

IX. The Gospel of Jesus Christ in Biblical Perspective
The Majesty, Message and Ministry of the Gospel
“Regeneration: The New Birth – Born Again”
Ephesians 2:1-10
Dr. Harry Reeder
November 25, 2012 – Morning Sermon

Let’s look at Ephesians 2 as we walk through this great statement of saving grace in Jesus Christ. Ephesians 2:1-10 says [1] *And you were dead in the trespasses and sins (our natural condition) [2] in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—[3] among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. [4] **But God**, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, [5] even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—[6] and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, [7] so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. [8] For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, [9] not a result of works, so that no one may boast. [10] For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*

The grass withers, the flower fades, God’s Word abides forever and by His grace and mercy may His Word be preached for you.

If you desire to be a rich a person I have a way for you to accomplish this. Write a book, make a CD or a DVD in which people are convinced that you have the key to something. For someone who plays golf, if there was a book that was titled A Key to a Par Round, then it would probably end up as a big seller. Everyone wants to know the key. Everyone wants to know the swing thought. I have a swing thought when I get on the first tee and its “Oh Lord, please help me find this ball after I hit it.” What is the key thought for a golfer? What is the key technique for a salesman? What is the key to managing successfully? What’s the key to getting an “A” in the class or learning what’s in the class? We’re always looking for the key.

In Christianity we don’t have to look far for the key. We don’t have to look in a distant place for it. For instance, the Apostle Paul gives us the hint, the clear statement, when he looks at the church at Corinth which he ministered to for 18 months and he said in I Corinthians 2:2 [2] *For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.* He preached to them the Word of the Cross. Everything he dealt with from family to citizenship to parenting to church government, everything began with and ended with was circumscribed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In I Corinthians 15:3-4 Paul says [3] *For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, [4] that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.* That was the Gospel.

I believe that the Gospel of Jesus Christ when rightly understood ensures that we will not walk off into error in other Christian doctrines. I believe that the doctrine of the Gospel ensures that we have the right motivation in the Christian life. I believe that the

doctrine of the Gospel will keep us on track and assured we'll keep coming back to what the Bible says. If the Gospel is at the foundation of everything, we understand it, we don't distort it and we don't detract from it then I believe the Gospel keeps us on track on the doctrine of Creation, Providence and the family. Everything in the Christian life begins with, ends with and is surrounded with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

That's why Paul said it was of first importance but it's not the only important thing and that's why we've taken this trip in our iShare the Gospel year to understand the Gospel with this series on the Majesty, Message and Ministry of the Gospel. Why? It is because the Gospel is the foundation, the formation and the motivation of the Christian life. It is the first of the first things. It is the key to everything else in the Christian life – why we live the Christian life, how we live the Christian life, what we believe in the Christian life. So we divided up our study into three parts – the majesty, the message and the ministry of the Gospel.

The majesty of the Gospel is simply the God of glory, the Father sent His Son, our King into this world. *Amazing love that Thou my King would die for me!* The majesty of the Gospel is a royal proclamation that the King who humbled Himself to the point of death on the cross has won the victory over His enemies and has saved His people from their sins. That is what the Gospel majesty is and that means it's a majestic message. Many times when I hear people sharing or talking about the Gospel it's almost like they're saying "God just needs you to affirm Him, won't you do that?" I don't mean to say this irreverently but the Gospel is not a whining appeal for God to be recognized and affirmed by people. It is a glorious announcement that the King has won the victory.

Just as the majesty of the Gospel reveals the love of the Father to give the Son to win the victory, the message of the Gospel reveals that the Son has won the victory. He is our Mediator. He has made atonement for our sins. He is our Intercessor. He has provided a propitiation for our sins. He has expiation – taken our sins away from us. This is a glorious message of the majesty of Christ's victory that we bring but now what is this third part that we've started, the ministry of the Gospel. The majesty of the Gospel is clear and the message of the Gospel is unique for there is not another message like it. No religion has this message. Every religion tells you what you have to give or do to get to heaven. Christianity tells you heaven gave to bring you, heaven gave the Son of God.

