Remember Jesus — Delivery Transcript

2 Timothy 2:8–13 (ESV) · Wes Terry · Sunday, May 1, 2016 · *Entrusted*

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Don't you hate it when you can't remember something you ought to remember? I was at my grandma's house the other day getting my hair cut and she went through the litany of all of her grandkids' names before she finally landed on the one she was talking to. Maybe your grandma's done the same thing. And you would point fingers, but you know you've done the same thing as well. And it seems like the older you get, the worse your memory gets. That's like with experience you get worse at it. Usually things don't work that way.

The memory is a funny thing. Gets worse as you age, but to me your memory is also probably one of the most effective spiritual weapons you have at your disposal. If you look throughout the Old Testament, you look throughout the New Testament. The degree to which Old Testament Israel, New Testament believers, the degree to which they were able to remember the great acts of God, it was to that degree that they were able to endure suffering and succeed spiritually. And the same is true in your life as well. All throughout the Old Testament and the New Testament you see prophets and men of God encouraging the people of God to remember, remember, remember.

In the Old Testament it was the Passover meal. God delivered—excuse me—God delivered Israel from slavery to Pharaoh in Egypt, and that was through the Passover. And when they instituted the Passover meal, they said, every time you have this meal, you tell your kids, you tell your children to remember that the Lord God is a delivering God, that He keeps His promises. Remember, remember, remember. You get over to the New Testament, Jesus has his last supper with His disciples, which was a fulfillment of Passover and he tells his disciples there, every time you take the Lord's Supper, here's what you need to do: remember, remember, remember.

Because the degree to which you can remember the great acts of God, it is to that degree that you're going to be able to succeed spiritually. And every time that Israel, every time God's

special people forgot the great acts of God in the past, it seems like it was at those moments that they found themselves wandering spiritually, eventually finding themselves in captivity to some weird nation and experiencing the judgment of God on their life. There's a lot of text you could point to. I just pulled one. It's in Psalm chapter 78, verses 10 and 11.

I'm going to read you this before we get to our text, just to kind of show you the dynamic of what happens when we forget, when we kind of get divine amnesia. Talking about Israel, it says they didn't keep God's covenant, but they refused to walk according to his law. And here's the reason, verse 11, they forgot. They forgot. They forgot his works and the wonders that he had shown them. So in the Old Testament and the New Testament, God tells his people through the prophets, through the men of God, Remember, remember, remember, remember.

Peter, one of the Lord's disciples, when he was writing his book to a church that he was a helping pastor, he told them, remember, if God delivered Noah through the flood, if he delivered Lot from Sodom and Gomorrah, then he can deliver you. Remember, remember, remember. Over the past three weeks or so we've been in a book called 2 Timothy, and in 2 Timothy, if you've been paying attention, this theme of remembrance has come up over and over again. Paul, in the first seven verses of 2 Timothy, uses the word for remember, I think about five different times.

He tells Timothy that he's thankful every time he remembers the Old Testament legacy of saints who've gone before him and lived a good life. He gets encouragement as he remembers the faithfulness of God through their lives. He remembers the friendship between him and Timothy. He gives thanks for that. He tells Timothy to remember his own spiritual legacy about his mom and his grandma, how they gave him a sincere faith. He reminds Timothy about the gift of the Holy Spirit that has been given to him. Remember your spiritual gift, Timothy, that you've been given everything you need to do what God's called you to do.

Remember, remember. Remember that God didn't give you a spirit of fear, but of power and love and self-control. Remember. Over and over and over again he tells Timothy to remember. And now we find ourselves in chapter two of this book, and Paul lays the ultimate memory tool down and it is to remember the gospel because it is in remembering the faithfulness of God in the gospel of God that is really going to resource you, Timothy, and he'd say to us, when you find yourself suffering, when you find yourself afflicted with pain and misery in your life that you didn't see coming when things take you by surprise and your world is crumbling down all around you when you find yourself in that moment here's what you need to do.

