the chief angels and he was reluctant to take on the adversary.

He has but one master and he will best him in the end. When that time comes, it is depicted in Revelation chapter 19 will occur at the second coming of Christ.

So, in the meanwhile, God has made a gracious plan and provision available for all of those who are descendants of our first parents who ceded or handed over the authority and dominion of the planet to Satan.

[8 : 38] And he is the prince of the power of the air. He's calling the shots now. As I told you before, Satan loves a high body count. He is the destroyer. He's a deceiver and a destroyer.

And he is at negotiating tables of empires and kings and presidents. And he influences in ways that we don't understand. But he's very, very good at what he does.

So, what God has given us to combat this is a trust, a confidence, a belief in our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the one who has already bested Satan in that great temptation that is spelled out in the four Gospels.

And he has made a way whereby we are able to stand against him. He has provided for us not only eternal life, but he has provided for us the cannon fodder, if you will, to repel him.

And that is found in the word of God. Because when Satan confronted our Lord with the various temptations, Jesus' response each time was the same as our response should be.

[9 : 51] It is written. It is written. It is written. He kept coming back with the authority. And by the way, it's all about authority.

Whatever you accept as your authority. And Christ there was appealing to the authority of the word of God. It's the only thing that can successfully stand against the wiles of the devil.

Not your imagination, and not your combat, and not your intelligence, but only the word of God is sufficient to stand against this one. It's the only thing.

It's the only thing that he cannot best. And that is the word of God. So what he has provided for us is this thing called the Gospel. And we told you that the Gospel comes, that the truth comes in three different layers.

When the Gospel is preached, all we are doing is giving people information. You have to have information before you can process it. And you have to process it before you can make a conclusion, arrive at a conclusion.

[10 : 54] So these are the levels of information. When the Gospel goes forth, and this Latin word here, noticia, is translated in the English word, everybody knows the word notice.

It comes from that. And I use the noticia, essentia, and fiducia to impress you and make you think that I know a lot more than I know. And I know a little Latin.

As I told you last week, in school we called it pig Latin. And that was about the extent of the Latin that we learned. And I also know a little Greek, and you do too.

And her name is Marvis. Okay. She's our in-house Greek authority.

Okay. She's our little Greek. So when you hear the Gospel, you are presented with basic information. And all it is, is that Christ died for your sins.

[11 : 54] And in that statement, we have Christ dying, which implies substitution because the word for is used. And your sins, which is designed to indicate that that's the reason that he died, is because of your sins.

And we talked about contrition, and we talked about repentance, and how necessary these things are. And we saw that God has commended all men everywhere to repent because he has fixed the day in which he will judge the world by that man.

And that man, of course, is Jesus Christ. And to repent means to change your mind. So when you give people the Gospel, and you tell them about the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, and why he did it, he did it for your sins, that is putting you on notice.

That is giving you a heads up. That is very basic, basic elemental information. Christ died for your sins. Now, the question is, what are you going to do with that?

What are you going to do about it? What do you make of that? Some people say, well, that was a long time ago. I didn't ask him to die for my sins. Or some people will say, well, I don't have any of those.

[13 : 01] And they're coming from that self-deceived position that self-serving generates.

And they simply do not see. But all of this is designed to plant a seed and then water it a little bit. So when notice goes into effect, someone has been notified.

They've been put on notice. Christ died for your sins. Now, it doesn't mean that you've done anything about it. It just means you've heard the information. That's all. You've been informed. You've been notified.

And then, when you contemplate that, you start thinking about it. And some people are so, what would we call them, maybe airheads.

They hear it and they just kind of dismiss it right away. You know, they just kind of throw it away and don't think any more about it. But for some, for most, for most, it tends to stick, maybe just a little bit.

[14 : 03] And they start ruminating. They start thinking a little bit. What are the implications of this? And as you think through the information that Christ died for your sins, you're going to do one of two things.

You're going to agree or disagree. Now, think about that. Is there a neutral position to be taken?

