

Grace That Gives Hope

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To hear the unchanging truth of God's word. And I would like for you to just focus in on this message full of hope for you as you hear from his word. So, if you will go ahead and turn with me to Titus chapter 2 and we're going to be in verses 13-15 this morning. In our previous sermon, we examined how the grace of God offers salvation to all people groups. We then looked at how the grace of God acts as our instructor, teaching us what to deny and then how to live towards maturity in Christ in this present chaotic age. But let's be completely honest with one another. Living a godly life when you are surrounded by a world that hates God's standards in the Bible is incredibly difficult, isn't it? You are tested directly against the current of popular culture day in and day out. Opposition and pressure to give in to popular culture comes to you from the outside and from within. And if we rely merely on our own willpower, we will burn out and collapse. So what drives us as Christians then to keep standing, to keep fighting for the good faith of the Lord Jesus and keep denying our flesh day after day. See, the Apostle Paul answers that very burning question in our text this morning. He gives us the grand eternal scope of why we live the way we live. He shifts our focus from our past conversion and our present battles with the world, the flesh, and the devil. And then he points our eyes directly toward our glorious, yes, glorious future and the second coming of our savior Jesus Christ. So with that, please stand with me out of respect for God's word. Follow along silently as I read from Titus chapter 2, beginning with verse 13. Chapter 2 verse 13.

looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our savior Jesus Christ who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works. these things speak and exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee. This is God's word. You may be seated.

Looking at verse 13, I want you to focus on the two words looking and appearing. looking and appearing. To understand the power of verse 13, we must realize that the kind of environment into what the apostle Paul wrote these words. Titus was stationed on the island of Crete, a place well known in the ancient world for its deception, its laziness, and just widespread immorality. To live a holy life in Crete was, as Martin Luther famously put it, like living soberly in a bar and purely in a brothel. How could these Cretan believers possibly stand in that kind of present world? Paul gives them a list not of rather moralistic rules. That's not what he's saying in this text. to follow a bunch of rules

is moralistic focused on self. No, that's not what he is focusing on in this passage. No, he gives them rather a gaze, a hope with the use of the word looking. That word looking literally translates expectantly waiting for. So, it's going to happen. Jesus is gonna come back a second time. And so we have that expectant waiting for his second coming. And that looking is in the present tense. We're continually gazing upon Jesus. So you see, true Christian godliness is defined by an eager, expectant posture that is constantly forwardlooking. Why? Because our past has already been dealt with by the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. We don't have to look at our past guilt. We don't have to look at the penalty of sin no longer. That has been all taken care of by what Jesus Christ did for us personally as all believers in Christ that hears my voice. Amen. Amen. And so now we can live presently and for the future with this blessed hope. He uses the word blessed. I just love that. It just it it literally means happy making. If you look at the root word of blessed, every time you think about Jesus returning, it gives you this happy experience that nothing in this world can give you. Amen. Because of what Jesus has done for you in the past and what he's going to do for you in the present and what he's going to do for you in the future. He takes care of all timelines in your life. And so Paul then focuses on this word looking in verse 13. And so what are we then to look for? You may ask. Let's focus in on these words. Let's focus on the passage verse 13 where it says that blessed hope. I gave up just a little bit right now, but let me go deeper into this. You see the word hope in the original language, it's not a wishful finger crossed. I desired that this will happen. No, it's it's none of that. It's rather a rock-solid guaranteed expectation. It's a rock-solid guaranteed expectation. Just like your sins were paid for completely all finished. It will be completely right expecting that guaranteed hope that he's going to come for us. So that's that blessed hope. And then look at the phrase the glorious appearing. We get the root word for doxa which is doxology. We're giving glory to who? the glorious appearing of the one that we're going to receive.