The Father gave His Son and you are His workmanship. You were dead in your sins but God being rich in grace and mercy caused you to be born again to a living hope. So you have been saved by grace through faith and that faith you didn't even come up with. God gave you the gift of faith. We are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works. We do good works but it's not to get to heaven, we do good works because the good work from heaven has been done. We are His "poeima" (workmanship) from which we get our English word "poem" which means a literary masterpiece. You have been written out in the blood of Jesus as the masterpiece of God's saving grace in your life. What a glorious message!

The only problem is when it's preached. Who are the recipients? It is sinners who are dead. So what is a dead person going to do when you give him a good message? He will do nothing because he is dead. We were dead and that's why our third section, the ministry of the Gospel, is crucial because just as the majesty of the Gospel declares the love of the Father, the message of the Gospel declares the love of the Son and the ministry of the Gospel declares the love of the Holy Spirit who brings dead sinners to life

in Jesus Christ. In the Bible He does that through six things because of what Christ has done for you. How does the Holy Spirit get you to Christ, saved and in to eternity?

I have given you this timeline of the work of the Holy Spirit with the Gospel in your life. In the last study we covered the first step which is effectual calling. That's when God delivers you from the persuasion of sin and gives you a new perspective, eyes to see and ears to hear. Effectual calling has two parts to it. There is an external calling which is evangelism. There is internal calling which is the effectual work of the Holy Spirit that gives you eyes to see and ears to hear. The internal calling normally works with the external calling because God has revealed in His Word that in His grace and mercy He can redeem and regenerate apart from me sharing the Gospel with someone in extraordinary cases, such as Jeremiah was called from his mother's womb. John the Baptist was quickened in the womb of his mother. David's child's son had already been redeemed without having the opportunities to hear those messages. So can God do an extraordinary work in the lives of infants? Yes He can but it still has to be redeeming, regenerating grace.

Normally the course is this way. The external calling comes, evangelism which will always be resisted and rejected by dead sinners unless the Holy Spirit comes and persuades, empowers and propels us to come to Jesus Christ. When that happens an event takes place in your life, the Bible calls that conversion. In conversion, three things occur – regeneration, justification and adoption. Now that you've been called you are converted and you're born again. That gives you the ability to believe and repent in Jesus Christ because now you have not only been delivered from the persuasion of sin with calling given eyes to see and ears to hear, a new perspective but now you have been delivered from the power of sin and you're given a new heart where you can believe and repent. Then that means you believe and repent in Jesus which leads to justification. We will look at that further in the next study. Then that will lead to adoption. So you will not only get a new perspective but a new heart, a new record (justification) and a new family (adoption).

For all of you reading this that know Jesus as your Lord and Savior, I just described your history, the past grace in your life. That is what has happened to you. You've been called. You were regenerated and that's how you were able to respond. You were justified. *There is there now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.* You were adopted and now I'm about to describe your present life. It is sanctification where you have a new life and you are growing in grace. I will also describe your certain future. Those of you living today are in point five. Point six is assured if you are in Jesus Christ. *Those whom He began a good work in will finish to the day of Christ Jesus.* Romans 8:29-30 says [29] *For those whom **he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.*** [30] *And **those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.*** The Living God has accomplished this and assured this through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit is the One who is bringing you to Him.

So what about this matter of regeneration? We are going to look at several Scriptures to see what the Bible says about this. It is very important that you and I understand this matter of regeneration, the new birth or literally born from above. To do this we need to look at the clearest texts. Ephesians 2 already said that we were born

again to a living Hope but there is even a clearer text on even how and why this occurs. I want to look at the opening verses of John 3. Here Jesus has done miracles at His first visit to Jerusalem at the Passover and many people believe in Him but those are unconverted believers. They believe about Him but not in Him. One of them was a rich ruler, a Pharisee named Nicodemus who came over by night to interview Jesus.

