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SPEAKER

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New Beginnings

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Colossians 2:6-10



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Well, good morning to you, Providence. It's good to see you. Happy New Year to you. Hope you had a great holiday. My name's Dave. I'm one of the pastors here and have the joy to teach you this morning. If you joined us online, we say welcome to you as well. Also extend an invitation to you. Love to have you be our guest when you can make it. If you have your Bibles, Colossians chapter two. Colossians chapter two is where we'll be. Also, let me just say a quick word. If you are a Michigan fan, I know there's like three or four of you out there. If you're an Ohio State fan, if you're a Wolf Pack fan, if you're a Carolina fan, we have good news for you this morning. And even if you're not a football fan at all, we've got good news for you this morning because we're going to look at a man who took upon himself the sins of the world, was crucified, buried, and he rose from the dead. And this is the greatest news in the world.

And so we're excited to be able to look into this today. So if you have noticed the news this week, a little storm hit up in the northeast. It was a pretty intense storm. And when I think about the storm and was looking at the news, seeing how in some places people couldn't even find their cars. They were basically, completely almost paralyzed by the intensity of the storm. One house was close by a lake, the wind was blowing so bad that the ice water went up on the house, and it just froze instantly. And the words for the most part, for most of the news folks this week were that of people are in a sense paralyzed that they can't move, and they're powerless was a word. That they lost power. There's no power. And it wreaked havoc.

And we've been praying, I've been praying. I know a lot of lives were lost as well. And when I began to just see what was happening even in the Northeast, I began to think about what's happening in our culture, what's happening in our culture with the ideologies and what the university is promoting as far as this intellectual ascent above God's word and those things that are contrary to Christ and seeing that there's another way to live other than this book. And they're trumpeting this. And I had this visual that in one sense, what's happening in the northeast is happening to our culture. There's a sense of it's not just subtle now, like an undercurrent that moves people down the water and you really don't know it. No, it's this all out, it's landed. It's coming fast, these worldviews. And they're landing in such a way that it's paralyzed in a lot of people, a lot of Christians, they're not sure how to live, how to think about these things.

And then it's leaving people powerless. They don't have the power to live as God intended us to live. And when you think about what is happening even this morning in churches in our city, they will do about a 20-minute self-help talk. There'll be no mention of the gospel, no mention of the cross, no mention of the wrath of God, no mention of a cross resurrection, no hope. It's let's be nice, happy New Year. And many of these churches across the span of the west are specifically closing. A couple years ago, one study showed like 4,500 churches closed, 2019. That's 86 a week that were closing, abandoned the gospel, abandoned the word. Just imagine that if we, this week just said, man, it is been a good run, but we don't meet next week or the week after or the week after, and lock the doors and sell the property.

This is what's happening. All of it is happening in our city, it's happening all over the place. And so the question I want to try to answer today from the word of God is how then do we as a church family love Christ?

How do we live for Christ? And how do we leverage everything so Christ is magnified and you and I are mobilized to reach those far from him, to reach our city with thousands of hours of service and to reach the nations who apart from Christ, have no hope. This is the question. And this morning, if you're here and you're not a Christian, we're glad that you're here. We are so thankful that you're here, and we hope that you will see what we see in Jesus and why he has changed our life and how he propels us to live in certain ways in our culture.

And so Colossians chapter two, I want to pray before I do and read chapter two, verse six. There's a man named Paul who was preaching this good news of Jesus and the resurrection in a town called Ephesus. And about 120 miles away is a town called Colossae. It's modern day Turkey. And it's fascinating because this guy Epaphras, there's a guy named Epaphras that was in Ephesus when Paul was preaching. He came to faith in Christ, went back to Colossae, planted a church, a house church. And then from there as teachings and culture was changing rapidly fast, he had such a love for the fidelity of the gospel that he traveled 1180 miles from Colossae, modern day Turkey, to Rome, found Paul in prison, was in prison himself, and told Paul what was happening. Paul wrote a letter, named it the Colossians. That's the people who live in Colossae.

And then there's another guy named Tychicus, chapter four tells us, that delivered that letter. So over 2200 miles walking southwest, went running this week or that time, right? But both if you work this out. Sorry, give me great peanuts, all that. So just think though, he makes it back 1180 miles by foot and boat to the town of Colossi and reads this letter in the house Church. This is what we have. This is what's in our hands this morning. And so I want to pray and thank God for it and ask him to help. God, we love you. Thank you for your grace and mercy today. Thank you for your kindness today. I pray, God, that you would open our eyes to see the glory and the greatness of the grace that's found in Christ alone. In Christ alone is their hope. And so please, please do a work we pray in Jesus name. Amen.