See, the word here is epiphania. Epiphania. You see, at his first coming, the Lord Jesus true identity as the triumphant Messiah was concealed in the humility of a manger and the shame of a rugged cross as a suffering servant. That was his first coming, suffering servant. His full divine glory was then covered from human eyes so that he could draw us through faith and the proclamation of the gospel in our salvation. You see, if he came as a triumphant Messiah, that would have never happened. But he concealed the full divine glory so that we can approach him. Amen. That we can approach him for salvation. See, the apostle Paul then declares that his second coming according to this part of the text is the full manifestation of his glory. Then it's the triumphant Messiah coming. He will break through the clouds and absolute magnificent radiance. The kind of brightness that we have never seen with our own eyes. No longer covering his glory, no longer concealed. It will be a day that will instantly reveal to every human heart and crush all evil. Amen. And then we focus on the deity of Christ. Look closely at the text, the

glorious appearing of the great God and our savior Jesus Christ. This is one of the most explicit declarations of Christ's absolute deity in the entire New Testament. Jesus is not a lesser created being. Amen. No, he is the great God in human flesh. God has declared my glory will not give to another. Yet here he shares his glory perfectly with the Lord Jesus Christ his son. He is the second person of the trinity co-eternal sharing the very radiance and glory of the father. So if the one who is returning is our great god and savior then then the day of judgment is not a day of terror. Amen. For the believer it is the day of our ultimate rescue. Our ultimate rescue from the presence of sin. You see that word appearing is such a wonderful thing. He is going to appear in his full glory. And again like I said as for a Christian it is something that we want to happen. Consider the perspective of the apostle Paul himself. You see throughout his ministry apostle Paul was beaten. He was stoned. He was shipwrecked. He was betrayed and locked away in cold, dark prisons throughout his missionary trips. Yet, when he wrote the church at Corinth, he looked back at all of those horrific events in his life, the agonizing suffering that he had to experience physically. And what did he call it? light momentary affliction. How could any sane man call severe persecution light? It was because the Apostle Paul was looking through the lens of eternity. He knew that the temporal difficulties he faced were absolutely nothing. He thought about this. He equated to absolute nothing. Can you imagine that for a moment? Think of what you're experiencing. Can you say the same thing as the Apostle Paul? That is a light momentary affliction. Let that be grafted in us. Amen. Not just what Apostle Paul experienced, but you can also experience that right now.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, you can. He put that for us, for our help. And so you can treat all the afflictions as absolutely nothing compared to the lens of eternity. You see, that's massive. This is important for us to weigh in because what's waiting for us is eternal joy. Like that song we sang this morning, eternal joy in heaven. That's what he was thinking about. He was thinking about the real glory that the Apostle Paul didn't see. We don't see yet. the glory fully displayed in true brilliance. Not 4K, 8K, true brilliance. Amen. The kind of stuff that nothing can compare to the glory that we're going to see of Christ. Amen. And so, he's going to reveal that for us in a moment when the Savior appears. The future hope completely contextualized his present pain. And the apostle Paul, he kept thinking about these things. So he couldn't think about his pain. He couldn't think about all the sufferings because he did think he was thinking so much of Christ, so much of what he is going to do for us for all of eternity. That's very important to think about that for all eternity because we're constantly bombarded by the temporal, aren't we? We can't see the eternal things yet, but that one day it's going to be all eternal. All eternity. That's what the apostle is doing. You know, a lot of people in the physical, they say, "Don't think about the pain. Focus on something else." But what they're saying is focus on something else temporary. So, it never really fixes the heart of the soul, the sin

problem. It never focus on the sin problem. You see, you can't take care of a temporal situation with a temporal solution. So, what the apostle Paul says, no, you can't do that. You can't do that with the Lord Jesus Christ. This is talking about eternity here. And so, you must replace all temporary things, all that is going on in your life that is considered temporal in this life and think of what's going to happen for eternity. That changes everything, doesn't it? Just let that sink in because apostle Paul took much time to just write those few phrases that makes a huge impact for his life and for our lives. Amen. Don't take light small phrases rather lightly. The apostle Paul inspired by the Holy Spirit used words carefully, thoughtfully, prayerfully. And so let those few words sink in to you this morning. You see, we live in a an age where we're constantly being refreshed. Refresh. What do I mean by that? We are a generation obsessed with notifications, aren't we? I can imagine everyone in this room, at least an adult, has a phone in your pocket right now. And it's probably pinging a bunch of notifications right now as you're sitting here in this room. If you're like one of me, I turn off my notifications. I only leave the ones that are text messages and phone calls because those are the ones that are urgent. But nevertheless, we are inundated with notifications. We're a refresh generation. We just constantly love notifications. We pull down on our phone screens over and over again, waiting for a refresh of a new email, a new text, a new news update, an update on what's going on the World Cup. Okay, I know. Amen. Amen. All right, so we have a muscle memory posture. This is a muscle memory. We we grab our phones. This is what we do constantly. constantly, constantly looking at our phones, a new email, a new text, a new news update. What's going on in the World Cup? Are they winning? Who's losing? This is our muscle memory. Now, it's not lifting weights, it's lifting our phones.