Not one I can think of. Because if you disagree, you don't agree. It's an either or. There isn't any in between. Now, you may put it on the back burner for later contemplation and thinking, but in the meanwhile, because you have not acted positively on it, you have acted negatively.

That's the only two ways you can go. So, not to decide is to decide. That's what Jesus meant when he said, he that is not with me is against me.

You'd be surprised how many people think this way. And they've, I've even heard some say this. Well, don't get me wrong. I don't have anything against Christ. In fact, I think he was a pretty cool guy. You know, he was this, he was that.

[15 : 22] But, are you with him? Well, no, I'm not. I don't have anything against him, but I just don't want to throw in my life. Well, that's being against him. To not decide is to decide.

You need to understand that. You were either on or off. There isn't any in-between. There's only a little bit of in-between in getting there from one to the other. But that's what we're talking about now.

And if you make a positive decision, assentia, that means you assent. Assent means to agree. Christ died for my sins. I agree.

I agree. The record, the historical record, is too overwhelming to deny. Christ died for my sins. Okay. I buy that.

I believe that. And a lot of people do. And that's where they stop. And for them, there is no salvation.

[16 : 22] These are the same kind of people who think that believing in God means you believe there is a God who exists. And they kind of congratulate themselves with that because, after all, they're not an atheist.

And they are patting themselves on the back that they believe there is a God. But you need to understand, you're not in the best of company because Satan believes that there is a God too. Doesn't he?

Of course he does. So when you assent, that means you agree. Christ died for my sins. Okay. I agree with that.

You know what you've just done? Listen, you have just repented. Now, you are not saved by repenting. But you cannot be saved without repenting.

And the reason you can't is because repent means change your mind. The gospel is given and proclaimed to give people a reason to change their mind about themselves, about their eternal destiny, about Jesus Christ, who he is, what he did, why he came, why it matters.

[17 : 36] What is your position right now regarding Jesus Christ? Just mentally mull that over a little bit in your mind.

Where are you right now with Christ? What do you think about him? And nobody can look into your mind and see what you're thinking. You have complete privacy.

You are right now, gears are turning. You are right now mulling over in your mind what it is you think about Jesus Christ and what you think about yourself.

Now let me suggest what somebody's probably thinking about themselves. They're thinking, hey, I'm a nice guy.

I'm not, you know, I mean, I'm not the best person in the world, but I'm not the worst person either. There are a lot of people worse than I am. I'm kind of somewhere average in the middle, you know. I give myself maybe a B.

[18 : 36] Okay, a B plus. Okay, an A minus. You know, I'm really a nice guy. No, you're not.

You've got to change your mind. You've got to change your mind to the assessment that God has given of you because his is a lot more accurate than yours is.

And his is, you're a sinner. And you need a Savior. And without this Savior, you are lost and you are lost for eternity. Well, I don't believe that.

Well, okay, that's your prerogative. You don't have to believe that. And you have not repented. You have not changed your mind about anything. You're sticking to what you've always believed and you think that's good enough for you and you're not going to, no preacher's going to change your mind, blah, blah, blah.

And I've heard that all before. And that's called being unrepentant. Kind of dig your heels in and say, I like me just the way I am.

[19 : 39] Therefore, God must like me the way I am too. Well, that is that faulty human thinking that we are all capable of.

You've got to repent. And when you repent, you change your mind and you say, I might be a nice guy as far as most people in the world is concerned, but God is not impressed.

Because the only thing that impresses God is his own character and nature. And he's the only one who has that. And that's what makes him incompatible with me.

So something has to change to create compatibility there because there is, this is one of the reasons why heaven is going to be heaven. Everybody there is going to be compatible. We're going to be holy as God is holy.

And we're not now. We're not now. What God has done through Jesus Christ is to provide something for us that will bring us that will bring us legally, judicially, forensically, up to his standard so we are completely compatible with him.

[20 : 58] That is amazing. It's called amazing grace. grace. And that is a free gift you do not earn, you do not deserve, and you cannot pay for because Jesus already picked up the tab and he offers it to you as a free gift.