Colossians chapter two, verse six says, therefore, so in light of what was just said, I'll unpack that in a second. "As you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him. Rooted and built up in him and established in the faith just as you were taught abounding in thanksgiving. See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit according to the human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world and not according to Christ. For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily. And you have been filled in him who is the head of all rule and authority." So three quick truths this morning, I want to just unpack it, that would help us love Christ, live for Christ, and leverage our life for Christ. The first is this, is that Jesus calls us to walk by faith.

Jesus calls us to walk by faith. Now what he has done in verse six, the word therefore, whenever you see that word, therefore in the Bible, it usually leads you to ask yourself, what is it there for? Because something has just been said of significance that then leads to therefore in light of this. And so what he said in chapter one is unbelievable. It's summed up in the supremacy and the sovereignty of Christ. He has basically put Christ on display in magnificent ways, magnifying the worth and value of Christ. He would go on to say in chapter

one, verse 15, he's the image of the invisible God. By him, for him, through him everything was created. And so he's laying this out. And then he transitions in this text so saying that there's the hope of glory, there's a mystery. But this mystery's been known now that Christ now lives in you.

If you've received him, if you've come to faith in him, he's the hope of glory. He lives in you. Then he says, now make sure no one deludes you with plausible arguments he'll say and do. And then he moves into chapter two verse six and says, now listen, therefore in light of all that Christ has accomplished for us and all that he is and who he is and what he's done, now as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him. Notice the text. It says, as you received Christ Jesus, it beckons the question, how do you receive the Lord Jesus? How do you receive him? Well, it's by faith, it's by trust, it's by hearing the gospel. This is the word means the good news. The good news of what God has done. It starts in Genesis where he's made us to be in relationship with him. And it only took three chapters for humanity to mess everything up. And in chapter three of Genesis, they weren't pleased with being with God. They wanted to be like God. And so they do the one thing that God told them not to do, although they had a thousand things they could do, and they rebelled against him. Sin enters the world. It's the fall of humanity, horrific day. And then in light of that though within a few verses, God in his grace and kindness makes a promise. I'm going to send someone that's going to make all things right. He will come. And he came, and he lived the life that we could not live. And he died the death that we deserve. He was buried and rose from the dead. He died on a cross for our sins, was buried in a grave, rose from the dead.

And this is what we call the gospel, the good news of Christ. And when you believe that, when you receive that and trust in that, not just an intellectual assent but believe like your heart by faith and trust, this is how you're made right with him. It's a term that we study in school. We don't use this word a lot, but it's a word called justification. And it means to be made right with God. It's going to the courthouse of God in essence and pleading, I'm guilty, please have mercy on me. And he says, I'm going to actually pay the penalty because a penalty has to be paid for the crime of sin against the holy God. And he goes, because I'm just, I'm righteous, but I'm going to actually pay that because I'm loving and full of mercy. So I'm going to pay that penalty for you in the death of my son.

And so go free, and you receive that. You believe that. This is receive. This is what it means to receive means you have a day you were born physically, the day you trusted Christ, that you received him, you believed on him. That's the day you were justified. It's a one time deal. You don't get saved over and over. You don't in a sense get justified over and over. No, you're justified, you're made right with God on that day when you received him. But then he goes on in the text. Notice the text goes on and it says, so walk in him. So just as you received him, you were justified. So now walk in him, you're sanctified. It's a word called sanctification. It means to be made more like God. You don't become a God but you're being made more like God in the way he loves, the way he cares, the way he extends kindness, the way he thinks, the way he does morals and values and ethics.

You follow Jesus, and you want to be more like Jesus. And this is what Paul's saying to the church of Colossae. These Colossians are knocking at the front door wanting to come in, hey let's add this and let's do this and let's do. And he said, no, it's Christ. Just as you received him, you so walk in him. And the gospel is such good news, right? Because send it so far outside the reach of his mercy, and there's no good day that merits favor into the kingdom of God. Both the immoral and the moral person needs Jesus because one struggles with guilt and shame, and one struggles with pride in thinking that they should be accepted. And Jesus came for both because he's so holy, no one can get to him. And there's no bad that's so far away that he can't reach.

