

1 Timothy 4:1-16

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[0:00] As I said earlier, we're working our way through. That's kind of what we, if you're new to Cornerstone, that's what we do. We pretty much start at the beginning of a book of the Bible and we work our way through. It's a really long one. We might take it in several chunks, but we've been working our way through 1 Timothy.

And Paul's really clear about his purpose. We saw that last week, chapter 3, verse 14, where Paul says, Although I hope to come to you soon, I'm writing you these instructions so that if I'm delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.

It's basically how to be church. You know, there are lots of books written about church life and so on, but actually there's a book in the Bible that's specifically about it and we've been looking at it. And we saw in chapter 1 that churches are to be gospel-centered, that the whole counsel of God is to be preached, but it's centered on Jesus' redeeming work, which is so wonderfully sung about this morning.

Chapter 1, verse 15, he said, Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the worst. That this is the most important piece of information that anyone in the world will ever hear, because eternity in heaven or hell depends on it, because there is no other name given under heaven by which we might be saved, we're told in the scriptures.

[1:26] And because that is true that we're to be gospel-centered, we have that gospel-centered purpose. Chapter 1, verse 4, it is to advance God's work. What is God's work? Well, we're told that in Matthew 28, Go make disciples, bringing folks to know Jesus and go on in Jesus.

And then we saw a couple of weeks ago in chapter 2, that a gospel-centered church is also a praying church, isn't it?

Chapter 2, verse 1, I urge you then, first of all, petitions, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings be made for all people. And then we saw last week that gospel-centering also focuses that we have to have gospel-centered leadership.

And as we explored that, we saw that Paul highlights character, competence, conviction, and so on. But character was the standout issue that marks out gospel-centered leadership, Christ-like character that's focused on him.

And so this week we move into chapter 4, having looked at character last week, actually to the deeper root that produces that character, that Christ-like character.

[2:42] And that root is the root of godliness or a gospel-shaped life. And that idea of godliness started last week, chapter 3, verse 16, where Paul said, beyond all question, the mystery of true godliness is great.

And we said last week, a mystery that Paul speaks about that when he does, it is usually something that's revealed in Jesus. And then that's surely, we see that worked out in the verses that come, that we're all about Jesus.

So the mystery of godliness is going to be centered on Christ. And we'll see that godliness being picked up in this chapter. Chapter 4, verse 7, train, the word is gymnaze in Greek, which we get the word gymnasium.

It's train. And then goes on to talk about verse 8, that physical training is of some value, but godliness is value for all things. You see that in verse 12 as well, what that godliness looks like in terms of, you know, Timothy set an example for the people in godliness, speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity.

So we're going to be talking about godliness. Maybe you're new to church or just become a Christian thinking, okay, calm, we're going to talk about godliness this morning. What is it? [3:55] So let me give you a quick definition that I picked up. The godliness is the proper response to the things of God, to a saving work through Christ on the cross, our call to repentance and faith in the light of that and live on him.

It's that godliness is the proper response to the things of faith, which produces obedience and righteous living, a changed life. So we're going to see Paul addressing, first of all, false godliness in verses 1 to 3, and then true godliness in verses 4 to 10, and then the true ministry that kind of produces that godliness in verses 11 to 16.

And though, again, Paul is kind of addressing Timothy as a leader, as we said last week, these principles apply to every Christian person, and every Christian person who's involved in a ministry or in leadership in one way or another.

Verse 6, this is how you will be a good minister or servant of Christ. So whether we're teaching in the services, in morning and evening, it's community groups, kids, leading a NAVS group, leading the Christian union, involved in prison work, young life, and all the many other ministries that we're involved in as a fellowship, these principles of godliness are key for us.

So let's hear what God has to say to us about it. So first of all, false godliness, verses 1 to 4. And it's really evident that from the get-go, that false godliness emanates, first of all, from a false gospel, chapter 4, verse 1.

[5:31] The spirit clearly says in that in later times, some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits, things taught by demons. So he's saying that some people will seem to believe, but then abandon the apostolic faith handed down from Jesus to the apostles and through the scriptures, and following deceiving spirits.

They may even claim to have spiritual experience, but it is not the spirit of God that they are experiencing. That in the end, those who are duped by them actually are finding themselves not taught by the spirit of God, but here, Paul's really clear by demons.

There's a demonic deception that we need to be aware of. It may look authentic, but it is certainly not. I remember in a training session in a former denomination, where a lady was doing the training, she was sort of chaplain for the week of the group, and she was talking about difficult times in church life, and she said, you know what I like to do?