You don't need a nugget of wisdom. You don't need a special song. You need to remember the gospel. Because the degree to which you can remember it and it takes root down and

grips your heart, it is to that degree that you're going to be able to endure the suffering that you're facing and succeed spiritually. So if you'll join me, take your Bible to 2 Timothy. We're going to look at chapter 2, and only going to look at a few verses this morning on this theme of remembering. 2 Timothy 2, we're going to be in verses 8 and 9 there to begin.

And I want us to just kind of hang out there for a second. 2 Timothy chapter 2, starting in verse 8. Remember Jesus. Remember Jesus Christ. By the way, Christ is not Jesus' last name. We'll get to that in just a second, but just want to throw that out there. Mr. Christ, how are you doing? No, not quite. It's not like that. Remember Jesus Christ risen from the dead. The offspring of David, as preached in my gospel, for which, the gospel for which I am suffering, bound with chains as a criminal.

But the word of God is not bound. So two things about the gospel in those two verses. He says, remember the person of the gospel, Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, offspring of David, and remember that even though I'm in chains right now, I'm chained to the ground, the word of God is not bound. And when he says word of God, he doesn't mean the 66 books of the Bible that you carry in your phone. He means the gospel, the word of God in the sense that the good news that God has come through Jesus Christ to save sinners of whom I'm the foremost.

That message is a powerful message. It cannot be bound. You may chain me to the ground, but you can't chain the power of the gospel. So remember the person of the gospel and remember the power of the gospel, Timothy, when you find yourself experiencing pain and misery in your life when your world's crumbling down all around you, remember remember these things. So let's just think about those things, what does it mean to remember those things? What does it mean to remember Jesus Christ risen from the dead, offspring of David? If the word Christ isn't his last name, what does it mean?

Well, if you're not a Bible person, if you're kind of just getting into Christianity, the word Christ is a title. It's an Old Testament title. You might think of it as the Messiah. The Messiah was the one that the Old Testament predicted, the one that the Old Testament said who would come and deliver God's people from their captivity that this was a kingly messiah that he was going to come and establish a kingdom in the throne of David and that kingdom was going to last forever and ever and ever. So that's what the text means when it says Christ.

And putting Jesus Christ right next to each other in that context, we don't see it today, but in that context communicated two extremely powerful truths, namely that Jesus was unique and that he was fully man and fully God. The fully man parts, that's the Jesus part, that Jesus was born of a virgin, Mary, that he lived the same kind of life that you and I lived. He sweated, he struggled, he labored. He did everything that he did in the power of the Holy Spirit, just like you and I do what we do in the power of the Holy Spirit.

He's Jesus. That emphasizes the death of Christ on the cross because Jesus was fully human, it meant that he suffered the things that all human beings face, which is the enemy of death. He was Jesus. Fully human. He was the Savior dying on the cross for our sins, but he's also the Christ, the Messiah, emphasizing his deity, that he's not just man, but he's the God man, fully God and fully man, that He's the Christ and that He's the king, not just the Savior who died on the cross for our sins, but who was raised and is now seated at the right hand of God, ruling and reigning over your suffering, over the foundations that are crumbling.

Jesus is over that, sovereign over that. It didn't take him by surprise because he's the Messiah. He's the king. He's the Savior. Jesus, he's the king, the Messiah. He's fully human. Jesus, he's fully divine, the Messiah, remember that. Don't just think of him as Jesus meek and mild, Jesus as you see him in popular culture. Remember him the way that he really is the Savior of the world, the king over all. Remember Jesus Christ. And if you think about those two names of Jesus and Jesus Christ, what Paul means when he says remember it, he's basically telling Timothy, remember when you think about the gospel that God always keeps his promises.

He's faithful. And if there's anything I want you to get out of this morning, it's not some theological insight. I know a lot of you are in pain right now. You come into this room, you maybe fake it till you make it. But you're suffering, and you need to be reminded this positive truth that God always keeps his promises. Always. It may not feel like it, may not look like it in the moment, but you can take it to the bank if the gospel is true, which it is, if Jesus is really risen from the dead and offspring of David, then you can know without a shadow of a doubt with all of your heart that God keeps his promises.