And so listen, justification, this idea of sanctification, Proverbs helps us three, five and six says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding and in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will direct your paths." And so this idea of trust, I love the word study the word lean not in the Hebrew. It carries with it this idea of lean not like don't have half of your weight in one place and half the other, right? Let me show you this. If I grab the stool and I sit on it and as I'm sitting here, I've got half my weight on the stool, half on the floor. And what he's saying is to lean not on your own understanding is a Hebrew word that carries with it this idea of both where the first word that says, trust in the Lord. Trust in the Lord, right? It means, and lean not, don't lean. In other words, don't have one foot in the word and one in the world. To lean not carries with it the idea, and to trust him is to have all the weight. He wants all of your heart. He wants all of your mind because what happens is if you lean on your own understanding and you've got one foot in and one foot out, it's like driving a car with a flat tire. But you're going to end up in the ditch at some point or you're just going to go round and round and not get anywhere. You're still in the car, right? He says, listen, trust him. Second Corinthians says, "For we live by faith, not by sight." The righteous live by faith. We continue to trust. Listen, you trust voices every day when you can't see their face.

All of you trust Siri at some level, right? Never met her, haven't seen her face. Just listen to her. Take a right, take a left, take a right, take a left. And what do you need? I can help you find, right? And we just talked. And then Siri talk. Never seen Siri face, but listen to everything she says, right? And listen, I mean the plane, let's just go there. You fly. Hopefully you didn't fly this week, it was chaos. But when you fly, you don't see the pilot's face, you hear his voice, right? And I mean you don't have one foot out the plane and one foot in. That's not going to go well for you, right? No, you don't even know the pilot. You're trusting, you're trusting everything that he says, that he does.

After the last service, had a family come up to me and he goes, "Man, you won't believe this. We flew into Connecticut, the wind storm, the storms are coming. We're about to touch down. And he just hangs a hard left. Big windstorm hit. We grab the ceiling like, Jesus we're coming home this week." And they come back around and another gust of wind hits the plane, throws it up, he misses. And they were going to land somewhere into the woods, and they come back around a second time. He's like, "Jesus, three chances. Please, Jesus. One more chance." And they landed. He was here this morning. But I promise you, he trusted everything the pilot was doing while praying.

Listen, now here's what happens. This is phenomenal. You got to stay with me. I know you all are up late, but you got an extra hour of sleep 'cause you didn't come to 9:30. So check this out. So Colossians two, it says, so walk in him. Now, watch what the text says, "Rooted and built up in Him and establish..." Now what he does when he says walk, to walk, it's actually this letter was written when Paul wrote it, it was originally written in Greek. And sometimes it's fun to just study a word in some of its tenses and the way it's parsed out. And so this word walk is a present active imperative, meaning that it's a command like you do it. It's an active. But then when Paul writes the very next words, rooted built up and established, he switches the tense. And he goes to this passive voice, to this passive, meaning that this is going to be done to you.

So in other words, if I say I hit the ball, I was active, I participated in that, I did that. And then if I was hit by the ball, it was done to me, right? Passive voice. And so what happens is this. This is fascinating. Watch. So when God calls us, Jesus calls us to walk by faith. So when you walk, you trust. You trust, right? Then this is what happens. It switches. It's not that you just keep grinding it out and try to root yourself. No, God does it. It changes voices. It's passive. It's done to you. God's going to root you. God's going to build you, and God's going to establish you. When you trust, God's going to take the roots and go down. He's going to work this by his spirit and his word. And then he's going to build your faith up.

And then he's going to establish, another translation says strengthen you. And then notice the text. The text then switches back to the active voice, and it says abounding in Thanksgiving. It's not just with gratitude. It's actually abounding. The word abounding means to be in excess of, just to have a ton of it. So what is he saying? What is God saying? I think this is what God's saying. God saying, listen. Listen, when you receive me, you walk. You walk by faith. You trust. You trust and you be thankful. You trust, and you be thankful. You trust, and you be thankful. And while you're doing that, while you're trusting and then giving thanks, while you're trusting and giving thanks, your life moored by trusting and gratitude, trusting and gratitude, trusting and gratitude, what is he going to do? He's going to plant you, he's going to root you, he's going to build you, and he's going to establish you.

This is what he's going to do. And those tires that seem flat, they'll start having air in them, and you're going to start growing. And those addictions that grip you, those temptations that seem to take the air out of all the tires, start fading. They'll knock at the door, but the tires will be strong and you'll be growing 'cause God's doing it. Listen. Listen, missionary friends of mine, they have been dear friends for 10 years, and we text over the holidays. So I was texting with him. He is 25 years old. He lives in South Korea. His parents live in the Middle East. His sister lives in Chicago, and they couldn't connect this year. And so three continents, three countries, today, they do this every New Year's Day, when they're together, they celebrate God's goodness in their life. It's been a hard journey your missionary in the Middle East, it's a hard journey.