I like to get a little doll, and I get some pins, and I prick them. I kid you not, okay? And as I think about them, I prick this little dolly, and everyone's sort of looking at each other a little bit, and bemuse and thinking, this is not Christianity.

This is voodoo. Taxi! You know, sometimes some of the folks who have been believers at one time have wandered very far from the farm.

[7:04] How does that happen? How do people who seem to be so zealous for the Lord then kind of end up in a very different place from where they set out? Actually, how could that happen to you and to me?

Because, you know, we need to be on our guard. This is, you know, what this chapter is, a lot of it is about. These people, with their teachings, verse 2, come from hypocritical liars whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.

You know, the word hypocritical in Greek comes from the acting world. It means to wear a mask. In other words, those who are teaching are hiding their true face or identity.

They're wearing different masks in different environments up the front and they're all salt and light or kind of smiles or whatever. But in the background, they're doing, you know, things that just ought not to be done. They're duplicitous, saying one thing, but actually doing another.

They're liars. How did they get there? Well, in the process of living like that, that duplicitous kind of life, that their consciences become seared as with a hot iron.

[8:12] So rather than keeping, as Paul was encouraging Timothy to have previously, a good conscience, which he mentions in chapter 1, verse 5 and 19, a clear conscience before the Lord, doing things right, or when they're not done right, to sort of have short accounts with God and say, Lord, I'm sorry for that.

And an apology to whoever needs to be apologized to. But they don't stop. They don't keep their conscience clear. Why?

Because they don't really want to stop. And consciences become hard, seared, immune to the prompting of the spirits. No longer, you know, after a time, feeling bad about the things that they're doing behind the kind of stages, as it were.

Or even if they do, they suppress that. And eventually learn to kind of ignore it. And usually what happens in that kind of scenario is people begin to change their gospel to suit their lifestyle. And so they become, in comparison with the true gospel, liars and hypocrites. In Ephesus, probably in reaction to the rampant immorality in the culture or in their past lives, they were teaching an extreme form of kind of the opposite of that, of asceticism, of staining from the world.

[9 : 35] In what ways were they teaching that? Well, verse three, they were teaching folks to forbid people to marry and order them to obtain from certain foods. This is a false path of godliness built on a false gospel.

It's a gospel or godliness by abstention or overextension, if you like, of the teaching of Jesus. What did Jesus teach? Well, by his example, he taught that people should be married if they're called to it.

He attended a wedding and gave approval of it. He taught on marriage reaffirming, the Bible's stance at marriage between a man and a woman and so on. And also, in terms of foods, he declared all foods to be clean.

He ministered and spoke good news to the untouchables and to the unapproachables. But these people were somehow, well, that's thinking, that's maybe for baby believers.

When you're mature and you have higher experience or whatever, you need to go further than just the teaching of Jesus. And so, eventually, they go off the farm out with Christianity and start teaching a false gospel.

[10 : 48] And the gospel that they had kind of concocted, it looks like it's probably a mix of Jewish and Greek thought. Greek thought believed that the material world was impure and only the spiritual was pure.

And because the body is therefore impure, it is imprisoning the soul. And so, you should purge the body, maybe using Old Testament food codes and no sex and so therefore no need for marriage, so that the spiritual, the true spiritual can come to the fore.

It was just a rehash of the culture with a smattering of Christianity added into it. It was a false gospel leading to a false godliness. It's a complete failure to understand actually the beauty of the full salvation that Christ has purchased for us and the life that he calls us into.

Full salvation, not half salvation in which you kind of have a little bit of it and have to add to it, top it up with weird and funky ideas, which was the false gospel and false godliness that was being taught in Ephesus.

But I guess you're thinking, well, this all seems a bit remote. But actually, let me stop and ask us all this question. Are there secret things that we believe we need to do in order to make God love us more?

[12 : 13] Are there secret things that we believe that we need to do to make God love us more? What are those kind of things?

You know, for example, if I don't read my Bible before I go out for the day, I'm not going to have a day blessed by God. That is not the gospel, friends. See, full salvation means that we are blessed because we are in Christ and we have put our trust in him.

And we read the scriptures because we want to know and understand just how blessed we are and the new life that he's called us into. Not to make him love us more. He can't love us any more than he does because of the power of the full salvation that Christ purchased for us on the cross.