So remember that. Remember Jesus Christ risen from the dead. You think about the resurrection? We looked at this on Easter. That changes everything. There are so many implications to the resurrection. The reason that I am a Christian is because I believe without a shadow of a doubt, based on all the evidence, and what I know to be true in my own heart, that God raised Jesus from the dead. One of the reasons that I believe that the Bible is true, the Word of God, without error, all the way true, that I preach it as if it was God speaking through the text, isn't because that's what I was raised to believe.

It's because I believe God raised Jesus from the dead, and that's what Jesus believed. Jesus believed the Bible was absolutely true, and I figure if you can predict your own death and resurrection and then actually pull it off, then I'm just going to go with whatever you say. And if you say the Bible's true, then I'm going to believe that. That's one of the reasons I believe in the sexual ethic of Christianity, not because it's popular, certainly not popular right now. One of the reasons I'm willing to hold to it, even though you may feel some persecution and some uneasiness, is because Jesus believed in a biblical sexual ethic and Jesus rose from the dead.

And I figure if you can predict your own death and resurrection and actually pull it off, then I'm just going to go with you on whatever you say, what you believe about the Old Testament, what you believe about Genesis, what you believe about everything, because you were risen from the dead, I'm just going to believe whatever you think about reality. I want to think about reality what you think about reality because you predicted your death, you predicted your resurrection, and you actually pulled it off. Those are the spiritual implications. The spiritual implications are that your past doesn't define you because God raised Jesus from the dead.

That you're not trapped by your past mistakes, you're not trapped by your past sins, that the things that give you hopelessness in life, the things that make you ashamed and miserable, those things can be forgiven. You can be full and free from the slavery of your past mistakes because God raised Jesus from the dead. You can have your past no longer define you. You now have a hope for a future. Why? Because God raised Jesus from the dead. And because God raised Jesus from the dead that means that the power that raised him from the dead is alive in you.

You've got a new kind of life, a new kind of power, a power to live a holy life, not a sinful life, a power to do what God's called you to do and not be held captive by your weakness and the weakness of your willpower and all the things that make us frail and unsuccessful in life. If God raised Jesus from the dead then those things no longer control us. But we can have a new life full of purpose and meaning. Those are the implications of the resurrection. And what Paul's telling Timothy is, Timothy, don't just think about Jesus generic.

Think about Jesus risen from the dead. There's power in that. There's meaning there. So meditate on it. Think about it. Preach it to yourself in the morning. Sing songs about it. Remember, remember, remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, offspring of David, which if you're not a Bible person, you're like, you know, who cares, you know? Who's David? I thought it was Joseph, you know. So let me give you a little bit of background there. David is King David in the Old Testament. And the reason that this is significant is because God made David, King David, a promise.

He promised King David that, oh let me just read it to you. It's 2 Samuel chapter 7. Has he got that on the screen? Here's what he told King David through the prophet Nathan. King David, when your days are fulfilled, in other words, when you die and you lie down with your fathers. I'm going to raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body. That's a biological background. And I will establish his kingdom. He's going to build a house for my name, talking about the temple that Solomon built, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

Now Solomon was David's son, he fulfilled that in some degree. He built the temple, but Solomon didn't live forever, and eventually the Davidic kingdom, the rule of David, fizzled

out over a long period of time and the Babylonian captivity happened and they didn't have a king in Israel. And then you read the book of Kings,[1] you see all that it was pretty well fizzled out until Jesus comes back on the scene and Jesus establishes his kingdom. And because Jesus was the Messiah, the Christ, the one that the Old Testament predicted in texts just like the one that I just read to you.

Jesus is the one who fulfills the promise that God made in 2 Samuel chapter 7 verse 13. So Paul again is telling Timothy who would have had much better background of the Old Testament than you and I. Timothy, remember God keeps his promises not just because he raised Jesus from the dead, but because he's the offspring of David. He did what he promised he would do. Maybe they didn't see it back then. Maybe it took a long time for it to come about, but God is always faithful to keep his promises.

Remember, remember, remember when you're suffering, when your world's crumbling down all around you, remember that God keeps his promises. Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel. And if you're new to Christianity and you kind of want the essence of the gospel, you put those two things together, that's pretty much it. Paul did the same things in Romans chapter 1, first four verses of Romans. He preaches the gospel, and it's basically Jesus Christ risen from the dead, offspring of David. God keeps his promises.