So he has recently taken a job to move out of there in South Korea, but he's still doing this as a 25-year-old man. And so what they do, they do a gratitude journal. And this gratitude journal, what they do is they all

day, usually takes about 10 hours on New Year's Day, and they're going to do it today on Zoom. They're going to do it on Zoom, three continents. And they're going to share, right? They're going to share what they're grateful for.

And this 25-year-old, I said, bro. I said, "Bro, look, I know when you first started this, because you told me about this. You had four or five things that first time as a teenager. As a 25-year-old man, what do you got this year?" And he says, "Bro, it's been an amazing year. Hard but good. Can't be with my family during Christmas, the holidays, but this year I've got 1095 to share today." You imagine sitting in your living room for 10 hours with your kids? I'm thankful for this. I'm thankful. On January 7th, 2022, this is what I was thankful for. On February 3rd, this is what I was thankful for. On March 7th, this is what I was thankful for. On July 3rd, this is what I was thankful for.

Listen, he says walk. He says, walk, trust, abounding in Thanksgiving. First, Colossians five says it like this, "Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God." And so this year, listen, we're asking you to join us as a church to continue to walk, to continue to believe in what he's called us to in our reach vision. Our reach vision, we're just asking God. Look, our reach vision is not to reach people out there. It's actually for God and his spirit to reach our heart. Our heart's the target to be for God to move in our heart in such a way to extend ourselves to the point of discomfort, to bless, to reach four that are in our life, that God's put in our life, to reach our city with 1000 hours of service and to reach the nations to reach the 3.2 billion people who have never heard his name, to get on a plane to get a passport and go. This is what we're asking God.

We're walking by faith, trusting him that he's going to do this in you and through you for his glory, for the good of others and for the gospel to reach the nations. And so let's continue to lean in together and walk not by fear, but by faith, trusting him. Notice second is Jesus, what does he do? He cautions us. He cautions us to guard our faith. So he calls us to walk by faith, but then he cautions us to guard our faith. Notice in verse eight, see to it that no one takes you captive by the philosophy and empty deceit, through this hollow and deceptive philosophy, this love of wisdom, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces. What is he saying here? The word captive is an interesting word. It means literally to take hostage, to take their minds, and to hold them there.

And this is what's happening with the ideologies and the philosophies of the worldview that's contrary to Christ and his word. It's not just trying to influence you. It's trying to take you captive and to hold you there. Colossians two four says, I say this. Paul's writing before this section of the passage, in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments. This idea of elemental spirits, it's like trying to take. The enemy's trying to take what you know maybe as a mature Christian and put you back in elementary school and then reteach you something that's not true. A new alphabet, a new way to do math. No, no. A new way to live and new way of what to call truth truth, right right and wrong, wrong.

See, the enemy in many parts of the world, he uses war to try to stop the gospel. In our day, in our time, he's using words to try to stop the spread of this good news. I mean, think about some of our schools. You go to just about any of them. The ideologies that are coming out of them, I mean some of them are mind blowing. I mean for Harvard University where they were training one day pastors to preach this gospel, to preach the good news of Jesus Christ, his life, death, and resurrection. They were training, they were planting churches. Has recently changed in the years past their logo. Where their original logo was two books on a shield under a book. And the two books on the top of the shield were open, symbolizing the Old Testament and the New Testament. And the book on the bottom was the book signifying Man's Reason. And it was actually turned face down in subject to the word of God.

And through the enlightenment era and man growing in their ability to think they can reason better than God, they flipped the book over and turned it upright on their new shield and new logo to say, no, we have the answer. Think about the social media. It pumps a narrative, constantly pumping a narrative of this is the way you should live and this is what's going to satisfy you from sex to status to stuff all the time. Just constantly in your mind, and it's fueling this American dream. And it's a narcissistic worldview that's trying to put you at the center. And listen, if you are at the center of your life, it's going to be a miserable journey.

It's going to be exhausting. It's going to be flooded with guilt, shame, wanting more. You achieve something and you feel like that's going to satisfy you, and you don't. So you want more. And I mean, it just leaves you empty. I mean, think about our culture, how it looks to the GOATs. This is the title we're giving all of these in the athletic realm. Let's just go there for a second. The GOAT, the quarterback Tom Brady, right? The GOAT. And you're thinking about... My heart goes out to Brady. I'd love to have just a one-on-one with him, no autographs, no selfies with him, just a one-on-one with the Bible. Because I could answer the question he's asked. He asked the question in the interview in 60 Minutes.