John 3:1-8 says [1] *Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. [2] This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him." [3] Jesus answered him, "Truly (Amen), truly (Amen), I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." [4] Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" [5] Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. [6] That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. [7] Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' [8] The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."*

Nicodemus is saying 'how can these things be?' Jesus basically answers him saying "Are you *The* teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things?" From that text I want to bring out two things for you about regeneration. One I want to show you the emphatic necessity of the new birth from the text and then secondly the nature of the new birth from the text. For some of you I am describing something that has already happened to you. For some of you I pray that external and internal calling has brought you to read this so that this may happen to you – to be born again from above.

Why would I say that the new birth is necessary? Jesus says, '*You must be born again.*' The first reason why I believe the new birth is a necessity is because of what Jesus says and I'll give you four reasons why I think it's necessary. The first reason is because of what Jesus says. He says that you must be born again. He doesn't say it's a good idea to be born again or if you want rewards in heaven be born again. You must be born again if you are to see and enter the Kingdom of heaven. How do you see the Kingdom of heaven? You see it with the eyes of faith. How do you enter the Kingdom of heaven? You enter with the legs of repentance when you turn from your sin to come to Christ. You cannot see by faith or enter with repentance unless you're born again. He is not saying believe in Jesus, turn from your sins and you can be born again. He is saying you won't believe in Jesus, you can't come to Jesus, you won't see or enter the Kingdom until you are born again. The new birth is not the reward of believing. The new birth is the act of God's grace that enables you to believe in Him. You must be born again to see or enter the Kingdom.

The word see is an interesting word. Perhaps I can illustrate this way. In my office I have a print of the Rembrandt on the prodigal. It's one of my favorite paintings. Let's say you just love me so much you want to come over and clean my office for me. It's not a suggestion. It's just an illustration. Let's say you take down that painting, go outside and ask your child to hold the painting for you while you clean. This painting to me is a very powerful painting of the prodigal son from Luke 15. While you're child is holding the painting a dog wanders through and there in front of him is the painting. What will the dog do when he sees the painting in front of him? He will see the painting

and he'll walk around it but he never "sees" the painting. Oh he saw something to go around but he didn't "see" what that painting was saying.

The Kingdom of God is in this world and people see it manifested in His church and in His people and they'll go around it until they really "see" the Kingdom of heaven with the eyes of faith. They won't enter it until they are given the ability to say "no" to self and "yes" to Jesus Christ. So it is see and enter. You cannot enter unless you are born again.

A second reason why the new birth is necessary is because of how Jesus said it. When Jesus says you must be born again He starts it off with an 'amen.' He says "Truly, truly" or "Verily, verily" or "Amen, amen." In other words if I'm preaching on the new birth and you're thinking "That's pure Bible teaching, that's right faithful to God's Word, that's true" you are liable to have a Presbyterian spasm when I'm finished and say "Amen!" When Jesus preaches on the new birth, He doesn't have to wait to get an 'amen' from people because He puts the 'amen' at the beginning. 'Amen, amen, truly, truly, forever, forever, I say to you unless one is born again...' In other words, the One who is the Amen, in whom all the promises of God are 'yes' and 'amen' says "Amen, amen, you must be born again" who has said it, is absolutely crucial.

Not only does He say amen back to back but He repeats it three times. John 3:3, 5-7 says [3] *Jesus answered him, "Truly (Amen), truly (Amen), I say to you, **unless one is born again** he cannot see the kingdom of God."* [5] *Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born of water and the Spirit**, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.* [6] *That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.* [7] *Do not marvel that I said to you, '**You must be born again.**'* Three times He says 'you must be born again.' Two times He affirms it with amen and amen. You not only have what is said but how it's said.