And when you repent and you agree with that, you change your mind from whatever it is that you believed before and you repent and you exercise fiducia.

And this is the word from which we get the word, English word, fidelity. And it has to do with faith or faithfulness and it literally means an entrustment or a commitment.

And when you hear the gospel, Christ died for your sins, you agree with that, you change your position from whatever it was. Some people, some people think, well, I'm a member of a church or I've been baptized or I've done this, I've done that.

And when you walk away from those things, when you lay those things aside or discard those, you are changing your mind about them.

[22 : 16] And you are focusing solely on what Jesus Christ did for you on that cross. That's repentance. You mean to change your mind. I've talked to people over the last 60 years who said, well, I'm a good Lutheran, I'm a good Methodist, my father was a circuit-riding preacher and on and on and on.

And we want to present all of these things as assets and we think that God is impressed with them. And hey, I pastor a church so I'm not against the church.

I'm all in favor of the church. But church and your salvation are not the same. So you have to change your mind about that. And when you do and you exercise faith, fidelity, confidence, trust, reliance upon Jesus Christ, then, and I don't know why that isn't turning off, if all else fails, pull the plug.

And when you exercise faith in Jesus Christ, you have repented and that is the, that is the next step. This is why I say you cannot be saved without repentance but you are not saved by repentance.

You know what you could do? You could say, Christ died for my sins. I believe that. I don't have any doubt about it at all. I believe that. And okay, and then the question is, what have you done about it?

[23 : 49] What have I done? I haven't done anything. It happened 2,000 years ago. What am I supposed to do? As a part of that repentance, what you are supposed to do is take your case to him and say, I recognize my sin.

I understand that I am lost and that I am in need of Christ. And I here and now want to present myself to you for your salvation, acknowledging my sin, confessing my sin, agreeing that I am, just like everybody else, in need of salvation and that Christ alone died to provide it for me.

And I want to put my faith and my trust in him. That's the commitment. That's fiducia. Have you done that?

Because if you haven't, you have not come to salvation. Now, Gary's going to read a scripture portion for a moment, in just a moment, and I want to run through this very quickly.

The central event of the entire universe occurred outside the city of Jerusalem on or about the year of 30 A.D., on or about the end of March, and then between the time of 12 noon until 3 p.m.

[25 : 17] in the afternoon. It was then that the most significant event on planet Earth occurred. During this three-hour span of time, several events took place.

The most obvious to those who witnessed the events were the enormous earthquake that literally cracked and split huge rocks in the area, and the utter darkness that shut out the light of the sun for the space of those three hours between noon and 3 p.m.

This was not a mere eclipse of the sun, which never lasts more than seven minutes. This darkness persisted for the space of three hours.

The hymn writer included, even in a hymn, called At the Cross, Well might the sun in darkness hide and shut his glories in when Christ the mighty maker died for man the creature's sin.

By the way, Isaac Watts wrote that. It was during those awesome three hours that he who knew no sin was made sin for us.

[26 : 30] This was the period of separation that occurred between the eternal Father in heaven and his eternal Son on the cross. It was then that Christ died spiritually.

It consisted of his spirit being separated from God, and when his spiritual death occurred by his separation and abandonment from his Father, that he then died physically.

To accomplish that, Christ cried out, Father, into thy hands I dismiss my spirit. He bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

That was his physical death. Both deaths were necessary because two lives were involved. Christ had a spiritual life and a physical life because human beings consist of a physical life and a spiritual life.

Christ was fully human as well as fully deity. We too, as humans, possess a physical body as well as a non-physical spirit.

[27 : 36] We use our body to interact with one another and our spirit to interact with our creator. This is why Jesus said in John 4 that God is spirit and those that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

John 4, 24. When Christ died, he succeeded in reconciling the entire world that was ruined in the fall. 2 Corinthians 5, 19 tells us, God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.

The full price was paid by Christ leaving nothing unpaid for our salvation. When Jesus said, it is finished, that is what he referred to.

done, the great transactions done. I am my Lord's and he is mine. Now would you open your Bibles, please, to Matthew's Gospel, chapter 27.