And so we have a we have an idea of expectation and the world is capitalizing on that, right? They know if you pay attention to this, you won't pay attention on eternal things. Those towards those things that ultimately matter. See, what if our souls had the same restless, eager, constantly refreshing posture toward eternity? What kind of a people would we be waiting for the ultimate announcement, ultimate announcements of Christ's return? What would that do? Just think about that for a moment. Constantly instead of doing this on our phones, constantly gazing, gazing the blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior. That's the kind of muscle memory, if I can put it that way, that we want. Amen. So beloved, the way we look at your future entirely determines how you live in your present. Let me say that again. The way you look at your future entirely determines how you live present. I'm going to share what that means. Here's a question I'm going to ask you. Are you tired today? Are you tired today? Are you feeling worn out by the moral decay that you see on the news? And now, thanks to our devices, we can know everything that's happening around throughout the world at all times, and we can just do it at the moment's notice. What do you think that does to your mind? What do you think that does to your soul? You're tired today. You're worn down

today because of this constant notifications, constant focusing on the temporal. How much have you thought about eternity this week? How much have you thought about eternity for a month, a year, decades if you're a Christian? How much do you focus on the eternal? That's the question that we must ask ourselves. And that's what the apostle Paul does here. What are you looking constantly at? You see, we're not only focusing on the external, but we also have our own exhausting battles that we are fighting against sin in our own lives. You see, just back in the Apostle Paul days and all the way leading up to devices, there wasn't as much outward battles as we have today. But we have this whole new thing that's happening more and more is the outside distractions, let alone the inward. So, do you sense you you're just more tired every day? I could remember that I was at least refreshed for at least a week. Now, it's like almost by the hour I'm I'm always tired. I'm always worn down. You don't realize how much the external is affecting you personally. So inspired by the Holy Spirit, Apostle Paul says, "Look to the one that can save you from yourself." Save you from yourself. Constantly gaze and lift your eyes not down but up. That true godliness means we possess a heart that actually look as believers, we actually desire, we actually love, and we actually look forward to the day of judgment.

Do you have that posture this morning? And do you have it with joyful confidence that your future is secured just as much as your past was secured and your present is secure? The thought of Christ's return to earth as the ultimate judge. Yes, the ultimate judge to evaluate all of humanity makes you shrink back or feel uncomfortable because you love this world too much. That is a spiritual warning sign that you are relying your hope on human reason rather than grace. You're either not truly converted or you are immature in your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. One or the other. You see, when we live with the constant refreshing of Christ return like the Apostle Paul, the treasures of this world lose their grip on us. And the sinful desires of this world lose their power to give in to the ungodliness and worldly lust and truly live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. See that doesn't change for us brethren. That does not change in how we are supposed to live in our present world. Amen. So if you're actively looking for that blessed hope which by the way means deep contentment that nothing satisfies you more than the hope of being seen of Jesus by his appearing. that nothing relates to that face-to-face encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ in full glory. That deep contentment, that's what he's that that's what the Apostle Paul is saying here. What that does to you is it protects you against the anxieties and temptations of this present world. That's the solution. I know you run it through. It's like that's it. Yes, that is it. But how much of us do we really let that anchor our souls in this present world? You see, you can live right with God right now. You can live right with others right now. And you can live right with your own self right now by following the instructions of God's holy word. It's living, isn't it? Let it live within you then this morning and throughout your life because that's what's going to help

you avoid this corrupted world seeping in, gripping your soul, causing you to give in to its power. But instead, you can say to the world, you're going to expire one day. You will expire one day. Remember Jesus is coming and creating a new earth and a new heaven. That's for sure. Amen.