You see, we can have a faulty little gospel that actually is a false gospel that leads to a false godliness and a lack of assurance and other things that are not part of the path of true godliness that we're called to enjoy in Christ because of the full salvation that Christ has purchased for us. Let me give one more extreme example. Say, we say to pastors that you cannot marry because you're involved in a holy work and involved in sacraments and so on.

[13 : 28] I think that's half salvation thinking, isn't it? Oh, but Jesus was never married. Neither was Paul. Well, yes, but the gospels are really clear. In fact, Paul himself is really clear that some of the apostles were married and the gospels make it clear that Peter was married.

You can't have a mother-in-law without having, being married. Full salvation sees that there is liberty in the Christian life to either marry or not marry as the Lord calls and the Lord leads.

It's not going to make us more holy or acceptable to God if we're married or not. See, half salvation leads to a kind of false gospel that leads to false godliness.

Full salvation, the true gospel, leads to true godliness and true life with the Lord. And full salvation, Paul's really clear, is based on the gospel of Jesus Christ coming into the world to save sinners.

And that leads us into the wonders and beauties of a new redeemed life, freed from the things that so easily entangle us to live the new life in which he has called us into.

[14:39] Life to the full, as Jesus described it, where there is power, wonder-working power, as we were saying, and blessing as we follow him. So if there's a path to false godliness, it's a false gospel, what is the path, then, to true godliness?

And you can see Paul is somewhat perplexed by their teaching because he says, verse 4, for everything God created is good. And so he's tapping back into Genesis, those early chapters of Genesis that we've seen him do already.

It's so interesting that those early chapters of Genesis are just so foundational in our understanding as believers. And so he's saying, nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving.

And obviously, there are kind of things on that that if they're really bad for you or whatever, you're not going to take it with, but in general, he's saying, nothing is to be rejected if it's received with thanksgiving.

So some folks may have been worried in Ephesus that food had been offered up to idols in the temple before it was sent to the market. Paul's saying, look, these idols are nothing at all. You know, all halal meats are blessed by a Muslim cleric before it goes out to the market.

[15:57] Some Christians may think, oh, I'm not sure about that. Paul says, Allah is nothing. He's not real. Forget about it. God made it, gave thanks for it, scoffed a lot and give a loud hallelujah at the end of it.

You have full salvation and liberty. Don't be distracted by false gospel, but by the true gospel and the liberty and godliness that follows from it. Have a conscience that is tender and clear, but is also strong in terms of what the gospel teaches.

Yes. Mark 17, 19, Jesus declared all foods to be clean. And we know these things. How? Well, verse five, because it was consecrated by the word.

In other words, God says it. We eat it. We give thanks to God for it. G.K. Chesterton in commenting on this had, you know, takes it even further.

He said this and let me quote him. You say grace before meals. All right. But I say grace before the concerts and the opera and grace before the play and the pantomime and grace before I open a book and grace before sketching, painting, swimming, fencing, boxing, walking, playing, dancing, and grace before I dip my pen in the ink.

[17:11] That is full salvation thinking that understands the whole of life has been given by God and we can give thanks for it where we have liberty to enjoy it where it is good and for his glory.

There's a gospel largesse in that, isn't it? There's liberty which I think the scripture gives us. And it's not that we don't fast at times. It's not that at times we don't deny ourselves and so on.

Jesus clearly teaches that. But it is not that we have such a shriveled up gospel that leads to a shriveled up way of living that God never asks us to.

It's a false gospel leading to a false godliness. But there's a true gospel that has full salvation that leads to true godliness. Now, like I said, not all foods are good and therefore, you know, we're not sort of indulging ourselves in things that are harmful and continually giving thanks for it.

But what is good? We rejoice in and we give thanks to God for it. So, what is true godliness?

[18:22] How do we get it? Well, it lines out for us. Firstly, verse 6. It's having, well, good leaders, pastors, elders, community group leaders, kids and youth leaders, Christian union leaders, NAVS leaders, young life leaders, prison fellowship leaders and so on who will point out where other teachings or understandings have gone awry.

You know, it's very common, for example, for folks to believe that you need to work your way to heaven. The Bible's really clear. We will never get to heaven. We can never do enough good works to get to heaven.

That's why Jesus came, to do the work for us so that the work is done and all we are required to do is receive that work through repentance and faith and living and following Jesus by faith.