Gary's going to come and read a short portion for us. Matthew's Gospel, chapter 27. And we will begin, Gary will begin reading with verse...

[28 : 52] 45. Right, verse 45. Okay, thank you, Gary. Matthew 27 and verse 45. Come ahead. Come ahead. Matthew 27, verses 45 through 53.

Now from the sixth hour, darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour. about the ninth hour, Jesus cried out with a loud voice saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthan?

That is, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? And some of those who were standing there, when they heard it, began saying, this man is calling for Elijah.

Elijah. Immediately one of them ran and taking a sponge, he filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed and gave him a drink.

But the rest of them said, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him. And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.

[30 : 22] And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom and the earth shook and the rocks were split.

The tombs were opened and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. And coming out of the tombs after his resurrection, they entered the holy city and appeared to many.

This had to have been one of the most gripping and literally earth-shaking events that has ever transpired in the history of this world. In fact, the word of God makes it quite clear that what took place on that cross within that three-hour period was the focal point of the entire universe for all human history.

And though this be true, in every respect, the full application of Christ's redemptive work has not been applied.

And here is the important distinction to me. Paid for? Yes. Fully applied? No. Only partly applied. The entire price and everything that was required for our redemption, for that of the whole human race, has already been paid in full and nothing is left to be done regarding that.

[31 : 54] And when we talk about the redemption of the human race, we're not saying, and I want to clarify this, we're not saying that therefore everyone is saved. That's not what the text is saying.

But what it is saying is the way has been made for everyone to be saved. And the death of Christ on the cross, reconciling the entire world to himself, means that everyone was therefore savable.

There would be no one who would be beyond God's ability to save them simply because the price that Christ paid for our salvation was more than enough.

And for anyone, whether it's Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, or anyone else, to suggest that they would somehow be beyond God's salvation is to depreciate and demean the value of the price that Christ paid.

It was more than adequate. So while not everyone is saved, everyone is made savable. all they need do is hear the truth, repent of their sins, and make the decision, just as we showed you on the overhead.

[33 : 11] If you will look quickly now to Ephesians chapter 1, we'll see why this is not yet applied even though it has been paid for, provided for, and is in the bank, if you will.

Ephesians chapter 1 and beginning with verse 9. The Apostle Paul writes and says that he has made known to us the mystery of his will according to his kind intention which he purposed in him with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in heavens, and things upon the earth in him.

Also, we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to his purpose, who works all things after the counsel of his will, to the end, that we who were the first to hope in Christ should be to the praise of his glory.

In him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, there we are. What is the message of truth?

Christ died for your sins. You've heard that. I know you've heard that because you're sitting right here. What you do about it is, of course, entirely up to you.

[34 : 36] after listening to the message of truth, the gospel, the good news of your salvation, you were sealed in him with the Holy Spirit of promise who is given as a pledge of our inheritance with a view to the redemption of God's own possession to the praise of his glory.

Well, what in the world does that all mean? It means that when you exercise faith in Jesus Christ by trusting him as your substitute, as the payment for your sin, God does something on the inside of you that is changed forever.

He makes you a new person on the inside. That human spirit with which we are all born, every human being has a human spirit, that human spirit is dead toward God.

That's what our sin does. It's dead toward God. And when you believe on Jesus Christ, God generates, regenerates that human spirit.

He makes it alive. He brings it into a connection with himself that did not exist before and everything has changed. You are a brand new person.

[36 : 12] This is the meaning of if anyone be in Christ, he's a new creation. Old things have passed away, all things have become new. And what are the things that have passed away and what's become new?

Many, many things, but chiefest among them your attitude changes and your actions change. Is there anything that is more definitive of who you are and what you are than what you think and what you do?

And those are both radically revolutionized. So you were brought in sync with him, whereas before there was a separation with him. That's what this reconciliation thing is all about.

Reconciliation presupposes a divorce. A separation has occurred. And it is between the sinner and God. And when Christ died on that cross, he did so in order to reconcile those two parties that were previously divided.