The gospel is true. First Corinthians chapter 15, verses 1 to 4, same thing. He gives the gospel, and the gospel is essentially Jesus Christ risen from the dead, offspring of David. It may not, you know, rhyme or anything, but you want to know the gospel and you want to have the gospel transform your life? Remember, God keeps his promises, and the way that you know that is because he raised Jesus from the dead and he delivered on what he promised to do. In the Old Testament, God keeps his promises. Remember, remember, remember.

And it's not just glory days all the time. The cross is involved, suffering is entailed. That sometimes life is going to be difficult, but know that even in your suffering, even when you're in the grave, such as Jesus was, even when things look dark and it looks like you didn't follow through, remember in those moments that the cross always precedes the crown, that the darkness always precedes the light. And just because you find yourself in a hole doesn't mean God won't be faithful to do what he promised to do. Remember Jesus Christ risen from the dead, offspring of David.

He's the God-man. He's the Savior-King. It's a cross and a crown. And for Paul, you put yourself in Paul's shoes. Where is he? He's in a Roman prison. And Paul is saying, this is the gospel that I preached, and this is why I'm suffering. When he says according to my gospel, he doesn't mean my gospel in the sense of I made this one up. It's different than everyone

else's. He means this is the gospel that the Lord, resurrected from the grave, gave to me, and this is the gospel he told me to preach to the Gentiles, Timothy, of whom you are one.

And it's because of my commitment to this gospel that I'm suffering the way that I'm suffering. And even though I'm suffering, even though I'm chained to the ground like a criminal I'm not going to let that get me down because I believe in the person of the gospel and I believe in the power of the gospel. So look at what he says in the next verse, verses 9 and the end of verse 9 I'm suffering, I'm bound with chains as a criminal, but the word of God is not bound. If there's anything I want to communicate, maybe that we've kind of lost in our day-to-day is that there is an unstoppable kind of power behind a biblical gospel.

You study church history, you look at Stalin, 1930s, he tried to take up all the Bibles and then eventually Christianity spread like wildfire in that area. Same kind of thing right now is happening in China. Hopefully is going to begin to happen in places like India. One of my pastor friends just the other day got denied. He was he was on the ground in India and they found out he was coming to do evangelism and to share the gospel and they sent him home. The truth of the matter is the harder you try to stop the spread of the gospel, the more you empower the spread of the gospel.

In China, they outlawed Christianity unless it's state sponsored, which is not really Christianity at all. And as a result, people have gone underground and they're spreading Christianity like crazy. Why? Because the word of God cannot be bound. You want to put people in prison? Put them in prison. But the word of God won't be bound. Chuck Spurgeon talked about the Bible as a lion. You don't defend a lion. You just let a lion out of its cage and it'll defend itself and that's what Paul is saying about the gospel. They may put me in prison, they may put me in chains, but they'll never be able to chain the word of God.

The reason that Paul was in prison, by the way, is because Nero was in charge over Rome. And I don't know how he burned Rome, but he burned it to the ground and he blamed it on the Christians.[2] And you think Christians are unpopular today? It wasn't anything compared to what it was back then. Everyone hated Christians because they were the ones responsible for burning their house down. They were a public punching bag. So Paul is in prison unjustly. He says, I'm bound with chains like a criminal. That was the worst kind of word you could use on someone.

That was the murderers, the thieves, the filth of society, those were the people who were described in that way. So Paul's saying, I didn't do anything wrong. I'm being chained to the ground like a criminal. But even though I'm being persecuted unjustly and it looks like everything is going to end here for me, that doesn't stop the spread of the gospel. And the first time that Paul was in prison, I don't know if you remember this, but he wrote a letter to the Philippian church. Look at what he said about his imprisonment when he was in prison the first time.

Philippians chapter 1, verses 12 to 18. You don't have to turn there. I'll read it to you on the screen. This is Paul in prison the first time. Here's where he came to really believe that the gospel won't be stopped no matter what you try to do to it. He says, I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me being in prison has really served to advance the gospel, not slow it down. So that it has become known throughout the whole Imperial Guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ.