The third reason the new birth is necessary is because of who says it. This is not Harry Reeder who is saying this. I am only reporting what He said. Jesus says "**I** say to you, you must be born again." When He says it notice how He says it with personal yet universal application. Jesus says in John 3:3 "I say to you" and who is Jesus talking to? He is talking to Nicodemus. He goes on to say in that verse "Unless one is born again..." Now who is He talking to? He is talking to everybody – up and inners, down and outers, no matter the color of your skin. We live in a world that is absolutely consumed with identity existence. I am identified by sexual choices, by the color of my skin, by my place of origin. We live in a hyphenated world (African-American, Asian-American etc).

When the Bible looks at us, we're all the sons of Adam. Every single one of you must be born again. None of you can come into the Kingdom of heaven unless you're born again but "I say to you personally" for there isn't a group plan here. You personally must be born again and unless you personally are born again you cannot see or enter the Kingdom of heaven. So the reasons are what He said, how He said and who has said it.

Now here is the fourth reason. The fourth reason why the new birth is necessary is because to whom He says it. He says it to whom? He says it to Nicodemus. Nicodemus said to Jesus that He was *a* teacher. Jesus says to Nicodemus "Are you *the* teacher?" In other words, if you were on vacation on a Sabbath and you were going through Jerusalem who would you go hear preach? It would be Nicodemus. At that time he would be the guy everyone was downloading on the MP3. This is *the* teacher of Israel. He knows his Bible. He knows how to teach. He is one above all of them and not

only that he's a man, he's rich, he's a ruler, he's a Pharisee and he's a member of the Sanhedrin.

Who does Jesus deal with that's lost in John 4? It is the Samaritan woman. She was a prostitute. My guess if Jesus were to have said to that Samaritan woman she had to be born again, Nicodemus would have said 'Amen!' Nicodemus you have to be born again. Here is someone that we would assume is on the way and he needs to be born again. It's not only the blasphemy of irreligion you have to be born again from, sometimes it's the blasphemy of religion that you think is going to earn heaven that you have to be born again from. Anyone and everyone, no matter who you are has to be born again to see or enter the Kingdom. There is no way into the Kingdom unless you're born again. Then what is the new birth?

Let's look at the nature of the new birth. I'm going to give you four things about the nature of the new birth. The first thing is the new birth is from above. In other words you have to be born again, something has to happen inside of you but it doesn't come from inside of you. It comes from outside of you but it's not baptism or the church or a preacher or religion that's outside of you. You have to be born from above. If you read the rest of John 3 Jesus says "I have come down from above." Now He has ascended and He sends from above the Holy Spirit. We have to be born from above. In other words, this is God's work and not man's work. Only God can give a new heart. If you're a believer today you're a walking survivor, no you're a "thrifer" of a heart transplant.

One morning on my way to a Bible study I was listening to Jay Vernon McGee and I heard him say "I'm tired of preachers saying to give your heart to Jesus." I pulled over to the side of the road to listen to how he was going to justify that. Then he said "Where in the Bible does it say to give your heart to Jesus?" The Gospel is not, give your heart to Jesus, but the Gospel is that Jesus gives you a new heart. He takes the old one out. It is from above, heart surgery by the Heart Surgeon, the One true and living God who has cut out the heart of stone and put in a heart of flesh. It is from above because He has chosen to love you by His grace and His mercy. Even though He didn't need you, He loved you. So born from above means what?

Born from above means you have to be born of The Spirit, the Holy Spirit which is the second thing about the nature of the new birth. That which is born of flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. In other words, if you have been born the first time then you are born of the flesh. You are dead in your sins. You not only need a Savior and you can't save yourself but you're opposed to God and salvation. I want to try and prove that to you by looking at Romans 8. Romans 8:5-8 says *[5] For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. [6] For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. [7] For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. [8] Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.* We not only 'cannot' but we're hostile to God. We're opposed to Him unless God changes our heart. By the power of the Holy Spirit you must be born again.