Doing that will help folks to kind of go from the path of a false gospel to the true one to find life and liberty in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul says, if you point these things out, especially in Ephesus, you'll be a good minister, servant of Christ Jesus. So we need folks who will be faithful in teaching and preaching the word of God in whatever context they find themselves and who secondly then are nourished themselves on the truths of the faith and the good apostolic teaching that Timothy himself and that we're called to follow.

[19:43] In other words, understand the word and powerfully apply that word to ourselves. Let it nourish our souls. You know, in order to, somebody wants to describe it as having a fullness for yourself that you might have an overflow for others, that our souls are nurtured so that we are in that the closet, the private place where we're enjoying the presence of the Lord and the relationship that he has given to us and it is from that platform that we're able to go out and to minister to others.

Then thirdly, verse seven, he says, have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives tales, bizarre stuff, freaky, you know, that's not in the Bible that may sound plausible, spiritual, gracious even, but are absolute nonsense that kind of will, almost speak and say, not many people know about this, but you can have this and this and this.

You know, if you're really spiritual, that create two-tier kind of Christianity, not understanding that the full gospel, the full salvation is available to every single believer in equal measure because what Christ achieved for us, it's not a secret, it is proclaimed, it is written in the book and we can all read about it, fully comprehend that we are saved by the sacrificial death of the Son of God for us on the cross and that same power that raised Jesus from the dead is at work in us by the Holy Spirit who teaches us, who reminds us, who comforts us, who equips us, who gifts us, who strengthens us, who rebukes us, who convicts us, who encourages us, who anoints us, who transforms us, who seals us in accord with the word which he inspired to tell us about all that God has for us and is available to us in Christ, by his Spirit, in his words.

All available to every single believer. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. So fourthly, true godliness comes by training.

verse seven or gymming ourselves to be godly. You know, we might go to the gym, we might go for a run or a swim or a walk or do sport.

[22:08] Paul says, actually that is of some value although when you're in the gym sweating it out you sometimes wonder if there's any value at all. But Paul says, no, it has some value for this life.

Helps you live longer and healthier generally. But here's the thing, no matter how much you sweat it out at the gym or hill walk or whatever it is that we're doing, there's a reality that faces us all.

That one day these bodies will give up and we will die. And so it only has some, you know, going to the gym only has some value but he says godliness is of value now, verse eight, for the present life and also for the life to come.

That godliness is of great benefit now. It frees us to live in the blessings of the new life and to find ourselves and able to lead and to teach others in that life.

And he goes on to kind of unpack that but if you stop and think for a moment, well what is the new life that he's called us? What does it look like? Well he kind of outlined it in chapter three, didn't he?

[23:20] Faithful to spouse, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, able to manage the house well, good reputation with outsiders, not quarrelsome. These are all ways in which actually we want to live.

These are all ways in which we live that will usually simplify our lives and keep us out of the complications of sin and the entanglements of it. What heartache would be avoided if we lived in accord with the life, the new life that Christ has for us that we're beginning, that we're seeing sort of in different spots just highlighted for us.

But also these are evidence, aren't they, of the work of the Spirit in us as he works out these things in us and through us as we yield our lives to him and say, look, I want to be changed.

I want to be more like Christ. I want to live in the new life that you've called me. I want to put off the old and take on the new. I'm a new creation. I'm applying full salvation. I want to apply full salvation to my life.

And so in order to live that changed life, what are we doing? We're living short accounts with God. Lord, I acknowledge I wasn't self-controlled in that way. Lord, I lost my temper. I'm sorry and say sorry to the other person.

[24:42] Lord, my word, my reactions and so on. Day by day, you're coming to him. You're acknowledging. You're saying, Lord, show me the things that need to change and help me to know how to change both practically and with the help of your Holy Spirit.

And so you're in a conversation. You're in a relationship with God. And so the power and the dynamic of this full gospel salvation is bearing down on your life as you are changed, made more like Jesus.

That is the path to true godliness that believes the true gospel. And he reiterates these points, doesn't he, in verses 9 to 14 in the trustworthy saying that Paul sort of has every now and again through 1 Timothy.

It's almost like getting the highlight right. Here is a trustworthy saying. Highlight, underline, double score, whatever. This is what you need to really know. And it's for this, he says, that we labor and strive.

We train ourselves because we have put our hope in the living God who is the Savior of all people. That's how we, as believers, that is who we are.

[25 : 49] We have put our hope where? In the living God who is the Savior of all people. You know, you can look at that in various ways, either all people in the way that he provides for all people, the sun and the rain, common grace.