They try to blame it on burning down Rome, but I just want you to know everyone knows the truth. I'm in here because I'm loyal to the cause of Christ. Most of the brothers, meaning Christians around the area, have become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment. And now they're much more bold to speak the word without fear. So they figure if I can suffer for it, so can they. That's a good thing. So I'm glad to be in prison. The other thing, verse 15, some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry.

But others do it from goodwill. The latter do it out of love, knowing that I'm put here for the defense of the gospel. The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition not sincerely, but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. But I don't care. What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice. Now here is a guy who is controlled, consumed by the advancement of the gospel. You can't make this guy sad. They say Paul, we're going to kill you.

Okay. To live is Christ, to die is gain. You can't get him down. He's always happy all the time. Why? Because he sees his suffering not as something that's being unjustly done against him only, but he sees all of the events in his life as being directly and sovereignly used by the Lord to advance the cause of Christ all around the world. And he thinks to himself, if that's what God wants to do through my life in this moment, then so be it. I can see the gospel spreading even in my suffering.

How can he have that kind of attitude? Because Paul mastered the art of remembering. Remember that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead. Suffering precedes glory. Remember that the gospel is powerful. It's the power of God for anyone who believe. Anyone who would believe. And so he says in verse 10, 2 Timothy chapter 2, therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they may obtain the salvation that is in Jesus Christ with eternal glory. In other words, it doesn't matter what they throw against me, it doesn't matter how much pain and suffering I experience in my life.

You know, maybe things happen to me that I didn't see coming that are unjust. But at the end of the day, I am consumed and driven by this passion to see men and women who are separated from God come to know God in a saving way through Christ. And if that means I've got to be in prison, then so be it. Lord, keep me in prison for 30 years if you have to. I'm sold out and committed to the gospel. Now let's say that the Lord asked you to do something like that.

Do you think you would be willing to endure the kinds of things that Paul endured for the kinds of reasons that Paul endured them. I've always been struck by this passage, 2 Timothy chapter 2, verse 10, where it says I endure everything for the sake of the elect. It seems as if Paul is suggesting that the reason, let's put it this way, one of the reasons why you and I suffer the way that we do is because somehow, either directly or indirectly, God is using your suffering to bring about his redemptive purposes in either your life or in the lives of people around you.

In other words, your suffering is being used by God to save you. When you think of salvation, I don't want you to think of salvation only as a past action. If you become a Christian, here's how you become a Christian. You realize your sin has separated you from God. You repent of your sin and you put faith in Jesus Christ to save you from your sin. That is a one-time decision. It happens once and God saves you. Okay. But just because God saves you in the past does not negate the truth that God is always saving you in the present.

Everything that happens in your life, God is finishing the work of salvation that he began when you first trusted Christ. And then scripture also teaches: someday you will be saved. So you were saved. You are being saved and you will be saved. At the end of the day, you'll be glorified. No more sin, no more death. Perfect body. The finished work, polished product. It's done. But you got the future salvation, you got your past salvation, what's in the middle? Your current salvation. And here's what Paul is saying. Timothy, I know what God's doing here.

He is finishing out salvation in my own life through my suffering, and he's using my suffering to bring about salvation in the lives of the elect. And the elect are just God's special people. It's the people who are going to trust in Jesus for their salvation. The elect is the church. It's the bride of Christ. It's the people who are going to believe. And Timothy, if somehow God can use my pain in this right in this moment right here to bring about the salvation of my wife or my children or my friend that I love, then so be it.

I'll suffer, I'll endure everything for the sake of the elect so that they may come to know Christ in eternal glory. And there's a man consumed by the gospel. Someone who remembered the ultimate, the things that really matter were the things that drove his life. And what he is saying to you and I this morning is instead of being consumed and letting the front burner issues of your mind be how bad your life is and how let down you are and how inconsistent the world is, instead of letting those be the front burner issues on your mind, why not remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, offspring of David?