The second time Jesus says 'you must be born again' He adds another phrase, 'of the water and the Spirit.' What does He mean when He says water here? He is not talking about baptism. I'll give you two reasons why this is not referring to baptism. When the Apostle Paul was at Corinth he said "I did not come to baptize I came to preach

the Gospel.” If baptism was necessary for salvation why would Paul leave it out of his ministry? He knows it’s important but he knows baptism is downstream (pardon the pun) from preaching the Gospel. You are not born again by baptism. You’re born again by the Spirit of God using the Gospel that’s been preached to us, the power of God. So this is not referring to water baptism here.

In fact, Nicodemus is a Pharisee which means he comes at night and what does that mean? That day he had probably baptized his utensils, his couch, his house and he himself had probably been baptized seven times. So if He is talking about water baptism what would He say? “Nicodemus you’re half way there. You were baptized seven times today in water. Now all you need to do is be born of the Spirit.” No! He is not talking about water baptism here. Jesus is saying “Nicodemus what are talking about when you say to get back in your mother’s womb? You’re the teacher of Israel! You ought to know what I’m talking about. Haven’t you read Ezekiel 36 where I will sprinkle clean water on them, renew them, give them a new heart, a new record and I will put My Spirit within them? Haven’t you read Ezekiel 37? What is the natural condition of My people? They are dry bones. I asked Ezekiel if they bones could live and he said Lord You know, now preach!” So He evangelizes dry bones and then the breath of the Spirit came. Bone was placed upon bone, flesh upon flesh and sinew upon sinew and a great army rose up where people were born again by the power of the Word and the Spirit.

So what do I think water means here? I think He is referring to Psalm 119 which is the washing of the water in regeneration, the washing of the water of the Word. I think He is talking about the Word of God preached and the hands of God’s Spirit. He anticipates this in Titus 3. Paul is developing our clarity for understanding. Titus 3:4-5 says [4] *But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, [5] he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, **by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit.*** I think he is talking here about the washing with the Word. Ephesians 5:25-26 says [25] *Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, [26] that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her **by the washing of water with the word.***

I also want to look at I Peter 1. I tend to quote these verse that come after the passage I will show you which is I Peter 1:24-25 that says [24] *“All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, [25] but the word of the Lord remains forever.” And this word is the good news that was preached to you.* Now I want to look at the verses just before these in I Peter 1:22-23 which says [22] *Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, [23] **since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God.***

In other words, in my first birth here was my father, here was my mother and God gave me life. In my second birth, my new birth, here is the Word, here is the Spirit and joined together it brought me from death unto life. We can share the Word and we can pray for the Spirit to move but the Spirit of God has to use the Word of God to bring the person, the sinner, to saving grace in the Lord. That’s what you and I are anticipating and looking for in the lives of people – the washing of the water of the Word, share the Gospel and then the power of the Gospel joined with the power of the Holy Spirit brings

men and women to saving faith in Christ. So far the three things about the new birth is from above, the Holy Spirit and the washing of the water with the Word.

The fourth thing is the illustration that the new birth is like the wind. The wind blows where it wishes. You hear the sound of it but you don't know where it's coming from. You feel it, you sense it but you don't know where it's coming from. You can't control it. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit. In other words, He takes the word for Spirit which can also be translated, when you don't use the definite article, for wind. Here is wind. Look how the wind comes. You can't control it.

When I was 21 years old I worked in the tobacco fields loading tobacco trucks and it was in the middle of the summer in East Carolina. Lord, please send just a zephyr. Could you just give me about a seven mile an hour wind, please? If that wind ever came, boy you felt it. So what is He telling you? The new birth is the sovereign work of God's Spirit. He blows where He wishes. You are born again by the free will of God and wherever He moves there will always be an effect. People are brought from death unto life. You see the effects where the Spirit of God works.