So now let's go to verse 14. Verse 14. Apostle Paul says, "Who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." You see, to anchor our hearts even deeper, the Apostle Paul takes us straight back to the core meaning of the cross. He says that Jesus gave himself for us. Think about that. The great God of the whole universe did not just give us his rules to obey. He didn't just give us advice for us to rely on or even just his material blessings and lavishing us with things. No, rather he voluntarily gave up himself as a ransom sacrifice to accomplish a lifechanging turn of direction in your life. Amen. Let's go through those three things. Number one, he redeemed us. He redeemed us. Says that he might redeem us from all iniquity. Not some, all. When we look at those words, pay attention carefully. To redeem means to buy back a slave from enslavement. That's right. We were once slaves to sin. We had no control power overcoming sin. And he paid a heavy ransom price by giving up of himself. By nature, we were prisoners to our own selfcentered desires. You could have never be able to come out of yourself because you are imprisoned by sin. And so Jesus then paid that infinite debt that we cannot do because we cannot save ourselves. We are chained to ourselves. He removed and broke the power of sin and freed us from ourselves by his own precious blood. He released us from sin's captivity. Remember that. Remember that time when you were just felt trapped and you couldn't do anything in your own willpower.

You can't do anything to be good because why? We were dead in sin. Dead in sin. We needed to be brought to life. Amen. And that's the true reality of what that word redemption mean. He freed us completely from the penalty of sin. And he did that with his own precious blood releasing us from self-imprisonment. And then the second thing he did for us is to purify us. He says, "And purify unto himself a peculiar people." That word peculiar means his own treasured possession. He we belong exclusively to him. While faith instantly delivers us from the legal guilt of sin and the penalty of sin, the remaining days of our lives are a continuous process of purification. He is making us more and more pure. Where Christ systematically cleanses our hearts. He's doing that whether you're sleeping or living. He's cleansing of your heart. He's renewing your mind with the living word of God. And he's reordering your loves. No longer self at the center, but God and Christ at the center and every other relationships around that. And and you also experience that sin is now foul to you. It's no is now ugly to you. Now your your eyes been open to the reality of sin and your eyes can never be darkened ever again. That's our present reality. And the old life of self-centerness is no longer your life. And then what does he do beyond that? There's more. He then mobilizes us. He equips us to

be zealous of good works. God did not save you so you could just sit idle here in your church in the church pews. He didn't make you just to wait in a way without doing anything physically.

He saved you to make you zealous. Do you realize that he saved you to make you zealous? He uses that word zealous. It's not just good works. It's zealous. That's important. Why does he use that? Because zealous, it means burning, boiling over and consumed with a passionate eagerness to accomplish good deeds that honor him and blesses others. You see, we want to honor ourselves in our good works. But when it comes to zealous good works, it's honoring him first. Amen. And then we're blessing others. That's very important. You see the Old Testament prophet Malachi prophesied when the Messiah would come, he would be as a refiner's fire over his people. That's right. Over you as believers in Christ. This is what he does. Think of a master smith that purifies a metal container full of raw silver over a blazing heat. He watches the molten metal intently as the intense heat forces all the dross and the impurities to rise to the surface so it can be systematically skimmed away and removed. Skimmed away and removed. How does a silver smith then know when the refining process is completely finished? He knows the silver is perfectly pure when he can look down directly into the open container and see his own face perfectly reflected against the metal. That's what he's doing, brethren, to you. That exactly what the Lord Jesus is doing through the trials of your own sinful desires and you being sinned upon. He's purifying all of those impurities in your life. And he's pointing you in a whole different direction. Amen. He is burning away the dross of all the worldliness and the cares therein until his own image is reflected in your character. Do you think about that? Do you think about Christ's image being purified in your life?

We do not perform good works to become God's possession. No, we perform good works because we already are his prized possession. Holiness is not a heavy burden then. It is the grateful overflowing response of a soul that knows it has been bought with a great price. Think about it. Loneliness problems, addiction problems, mental problems, shame problems. Since you are no longer focusing on yourself at the center, all of those problems go away. Amen. Our problem is our self. And he takes and changes the affections to put now God at the center. And you don't no longer have to think about yourselves so much. a lot of the addictions, a lot of the shame, a lot of the loneliness, a lot of the mental issues because we just focus too much on ourselves. And praise God that as believers, we don't have to no longer think about ourselves in this way. We don't need another advice. We don't need another just empty shallow words. We need someone to save us from ourselves. Amen. And that's what Christ has done. needs to he's delivered us from ourselves. So we need to stop asking what is the bare minimum then required to get me into heaven. Do you see any of that in the Apostle Paul to this point? He's done three objective things in our lives to get us off of ourselves to get us into doing what glorifies

him and honors him and we can bless other people the only way that God can. Amen. And so we then if we instead focus that we are his prized possession. He treasures us. We should be then passionately asking Lord how can I pour out my life today in good deeds to put your glory on display. Your glory on display. Your honor on display. because it's not about me anymore, but it's rather about Christ and his image being reflected back to you and and back and and to others. Amen. Let's not forget that as well. We need other people to see how good it is to be in Christ.