Why not remember that even though you may be in a bad way, the word of God is not bound. Even though this suffering may come in your life for who knows what reason, God is not absent, God is not taken by surprise, God is not indifferent, but He's actually using this pain and suffering in your life to further His redemptive plans in your life and in the lives of

people that you love and so why not rejoice? Remember Jesus. Remember, remember, remember. Now the word elect, I mean, I don't want to have a debate here, but the word elect is a biblical word.

Some people disagree on how people get elected, and you know, are you saying that God elects some and he doesn't elect others and some people go to heaven and some people don't? Yeah, basically that's what the Bible teaches. But how that happens is disagreed on, and I don't want to get into the debate, because the text doesn't shed any new light on the debate. I think what the text is showing us is that in your life right now, the suffering that you're facing in this very moment, that it's not just meaningless, that it has purpose behind it, and somehow God's going to use it in your life to finish the work of salvation in you presently.

Or to bring people you love, people you know, people you may not even know, you'll never even meet till you get to heaven, to bring about their salvation. And if that's true, remember it. And let that empower you to endure and finish strong. Remember the person of the gospel, remember the power of the gospel. Then lastly, remember the promise of the gospel. Look at chapter 2, verses 11 to 13. Paul closes with this trustworthy saying. He does it in 1 Timothy about three different times. It's basically a way of saying, take this to the bank.

This is solid info. You can bank on it. It's phrased like it's a song. So the last song that we just sang. Isn't that a good song? Praise that's such a good song. Kind of like that. An easy-to-remember packaging of gospel truth. So here's what it says. This saying is trustworthy. Verse 11, if we have died with him, we will also live with him. That's why when we baptize people, we say buried with him in death, raised to walk in a newness of life. That's communicating the gospel that we die to sin, we die to ourself, we repent of that old way of life, and we're raised to a new kind of life.

Gives us the Holy Spirit. He gives us eternal resurrection life, gives us power to live a new life. If you die with him, you're also going to live with him. If we endure, so the first part's talking about your salvation, the second part's talking about continuing in your salvation. If we endure with him, we will also reign with him. So not only do you live with Jesus forever in heaven, but you're actually reigning with him, given the authority that he has given. So those are two positive truths, then he goes to two negative truths.

If we deny him, he will also deny us. Talking about apostasy, meaning those people who live their whole lives and continually reject Jesus as Lord. If you're going to deny Christ at the end of the day because he can't deny himself, he will deny you and then the last one, verse 13, if we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself. So two positive stanzas, two negative stanzas. The positive communicates one truth. If you will trust in Christ to forgive you of your sin and you will endure to the very end God will be faithful to save you and at the end of the day glorify you and you will reign with him forever.

Why? Because God keeps his promises. Two negative truths, or two negative stanzas, present one negative truth, which is if you deny Christ, if you are faithless, if you never put saving faith in Jesus. Because God is faithful, because he cannot deny himself at the end of the day, he won't be saved. Because the way to salvation for anyone who would believe, anyone who calls on the name of the Lord, they will be saved. But if you reject him, if you deny him, if you're faithless, then he'll deny you. Why? Because he's faithful to himself.

He's faithful to his word. Now I used to think that last line communicated, you know, if we're faithless, he's faithful. In other words, you know what, we can't live a perfect life. We all struggle with sin. At the end of the day, though, even though we maybe struggle, God is faithful and he's going to save us anyway. And that's a biblical truth. Your salvation isn't based on your works. Your salvation is based on grace through faith. So you're going to struggle with sin for the rest of your life? Absolutely. Guess what?

Your salvation was never determined by how well you defeat sin in your life. Your salvation has always been determined by whether or not you've trusted in Jesus to give you his perfect righteousness and pay the penalty for your ugly sin. But that's not what this text is communicating. This text is communicating that God is faithful to himself, and because God is faithful to himself, and he has already established in his word that if you deny him, he will deny you. At the end of the day all people don't go to heaven.

I like the way C. S. Lewis put it. There are some people who at the end of the day say to God, Thy will be done, and then there's other people in the world who at the end of the day, God says to them, Thy will be done. God never forces anyone to go to hell. Everyone who is there chooses to go there of their own free volition. And I think that's what this is communicating. God will not deny himself by forcing people into a heaven, into a relationship with Christ that they never accepted in the first place.