And he brings you into union with himself. He gives you eternal life. He forgives your sin. He makes you his child.

[37 : 24] and everything is changed. This is what Jesus called being born again. In that same passage in John's Gospel chapter 3, Jesus said, that which is of the flesh is flesh.

That's your body. And that which is of the spirit is spirit. spirit. And that's that internal part of your being. Now for our last reference, I want you to see why it is that even though the transaction has been paid for in full, it has not been applied in full as it one day will.

And that is in Romans chapter 8, a familiar passage, one that is just reeking with blessing and benefit. Romans chapter 8. In verse 22, we know, Romans 8, 22, we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

What is that all about? It's saying that the whole of creation, everything, has participated in the fall. Everything came crashing down.

And the dominion that Adam and Eve were given has all become disrupted. And who is in charge of it now? The adversary. The adversary.

[38 : 59] He is the God of this world. And if you wonder why things are in such a mess today, all you need to do is look and see who is in charge.

You know, some people think that God is ruling this world. And that's only partially true. This world has been handed over by our first parents to the adversary.

That's exactly what Jesus was talking about when he called him the prince of this world. And as I told you before, Satan loves a high body count. He's the destroyer.

A deceiver and a destroyer. And for people who think that God is really in charge and God is calling the shots here, that's nonsense. God wouldn't run a world like this.

This is a fallen world. And we are fallen creatures living in it. And we are on our way to something better and something wonderful, but it hasn't happened yet. Satan is in charge of this world.

[40 : 01] Don't you understand? That's why things are in such a mess. And I don't mean to say that we have to have Satan's help in order to do mean and ornery things. We can accomplish that quite well on our own. But he energizes and he aids.

And let me tell you something. For those who believe that God is really in charge of this world and has not relegated that to Satan who conned our first parents out of it, if you believe that God is really in charge of this world and that he's calling all the shots, how do you explain the way the world is running?

How do you explain what's going on? And you know, this is the very argument that a great many people give for their not being a God. And their reasoning is, if there is this great, good, benevolent God who exists and he's all powerful, how can you possibly explain what's going on in the world today by way of death, deprivation, starvation, ruination, war, conflict, and all the rest of it?

When Jesus Christ returns, and establishes his throne and wrests from Satan himself the power and authority that he has been exercising and establishes his throne in Jerusalem and will rule the world with a rod of iron, let me tell you something.

The world will know then who is in charge. and let me ask you this, if you think that God is in charge of the world now, do you think the world believes that?

[42 : 02] Of course not. When Christ is ruling and reigning, there won't be any doubt anywhere as to who is in charge and what's going on.

and that's not where we are now. So to fix this, that's why Christ came, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

And when he died on that cross, he provided the basis for making a down payment. commitment. Now, our last reference, here in chapter 8, verse 22, the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

And not only this, but also we ourselves having the first fruits of the Spirit. What's that? First fruits is the first crop that is harvested.

It's the first of the crop that becomes ripe to harvest. That's the down payment. And when a farmer goes out in the field and he sees the crop that he has planted and he sees ripened grains begin to show up and they are the earliest ones to ripen, that's called the first fruits.

[43 : 29] And what the first fruits, indicate and promise is that there's a whole bunch coming afterwards. That's just the beginning. And so it is. That's the down payment that Christ has made in us.

The first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, which is the redemption of our body.

When Jesus Christ saved you, if you are saved, if you put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ, he regenerated your spirit on the inside, made that new, and when you die physically, that renewed spirit within you leaves your body and goes to be with the Lord, but he didn't do a thing for your body.

Your body remains corrupted, and it is placed in the grave where it decays. But the down payment has been made, and the fact that he has regenerated your spirit, and by the way, your body is not the real you.

It's just an outward manifestation of you. Your real body is not you. Your real you is on the inside.

[44 : 50] That's the part that was regenerated when you were saved, and that's what is absent from the body and present with the Lord. So when Christ made that payment on the cross and died for our sin, we received the down payment of our salvation, but the rest has not yet been fulfilled.