After three Super Bowl wins, he says, "I think there's more to life than this. I think it's out there. I just don't know what it is." Oh, if I could just have five minutes, I could tell him. Right? And I know people want to get to him because a selfie and I don't care about. I'm impressed with one man on the planet, and he came back from the dead. And listen, I mean, just think about Tom, how confused he is. I mean he gets seven. He's got seven rings, no one's close to it. And he comes out of retirement to try. They're like seven and eight this year, playing terrible. Just retire. Just enjoy it. And the reason he can't is because his identity is wrapped up in a uniform and a ball that has about 16 ounces of air in it.

He doesn't know what else to do. Lost his marriage this year, family. And this is what culture said, the GOAT, the greatest of all time. Look, we need to start talking about a lamb instead of a goat. There's a lamb that was slain for the forgiveness of our sins. Yeah, yeah. That's okay to do that, right? Right, I mean listen. They play the Panthers today. They're going to be clapping, throw a football, right? No, there's a lamb who's been slain for the forgiveness of our sins. And it's sad when the next generation looks at this as greatness. And I'm not

downplaying. He's a great athlete. My point is, if you find your identity in anything other than Jesus, you won't ever retire. You just keep working. You don't know the meta narrative and the narrative of the story of life and how you fit and where you fit in and what he has done for us.

Listen, the second Timothy says it right. "For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions." And it's here. This is next few weeks, I'm just encouraging. I'm inviting you online to come and join us in house. And then in a live group after, we're going to do a series called, Does the Bible Really Say? And we're going to walk through some of these worldviews that are knocking at the doors of all of our hearts and see what the Bible says and have a theological perspective of how to engage with that. Listen, to guard your heart, guard your heart. One way you can guard your heart that God tells us is through his word. And so we have a Bible reading journal that's out. It looks like this.

You can pick it up at the welcome desk, and it's got prayer in there. And to encourage you with your prayer life, but also gives specific daily doses of the word to be able to just continue to saturate yourself in the word. Listen, you go a day without eating physical food, I would suggest not going a day without eating spiritual food. And this helps us navigate the war zone of the worldviews that are coming. And it keeps a calm around your heart. It guards your mind, it guards your heart. And so grab one of those. Third and last we'll close as Jesus. Jesus cautions us in growing in our faith, in guarding our faith. But he also compels us to grow in faith. So what I mean by that, Jesus compels us to grow in faith. Listen, Jesus, the son of God, the resurrected one who has taken upon himself the rightly due penalty that's due us upon himself on a cross is the one who's going to compel you.

We can encourage you, week in and week out. But Jesus verse nine says, "In Him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily." Like he is the God man. He is the son of God. He is the one who is going to compel. And if you're captivated, listen. Listen, if you're more captivated with Jesus than TikTok, it's going to go well for you, right? Listen, Hebrews one says, "In the past, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways. But in these last days, he's spoken to us by his son whom he appointed heir of all things and through whom he also made the universe." Listen, what compels you to love and live and leverage your life and walk the way you do, if you are bored with Jesus, you might be blind to Jesus. He is the resurrected son of God.

He is not a bandaid for your heart. He's not just a good teacher. He is fully God, fully man who has made a way to be reconciled to a holy God. We've sung this word holy. I don't feel holy most of the time. And he has made a way to be able to escape the coming wrath of God. He is strong enough for you. Colossians one 16 says, "For in him all things created things in heaven and on earth, visible, invisible thrones, powers, rulers, authorities, all things have been created through him and for him." And in him, he holds all things together. He's strong.

And now listen, think about this for a moment. Zydrunas Savickas, he is the strongest man in the world, out of eight billion people. He lives in Europe, oh, year after year after year. And listen, this is what he can do. He can squat 940 pounds, right? That's on your back getting it going in the gym, right? Bench press, he can bench press 585. And he can deadlift 880 pounds. The strongest man out of eight billion people in the world, this is how much he can lift one zero, one zero.

Now think with me for a moment how the earth scientists have been able to determine its weight. And the earth weighs 13170. I don't even know how to say the number, but it has 21 zeros behind it. This is how much the earth weighs. The Milky Way galaxy is so large that 6.14 Earths, 6.14 with 36 zeros behind it, that amount of Earths could fit into the Milky Way galaxy. New Year's Day. Think about NASA. NASA sent New Horizon space rocket in 2006 to Pluto traveling 36,400 miles per hour. And it did a flyby of Pluto in 2015. 2006, it's launched. 2015, hello Pluto, 36,000 miles an hour. And Hebrews says Jesus made the universe.