I want to share with you two more texts and then the takeaway. Let's look at John 1:11-13 which says [11] *He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.* [12] *But to all who did receive him, (What does it mean to receive Him?) who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God (adoption),* [13] ***who were born, not of blood*** (Not because of who your father and mother was) ***nor of the will of the flesh*** (Your own resolution) ***nor of the will of man*** (not from within you), ***but of God.*** By God's will you were born again as the Spirit of God blows where He wishes for His own glory and out of a love for you that is un-coerced and unmerited.

Now I want to look at James 1:18 says [18] *Of his own will he brought us forth (how?) by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.* The Lord has brought you forth as a harvest out of His own will through the instrument of the Word of Truth in the hands of the Holy Spirit as you were brought from death unto life.

So here is the takeaway. Regeneration is the Gospel ministry of the Holy Spirit whereby a sinner is delivered from the power of sin and death and brought to Christ and life with a new heart to see and enter the Kingdom of God. So here I am. What is born of the flesh is flesh and apart from Christ I stare into the kingdom of darkness, into the yawning abyss of hell. Now the Lord has called you externally. Do you sense that internal work of calling that brings you to being born again? How will you know it? You will surrender to Christ. He is now your life. The Kingdom of heaven you have entered because the King is your Savior and Lord.

I believe what John Owens says is absolutely true. I believe hell will be populated by a large number of people who one, believed they didn't need the new birth to gain heaven or it will be populated by those who claim to have a new birth but now evidence of a new birth. [22] *On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' [23] And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'* (Matthew 7:22-23) They are claiming a new birth but have no evidence of it.

When you are born the first time you know that it's there, don't you? You have a pulse. When you're born again there will be evidence. I didn't tell my father and mother, "Okay you can give birth to me." God sovereignly brought me forth and God

sovereignly brought me forth from death unto life by His grace but when He did everything changed. I still have to deal with sin in my life, entangling sin. Some sins were microwaved out and some sins were crock potted out of my life but there was a different desire and passion. Something changed that was there. *[17] Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (2 Corinthians 5:17)*

Maybe you're thinking you don't need the new birth. You know your Bible. Nicodemus did. You taught Sunday school. Nicodemus taught. You have your catechism. Nicodemus didn't have yours but whatever one he had he knew it. He knew his Bible. He knew how to teach it. He could convey it. He could do all kinds of things. He had been baptized many times a day. He was a member of the covenant of the common wealth of Israel. He had to be born again. You have to be born again so that you might come to Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.

Today the Spirit of God has called "Come" and if you have come then praise His Name because you're a walking miracle. You have a new heart and you came out of the tomb of sin and death and you're now alive in Jesus Christ. The Savior has set you free. He is ready for you to go out and put that Word of Truth in the people's life that the Spirit of God is going to use to bring them from death unto life. Prophecy over those dead bones and watch the Spirit of God move as He brings men and women to saving faith in Jesus Christ. Praise His Name from the valley of sin, death and dry bones to Mount Calvary and life forevermore. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for these moments we could be together in Your Word. Thank You for the eyes of faith and the feet of repentance. Thank You that we might come unto Christ and put our trust in Him. Father for those reading this that have done that would You give them a special sense of joy in Christ because of what You've done by the Holy Spirit using the Word of the Gospel. The washing of the water of the Word and the power of the Spirit of God has brought them to life and may they rejoice in Your sovereign grace from all eternity and that will not let them go. Father, would You give us a renewed commitment to bringing that Word of Truth to people that Your Holy Spirit uses to bring them from death unto life? What an enormous privilege that we get to be, as it were midwives, watching that glorious birth work, bringing the Word of Truth. We can't open minds or hearts or eyes but we can open the Scriptures. Father, if there is anyone reading this today and You drew them to read this that they might hear that the King of Glory set aside His glory to die on the cross to save them from their sins, may they come to Christ and surrender. We will give praise to You Father as You bring Your people to Your Son, the Savior and I pray this in Jesus' Name, Amen.