But saving grace is provided especially to those who believe. I wonder if you're a seeker this morning, you're thinking, actually, I'm not following Jesus.

I've not called on this, living, experiencing this full salvation Christ purchased for me. Well, it is available to you. Repentance and belief.

Turn away, turn direction from the way that you're going. Say, Lord, I want to follow you. I'm sorry for the things that I've done. Please forgive me and enable me to walk in faith in you.

So notice the order. There's a putting our faith, the faith, our hope there. In a sense, it is the priority before the labor and striving that the hope is the center thing and then the labor and striving, the training, comes after.

[26 : 57] And that order is important because when we put our hope in the living God, the living God becomes a living reality in our lives. Boom! As we call them and as I've said in repentance and faith, we're born again.

Boom! Dead souls are made alive to Christ. The light and life of God begins to work in us. That's the reality of our lives.

We don't feel it, but that's what's happening. Hallelujah! This is the mystery of true godliness. Christ in us. We've received him as Savior and Lord.

To quote Colin Smith on that, he said, the Christian life is not dreary defeat, but an active pursuit by the power of the Holy Spirit that lives within you. So we're free to live in this new life to discover true godliness from the true gospel.

And that is undergirded and proclaimed through true ministry. Paul says if you point these things out, you know, they will be helped, you'll be a good minister.

[28 : 01] But then he was on verse 4. You know, and so therefore, no wonder he has conviction, verse 11, sorry, conviction about these things. When he says command, there's that word again, we saw it in chapter 1 a number of times.

Command and teach these things that where our hope is to be placed, what full salvation looks like, what it feels like, what change and transformation we can expect and how to achieve it.

These are the true, they're wonderful things that you are to teach. And then the famous verse 4.12, after which our youth group at night is named 4.12. Don't look down, anyone look down on you because you are young.

Many folks think that he's in his 30s, not as if he's a teenager. He said, ignore all that nonsense, but instead, do what? Keep your focus on the Lord and be nourished by him and let the life of Christ flow through you so that you're able to set an example for the believers.

And here is a challenge for those of us who feel called to leadership in ministries, but actually for all believers, but especially for those who are in leadership, that we need to lead in the direction that we want people to follow, setting an example in speech and in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity.

[29 : 22] Whether we're kids leaders or elders or staff or community leaders or whatever ministry, that we're setting an example, that is a challenge, isn't it? I feel the challenge of that.

Not because we have to, no, but because we want to, we want to because of the Spirit of God that is at work in us. Verse 13 is interesting.

What was the reality of the church's experience in those first, what did their gatherings look like? We know what ours looks like, but what was theirs like 2,000 years ago? Well, Paul helps us to see that as he addresses this.

We know in chapter 2 that they prayed and they made a priority of prayer, but also here we see verse 13, there's the public reading of Scripture. There is preaching or exhorting and there is teaching.

This, what we're doing here is in one form or another is what the church has done since the church began. Verse 14, don't neglect it, Timothy.

[30 : 28] Church throughout the ages, don't neglect it. Timothy, this gift was given to you. Don't neglect it. It was given by God through a word of prophecy as the elders, you know, gathered around, prayed for him, maybe laid their hands on him.

And as they prayed, someone may have felt moved. To speak what they, you know, the words that Timothy need to hear about his calling. And of course, that is tested and it was proved to be true. Paul's saying to this, to a struggling elder, Timothy, preacher, you know, has trouble with his stomach, needing encouragement, saying, remember what God has called you to so clearly. Stand firm in the calling. Keep going, son in the faith. Are you involved in a ministry where you're feeling a bit downhearted at the moment?

Keep going. Stand firm in it. Proclaim the wonder of full salvation in the ministries that you're involved in. And do it, verse 15, with diligence, wholeheartedness, careful watch over your life, life, persevering through hard times.

[31 : 43] And I think, you know, one of the most dangerous places in any ministry or leadership time, do you know when it is? I think it's when you're doing really well.

I think when things are going really well and you begin to kind of let your guard down and you think that, you know, it's happening because you're so awesome or whatever and you stop leaning on the Lord and then you open yourself up to temptation.

Oh, I deserve this. You know, it's just a little thing. A little thing becomes a bigger thing, becomes a bigger thing, becomes a bigger thing. Keep watch, careful watch over your life.

Persevere through hard times so that you may come out at the other end, not having fallen by the wayside, not having fallen into false gospel, but having held, kept the faith, run the race and seen many others come to faith and stay in the faith also.