He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature. And he upholds the universe by... Listen, by the power of his word. By the word of his power. And after making purifications for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high. Think about what the writer of Colossians does, and the writer of Hebrews does. It holds up this incredible picture of Jesus' creator. Colossians does it. He's the creator of all things for him and through him. But it quickly moves to the cross. It quickly moves to the cross of Christ. In Colossians 1:20, it says in "making peace by the blood of his cross." It's his cross, that he drank the wrath of God. Hebrews says it's going off on this incredible portrait of who Jesus is, the exact radiance of Jesus. And he's the one who's made purifications of our sins. He's the one who holds the universe by the power of his words. And then he transitions, and making purifications of sins. Why is that statement in Hebrews one after this incredible statement of him being the creator of all things?

I think it's because creation shows the greatness of Christ. Creation does. But the glory and the grace of Christ is shown in his cross. He says after, how did he make purifications for sins? How did Christ do this? You know what he did? He went to a cross and he died in our place. He loves you, and he loves me. And he took upon himself the sins of the world, and he drank the wrath of God. It's he absorbed the wrath of God upon himself. He loves you. He is the God man that had to represent God and had to represent humanity. And he's the one that bridges the gap. He made purifications for our sins. This is the good news of the gospel. He made purification of our sins. That he who knew no sin became sin so that we might become the righteousness of God. Our sin put on him and his righteousness imputed to us, given to us when we received and believed on him.

And I just want you to get this one visual, and I'll pray. This one visual, think about with me for just a moment. Just a moment think with me about trying to go under Niagara Falls, right? Think about Niagara Falls. I mean, thousands of pounds of water just pounding. And let's say this represents the wrath of God. And to get from this side to the other side, we have to go through it without it touching us. You have to get through

it. You got to be perfect. You got to have some type of righteousness to get through this. And just think for a moment. And this pales in comparison of what it really means, but just think for in comparison that this is a super umbrella, and I'm able to walk through that. I'm able to walk through that with this on top of me just like this, right? And not one drop of mist touched me.

That's what Christ has done. He has drunk the wrath of God for your sin, every drop of it. And so listen, every one of us in this room one day will come before, not with mom and dad, not with grandma, not with extended folk, just you and the holy God. And on that day, there's a way to get through this without it touching you. And it's trusting the lamb who was slain, and his righteousness is given to you and it covers you. Colossians 3:3 says we are hidden in him. And you'll blow through it, and it won't touch you.

That's the good news of the gospel of what Christ has offered for us. So today, let's trust him. If you've never trusted him today, I'd encourage you to trust him. Give your life. Be justified. Be made right. You know how you do it? You say, I'm a sinner, God, I need you. I can't do this. He'll come. He'll work. He's strong enough to show himself to you. And if you do know him, keep trusting him. Keep walking, but treasure him as you trust him. Treasure him as you trust him. Listen, take your Bible seriously, and read it. It is a gift from God. Read it. I know it's hard some mornings, right? Fight for it. Not to get favor with him, but because he's shown favor to you. You're not trying to merit more favor. You're just trying to walk and be strengthened. Establish he's going to do these things to you.

Promise he's going to do these things to you as you trust, as you read. And then let's tell everybody this year. Let's tell everybody we can about this king. This is really, really good news in a bad news world. Tell everybody you can. And listen, if you haven't signed up for our Reach your Four, I want to encourage you to stop at the welcome desk and join us. We want to walk with you and equip you and encourage you in how to navigate some of these conversations when these things are knocking at your door, trying to let air out your tire. We want to walk with you. So let me pray. God in heaven, hallowed be your name. You are a great king. You are a great savior. You are Lord of all. And God, as we start this new year, I pray. I pray that you would capture our affections, that we would not be captivated by the philosophy and empty the sea of those things knocking all the time through the lens of our phone, through the screen, on our walls, through the air that we breathe. It's coming in full on. And God, I pray. I pray that you cause us to lean into your word, walk with you, trust you, and take a stand for you. Winsomely, humbly, full of compassion, looking to bless those that are far from you, looking to serve those that are far from you in hopes that they would see the Savior before they hear about them. So God, work this. Work this God in us, we pray. In Jesus' name, amen. Providence, let's stand. Let's worship, let's sing.



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