Now, look at verse 15. Verse 15. These things speak and exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee. What the apostle Paul does here, he closes with this incred he closes up rather in verses 13 and 14 with all of his theological meaning of who we are in Christ and now issues this very authoritative charge regarding pastoral ministry to Titus the pastor of the churches in Crete. So he's speaking to pastors right here. He says three things that you need to do. speak, exhort, rebuke, and do it with all authority. So, let's go and focus in on those things. What is my pastoral charge to you at Calvary Road Baptist Church? First, speak. I must speak. I must preach clearly those things that do not know, those who do not know the truth. Here, what the scripture says about disobedience to God's word. I need to show you what it means to disobey God's word. Second, I need to exhort alongside those that know the truth, that know the truth, and be your paraclete, be your helper, standing right beside you, to encourage you, to urge you, to admonish you to actually live out what you have heard of the truth so that you don't fall back to your old way of life of disobeying God's word. So walk with me then. I got to speak what truth is and what does it look like when you disobey God's word. And then if you have now been born again and truly have trust in the Lord Jesus Christ who have changed your affections to now you want to desire the things of God and his word and obedience to him. And I I am here encouraging you. I'm here to urge you to admonish you to yes live out this word of God in your life. Then third, and this is the one that always is a difficult one for me, but he says to do this also with all authority, is to rebuke. Yes, I am called to rebuke when it comes to your sin, your own hypocrisy. Or maybe you might be believing a false doctrine that rises up in your life that makes you the center. You'll notice a lot of false doctrine focuses on yourself, not on God. And so me as a preacher is to openly rebuke then and call out all these things like a father. Yes, pastor is like a spiritual father that if I see disobedience to God's word, I must rebuke with longsuffering. Yes. Do not go down that direction. You don't that's the direction of yourself. Let's turn back to putting Christ at the center. And then he says with all authority all of these speak, exhort, rebuke. You see Titus authority didn't come from his personal opinions. He always in his maturity looked to Paul inspired by the Holy Spirit heard from his words which ultimately came from God and he spoke just a word. You know that's what I constantly think just to give out the word of God and let it just do the work that only God can do with his own word. Amen. It doesn't rest on my opinions but it rests on God's word. You know, Martin Luther

brilliantly observed that a pastor's office has a two-fold use. It must be used as both bread and weapon and a weapon. Bread to feed you with scripture to feed your spiritual soul. But is also used as a weapon to resist the wolves. Resist the wolves. Those that turn the word of God into lasciviousness. who turn the word of truth as a lie. I must use the word of God as a weapon and rebuke those that go against God's word and his people. So as a pastor, we must as rather as pastors, we must build up with one hand to defend the truth and with the other like in Nehemiah, we were building the walls. That's a and who is sufficient for all these things? The apostle Paul says only God and his strength and his word. You see as a pastor only builds but never defends. If you look at it this way, only builds up but never defends. The wolves will come in and instantly destroy the sheep. So I have to constantly pay attention. I'm doing these two things while I'm giving the word of God. But then the Apostle Paul ends with this phrase, let no man despise thee. Notice there, let no man despise thee. He's saying to keep from being despised, Titus has to live a life that matched his doctrine. If our walk does not match our talk, our words lose all their weight. Titus was not supposed to share again his personal opinions, worldly advice of self-help or human philosophy. No, he was to handle the divine inspired uncompromised word of the living God. And he was called to stand firm, to persevere, and insist on being heard. That's what it means not to despise. Listen to God's word. This is what's going to radically change your soul from the inside out, not from the outside in. The metaphor used or on this text is a lighthouse. Now, I personally have not seen a lighthouse, but I can visualize it. What is a lighthouse ultimately do? Is prevent a ship from being wrecked by the rocks. And many times in our lives, we're not like that light. I'm thinking as pastors that we don't send off, hey, you're in the dark. You're lost. And the only way is to look at the light in front of you to avoid the shipwreck of your life. And God gives me the ability to sense by our conversations, hey, you're you're going to hit the rocks. You only have one opportunity here in this life, and it's for eternity. I have to let that weight sink in. Any decisions or choices you make that will bring shipwreck in your life, that will destroy your life, maybe other people in your life as well. You don't have a second chance.