And when it is, then your body will be redeemed in the same way that your spirit has been redeemed, and we will be a whole person. And this is what Paul meant when he said this corruptible, this corruptible body, weakened body, body of humiliation, you live long enough, and what happens?

Your back gives out, your legs give out, your eyes give out, all of these things, they wear down, and they stop working. Paul talks about this in 2 Corinthians 5, and he talks about this, our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, and the word literally means starts falling apart, just like a ramshackle old house that starts collapsing in on itself.

That's these bodies. But the inner man is renewed day by day because cancer and paralysis cannot touch your spirit. It can only affect your body.

So we have the down payment, and the completed action will be finished when our bodies are redeemed, and this corruptible body puts on incorruption, this mortal body puts on immortality, and then, then shall be brought to pass the saying, death is swallowed up in victory.

[46 : 32] Then we will be able to say, aha, death, where is your sting now? And death won't have a sting because Christ has taken it out.

Amazing. It's called amazing grace. Such involves a total transformation of our personhood, involving both attitude and actions. We have a new perspective, a new agenda, a new everything, and if anyone be in Christ, he's a new creation.

Among other things that God does for you, he gives you a new set of eyes. I'm not talking about the 2020 kind, but I'm talking about the eyes that enable you to see yourself and God and everybody else and the world differently.

and you will start seeing it accurately for the first time. Many people have a veil over their eyes that Paul talks about in 1 Corinthians 5, this veil over their eyes, I'm sorry, 2 Corinthians 4, the veil over the eyes that blurs the minds and the thinking and the eyes of what reality is.

When Christ comes in, everything changes. Now, the only question that remains is, what part of this is true for you? This today could be your day of salvation, but only if you want it so, because God will not force himself on anybody.

[48 : 04] He stands at the door and knocks, and I don't know if you've seen that picture or not, Christ in the garden standing at the door and knocking. If you look carefully at the door, you'll see that it has no doorknob and no latch.

And what that means is, the door has to be opened from the inside. And if you don't want to open it, God will not break down the door.

He will respect your volition, and he will allow you to go the way you want to go, but not without warning you that it's a way of disaster.

And that's partly what this message is all about. That's why Jesus came, that's why there's a gospel to preach, that's why there's salvation, that's why there's a need for repentance, that's why eternal life comes into play.

All of these things are part and parcel of that package, and it is an incredible package. It is amazing. Amazing grace.

[49 : 08] Pray with me, please. Our Father, despite what we have proclaimed, that in many respects is with great simplicity, it still contains great profundity, and there's much about what we've been talking about that we still don't understand as much as we would like after all these years of proclaiming it and believing it, because everything about you, including the plan of salvation that you have wrought, is so deep and so wonderful that there's no bottom to it.

We are grateful that we serve an inexhaustible God who has gone to incredible lengths, the length of even rupturing, rupturing the makeup of the Trinity for one member of that, to come to this earth and take upon himself the form of a man, made in likeness of a man, and humbling himself even unto death, the death of the cross.

We cannot begin to fathom that kind of love, but we revel and rejoice in it, and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for this great length to which you have gone, and in which the son cooperated to balance the moral scales of the universe.

Thank you for each and every person here this morning and our prayer for anyone who may not have made this decision to put their case in the Lord Jesus hands, that they may see fit to do so even now and say, your God I recognize just like the scriptures say, that I'm just like everybody else, I'm a sinner in need of salvation, and I want the salvation that Jesus died to provide for me.

So with my questions and fears and doubts that I may have, as best as I know how right now, I want to surrender myself to you. I want you to come into my life, I want to open my heart to you, I want you to make me your child, give me your forgiveness and the eternal life you've promised.

[51 : 26] Thank you. for doing for me what I could never do for myself. Thank you. In Jesus' name, amen.

Dear friend, if you have made that decision, I can promise you God has heard you and he will not turn you away, for he will not cast out any who have come to him.

But I would urge you to do this. I would urge you to tell someone of your decision. Let them know so they can rejoice with you and so they can encourage you in the faith.

Thank you again for sharing your morning with us. God bless you. You are dismissed.