You know what today is? What Sunday is? Pentecost. It is the church's birthday. Thank you. Like it.

[32 : 52] The spirit fell on that first Pentecost Sunday like the power switch was switched on. The church came alive. We are inheritors of that same power that raised Christ from the dead, that began the church on that first day, that sustained the church through those early years.

We are inheritors of that same God and that same gospel and that same power to enable us to stay true, to keep the faith, to keep committed to the path of true the godliness based on the true gospel of full salvation.

That proper response to the things of God produced, that produces obedience and righteous living and joy all in the light of his glorious grace. that is true ministry, friends.

That is what we want amongst us. That is what we want to be communicating in the environment to the ministries that we have. That is chapter 3, verse 16, the mystery, the thing hidden now revealed in Christ of true godliness.

It is focused on Christ, our relationship with him and all that we're receiving through him by his spirit. I came across this quote and let me finish with it.

[34 : 25] You need to suspend all thoughts of present international relations and your opinions of that and hear what it was meant at the time. Okay? I'm quoting Churchill and he was writing his reflections about one particular night, December 7th, 1941.

After 19 months of lonely leadership, the nation had been pounded. They were staring defeat in the face. They were laboring and striving but without any real hope or prospect of victory.

Then a mighty power became engaged in their fight and he wrote about that. Let me quote. He's on the phone to the White House and he says, in two or three minutes, Mr. Roosevelt came through. Mr. President, I'll not do the accent, Mr. President, what's this about Japan? It's true, he replied, they have attacked us at Pearl Harbor and we are all in the same boat now.

And then Churchill wrote this. He said, no American will think it wrong of me if I proclaim that to have the United States at our side was to me the greatest joy.

[35 : 39] I could never foretell the course of events. I do not pretend to have measured accurately the martial might of Japan but now at this very moment I knew the United States was in the war up to the neck and in it to the death.

So actually we had won after all. Yes, after Dunkirk, after the fall of France, after the horrible episode in Iran, after the threat of invasion when apart from the air and the Navy, we were almost an unarmed people.

After the deadly struggle of the U-boat war, the first battle of the Atlantic gained by a hand's breadth. After 17 months of lonely fighting and 19 months of my responsibility in dire distress, I knew.

Actually, we had won the war. How long the war would last or in what fashion it would end, no man could tell, nor did I at this moment care. All the rest was merely the proper application of overwhelming force.

However, whenever we think of war, even of Churchill's words, they give us an illustration of an experience of being enjoined by a mighty force that changes the direction of history, that changes the direction of lives, that changes the course of history of the war.

[37 : 03] We too have been engaged, haven't we, by a mighty force, actually, the greatest force known to the universe. Through Jesus Christ, we have been brought into glorious relationship with the living God who gives us power to believe, power to live, power to be sustained, power to fight the battles, power to, knowing, because of our great hope, the battle, the war has been won.

There may be battles still to be fought, but the war ultimately has been won, and we, friends, are on, by the grace of God, the winning side. And so this morning, I wonder if you feel powerless.

I wonder if you feel weak. I wonder if you feel inadequate. I wonder if you feel downhearted. Maybe you're on the top of the world. But I'm guessing that for most of us, you know, it's, we're in that season of time of the year and folks are tired.

Parenting is hard. You know, they're facing hard stuff in life or whatever. Hear these truths. Hear where our hope, refresh yourself in where your hope, our hope, is truly placed.

And what that hope really, truly means. That we have been engaged with the most, the greatest power that the universe knows, made available to us through Jesus Christ.

[38 : 30] That as we stand on the true gospel, we're able to live out the glory of this changed life, true godliness that enables us to go on and to have true ministries in which lives are truly being changed.

So friends, be encouraged. Know the joy of full salvation this morning and what has been purchased for you through Jesus Christ.

Let me pray. God our Father, thank you for the reminder of these things.

We so often find your word just timely speaking to us the words we need to hear. I pray, Lord, that you would continue to work powerfully in our hearts, helping us to remember the things that we need to remember that will sustain us through the coming week, the weeks and months.

Lord, we bless you and thank you that you in your grace and mercy have opened our eyes to behold Jesus. we bless you and thank you that you changed us and you are changing us and that you have given us a hope not just for this life but for the life to come.

[39 : 57] Lord, help us to live in the light of all these glorious truths, whether we're young, whether we're old, whether we're single, whether we're married, whether we're without kids, whether we have kids. Lord, help us to receive your power.

For we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.