You wreck your life for good. That's the warning that I have to give. And it must be piercing like light. I must target the exact thing that's going to wreck your life that I can show the darkness of one's heart because your life is on the line. And so he speaks. He says speak with absolute authority. use the word of God with its full weight that there is danger at your hand. As a church, we cannot afford I cannot afford to mute the truth of God's word to satisfy you and your sin.

That's what sin does. It makes you drift into wreck. And I'm here to say, "No, don't do it. Don't do it. Don't do it. By the grace of God, don't do it. by the word of God that please don't do it. And then I must unapologetically then with authority of scripture call upon you from this pulpit not to make yourself feel comfortable in your sin but make you feel

like this sin is eating up my soul and it's killing me. That's my effect my objective. I don't want you to feel comfortable in your sin. Nor is it to entertain you with cultural trends, what's going on in popularity even amongst the churches. I don't want you to focus on comparing our church with others, but just comparing yourself with the pure word of God. And you do you feel like as if the word of God is speaking to you? That's the objective with all authority.

You see, I'm not called to fight all battles. I'm called to just focus on these battles. the battle for your life. Your battle for your life. That you don't shipwreck your life, but that you are on the course that truly is from an eternal perspective looking forward a day when you will be ultimately redeemed by Christ and the power of sin. I want you to see that and feel it and your soul to be awakened to the reality that when Jesus Christ truly saves you from all sin, he really means it. He doesn't mean just a few of your sins. No, all of your sin. And he will bring it all up to light. That's how I know that God is working in your life. Is he bringing your sins up to your attention right now? Does the weight of your sins feel a burden to you right now? You don't have to hold those burdens. You don't have to carry those burdens. The one that carried all of our burdens went to the cross to lift that burden up. He said, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light." He really meant those words. You see, the yoke of this world is literally means you're hooked up to this bar. The world is dragging you into sin. But when you're yoked up to Christ, he is pulling you away from sin. What the world does, it puts burdens on you and doesn't really care about you. What Jesus does, he takes those burdens and makes you truly free from those things of the world.

That's what you're left with. And I want you to really think about what I'm saying here that you have right now the opportunity before Jesus comes back. Second time, you won't have an opportunity. This is the opportunity. That's why he means that today is the day of salvation before the day of judgment. Today is the day of salvation. He's giving you the opportunity if you're not saved here to be completely redeemed from all your sin and to live a whole different life where you're being purified and cleansed from your sin and you're zealous for good works. You're actually blessing people by God's love, by God's grace, by God's mercy. Radical change. Your past, your present, your future is forever secure. You're no longer bound by the penalty of sin. You're no longer bound by the power of sin. You're no longer bound by the presence of sin. Your past, present, and future is all secure in the Lord. Isn't that the kind of anchor you want? And you don't have to purchase it. It's already been purchased for you.

God will show you your sins and help you overcome your sins. Nowhere does in the Bible says that he will show you your sins and expect you to fix your your own sins. He does both. He shows you your sins and he helps you be saved from your sins. It's not left up to you. But you got to trust the Lord Jesus Christ that he can do that, that he can truly

redeem you from all your sins. I hope that this message not only help the Christians that I spoke to in the beginning half of this message, but that it will help you that are lost, that are outside of Christ, so you no longer have to be dead in sin as one theologian said, but you can be dead to sin. You can be dead to sin. I hope that this word has encouraged you from both ends that we all look to Christ. That we all look to Christ this morning. That you allow him to change your posture to focus on eternal things and that you treasure the things above and not treasure the things on earth. that you began to see what it really means to be a Christian this morning. Not what other people say, but what God's word says about a Christian. Amen. Let these words work to that end. Let us pray.

Father, we are so thankful for your word that gives us true blessed hope. We thank you, Father, that we don't have to live for ourselves anymore, but that we get the honor to live for you. And that you will fill us with your love. You will fill us with your grace. You'll fill us with your mercy. And that we can go and share with others what you have done in our lives. We thank you father for this way of life that is not only for this life but the life to come. Father I pray that you would build upon what has been said here and that it would not just awaken us in this room now but that it would effectively help us throughout our lives. the word will have been grafted into people's hearts, that it would have fallen on good ground, that there will be much fruit being borne for you, Lord. For you. This is all for you, Lord. Please bless to this end. Well, thank you for all the blessings you give down to your people. And we ask all these things in Jesus name. Amen.