So here's what it boils down to for you and I today. Some of us need to be comforted by the truth that God keeps his promises. Some of us are in here right now, we're suffering. You got tears in your eyes just thinking about it. You've got a son or a daughter who's far from the Lord. Maybe you have something going on in your workplace, you just lost your job, your marriage is crumbling, it's falling apart, and you're really beginning to wonder all of these fancy things that you used to hear at church and all the platitudes that the preachers and the Christians, other people, used to tell you, is it really true?

Is it really real? Or is it fake? Is it a phony? Is it just stuff that they said? Does God really keep his promises? And you need to know this morning. Just remember Jesus Christ risen from the dead. Remember him as the offspring of David that God kept his promises then if he can keep his promises with your salvation then why would you not trust him to keep his promises in this thing that you're facing right now? And you need to be encouraged. If you

can trust him with your salvation, the thing that matters more than anything else, then why not trust him with your marriage or with your financial problem or with your children?

But others of us here this morning don't need to be comforted by this truth. Some of us here this morning need to be made uncomfortable in this truth, that God keeps his promises. I've always wanted Broadview to be a place that unbelievers feel welcome because I believe that in our day and age, someone coming to faith in Christ is going to take a little bit of time because there's so many barriers that have been put up in our culture that keep people from hearing the gospel in its own terms. But even though I always wanted Broadview to be a place where unbelievers feel welcome and safe, I never want to communicate that it's a good thing to be comfortable in your unbelief.

Because at the end of the day, if Christianity is true and God is real and salvation is through Christ alone, then what you do with that information really matters. And if you're here today and you've got no good reason why you would reject him, if there's no real obstacle keeping you from surrendering your life fully to Jesus Christ, then why do you wait? Why do you chance it? Why do you skirt on the edge hoping that maybe today is not the day that I die and I've got more time to delay the inevitable.

Does that mean you're going to have all your questions answered when you come to faith in Christ? No. There are questions that I have right now I don't have answers to. In fact, the deeper I go into the Christian life, the harder my questions become. But that doesn't undo my faith. It just makes it a little bit greater. Doubt is a friend to faith. If you're here this morning and you've got no good reason for why you wouldn't surrender your faith to Christ. If what you know is good enough to help you cross the line, then you need to be made uncomfortable in this truth that God keeps his promises and he will never drag anyone into heaven against their will.

And so why not today cry out to the Lord and say, save me. Save me. God keeps his promises. Here's how I want to conclude this morning. I know that there's a good number of people here who you find yourself sitting there and you're a little bit anxious and you've got some questions and you want to talk about it later. And so in your worship guide there's a little decision card and I'm going to ask you to fill that out, put your name and number down there. But I'm also going to ask the band to come and we're going to have a time where we really respond to the Lord.

And if you're here this morning and you just need to visibly declare, I still trust you, Lord, would you help me in my unbelief? Would you help me remember Jesus Christ risen from the dead, offspring of David, would you help me remember that you keep your promises? Because right now I got to be honest, I'm struggling. I need some help. And I'll be here to pray with you if you want to pray about that. But others of us, I want you to come this morning and publicly, boldly declare your faith in Christ.

You've had all these reasons all in the past, but all those reasons are no longer sufficient for why you wouldn't give yourself to him fully and freely this morning. I want you to come and make it public by declaring your faith in Christ. And yielding your life to Him. And from that moment on, it's no longer a lack of faith seeking answers. It's faith seeking understanding. And some of the questions that you have right now are only going to be answered when you'll cross the line and put your faith in Christ.

And so as the band plays, I invite you to stand and let's respond to the Lord.

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1. Transcript note: spoken as "the book of Judges"; Judges covers the period before Israel had kings, while the decline of David's royal line and the Babylonian captivity are recorded in 1–2 Kings and 2 Chronicles. Source: ESV text of Judges 21:25; 2 Kings 24–25. ↩
2. Transcript note: spoken as "he burned it to the ground and he blamed it on the Christians"; Tacitus records that Nero blamed the Christians for the great fire of Rome in AD 64, but he reports Nero's own guilt only as a rumor, and historians still dispute it. Source: Tacitus, *Annals* 15.44. ↩