

94-12-11Mark

...ways that you have expressed toward us in bringing us through another week. We thank you for all of the expressions of your compassion and your love for us in both large and small ways. We thank you most of all for our salvation, that we have a relationship with you through Jesus Christ.

It can never be changed, can never be shaken. It's eternal and written in the heavens because you are eternal and your word stands forever. We thank you for the security we have as your children.

We thank you for the opportunity that we have as your children to grow in grace, to grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior. We pray that the truth that we look into in your word this morning will contribute to that goal, that our lives will be changed, that we will be transformed on the inside, that God the Holy Spirit will have something in our souls to guide us and to change us with. We ask these things in Jesus' name.

Amen. Mark 2 begins a portion of Jesus' ministry that we have not seen thus far. And this is where opposition rises.

Now think about this for a moment. Think about the fact that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is perfection incarnate.

He has come down to earth. He is living among men. Can you imagine the kind of splash that this would make in Tahlequah? Suppose that there was an individual who was the actual living, breathing Son of God here in Tahlequah, walking among us.

And at about 30 years of age, he starts to become known outside his family, outside his circle of acquaintances, outside the customers at the carpenter shop. Actually, some folks believe that Joseph, his human father, may have actually also been a blacksmith. Typically, the men who were carpenters were also blacksmiths.

So they would have harness work, plows to fix, as well as things made of wood. And as a tradesman in a small community, you know that people get to be fairly well known. And yet this individual is perfect.

Never sins. Never makes a mistake. Never says the wrong thing.

Never thinks the wrong thing. Never does the wrong thing. And I would find this remarkable.

I would think that we would all find it exceptional. And yet here is the Son of God walking around in Israel, and He is a curiosity. He starts out being a curiosity.

And when He begins to do miraculous things, He becomes more than a curiosity. He is a

spectacle. He is a form of entertainment.

And He is also a source of hope to those who are looking for an answer to a particular problem in their life. If they have a withered limb, if they have a demon-possessed child, if they have some other form of disease or illness, here suddenly is the answer. Here's someone that I have heard can cure this impossible problem.

And so people begin to flock to Jesus Christ as He begins His ministry. We saw this in chapter 1 of Mark, didn't we? We saw that He gathered His disciples after a year of sort of part-time following and some events that we don't have in the Gospel of Mark, but we do have in John and Luke. Mark, recording the words of Peter, is telling us about the start of Jesus' ministry here in Capernaum.

And so Jesus has showed up in this community and teaches in the synagogue. He is there to teach. He is there to communicate something about God.

That's His purpose. As He finishes His lesson for the morning, He sees a man in the synagogue that is demon-possessed, and He casts out that demon. People are immediately shocked and amazed and dumbfounded.

And at the end of the Sabbath, they bring to Him at the place where He's staying all of the sick and afflicted in the area for Him to heal, and He does so. Then we saw that He left and went away from that community. Even though there was a huge crowd, more people to be healed, more people to be ministered to, He left.

And He traveled around to the villages preaching and casting out demons. Then we saw His encounter with the leper. Here's another impossible situation.

And He reaches out in compassion and heals this leper and gives him an instruction which he does not follow. And we saw the consequences of that disobedience last week. We also saw the tremendous opportunity that the leper had to provide a testimony in Israel.

Now, he provided a testimony, didn't he? He went out and proclaimed what Christ had done for him. But it was pale and insignificant compared to the testimony he could have given had he been obedient. Now we pick up in chapter 2 and Jesus has returned to Capernaum, returned to the place where He cast out the demon out of the man in the synagogue in chapter 1. He has returned there.

And it says in chapter 2, verse 1, Again, He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house. Immediately many gathered together so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them.

Then they came to Him bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men. When they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had

broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying.

When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, Son, your sins are forgiven you. Now this is not quite what we would expect Him to say, is it? After all of this commotion, and you can imagine this happening this morning. Somebody removes the acoustic tiles.

We feel a cold gust of air come through, that 17 degree air. And here's four ropes and a pallet and some paralyzed man being let down. By the way, if that happens, I'm leaving.

So you just know now. But this would be an amazing thing. And if the Lord sees this happen and all attention is focused on this man, the first thing you expect to hear is not, My child, your sins are forgiven you.

You expect something like, What have you done to Peter's roof? Or let your paralysis be gone. Take up your bed and walk. And yet, the subject of sin isn't the first thing that comes to my mind when I picture somebody being let down on these ropes.

So keep that in mind now, because He says, Son, your sins are forgiven you. And in verse 6, Some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts. Why does this man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone? But immediately when Jesus perceived in His Spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? Which is easier? To say to the paralytic, Your sins are forgiven you.

Or to say, Arise, take up your bed and walk. Which of course is what everyone was expecting. Jesus had a reputation for healing.

Which is easier to say? Verse 10, But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins. He said to the paralytic, I say to you, Arise, take up your bed and go to your house. Immediately he arose, took up the bed, went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, We never saw anything like this.

Now for many of us, this is a familiar story. And you have heard, I'm sure, many times the straightforward lessons that this teaches us. We see the compassion of Jesus Christ.

We see the loyalty of the four friends who bear this paralyzed man to the Lord. I would like to point out something that may be a little bit less obvious, something we don't hear quite as much about, and yet something that is directly applicable to us. Let's take a look at this story, and I want you to notice something as we see the situation develop here.

Jesus is there in a house. Now if you go back to chapter 2, verse 1, where it says He entered Capernaum after some days, really what this is trying to tell us is because of what the leper had done in noising abroad Jesus as a great healer, Jesus had to be a little bit sneaky when He

would enter a town. We know that from the end of chapter 1. He could no longer openly enter the city.

So when Jesus comes back to Capernaum, He does not advertise His presence. He slips in quietly, probably after dark, takes up residence at this house, probably the house of Peter, and makes no one aware of His presence. But it was only a day or two, the Greek here tells us, before it was noised abroad that He was back in the city.

You cannot hide the presence of Jesus Christ for very long. Of course, this is a lesson for us. If Jesus Christ is present in our souls, we are not going to be able to disguise His presence for very long.

That light is not going to be able to be contained under a bushel basket. The presence of Jesus Christ in this town could not be contained, could not be hidden, and it very soon became noised abroad. So immediately many gathered together so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door.

Jesus never even got a chance to get out the door before these people collected. They filled the living room of the house. They filled the courtyard, all the way out to the gateway to the street, so that there was no passing in or out of this house.

But what is it that Jesus is doing there in the end of verse 2? He preached the Word to them. Remember in chapter 1, let us go elsewhere and preach, for this is the reason I have come. This is the reason I came forth, to preach.

Now, let's think about this a minute. The content of preaching is the Word of God. We know that.

What is the purpose of the preaching of the Word of God? Is it an end in itself? Having proclaimed the Word of God, are we finished? Having heard the proclamation of the Word of God, are we finished? Has the loop been closed? Has God's purpose been accomplished if the Word is preached and heard? Something to think about, isn't it? Because we can easily content ourselves with realizing that yes, the Word has been preached. Good message. Remember Ezekiel 33 last week, our Scripture reading? This people says, come, let us go and hear the Word of the Lord.

And they go down, and the sound of the preacher's voice is like a musical instrument, and the Word of the Lord sounds like a beautiful song, and yet the people are not changed. Obedience is not the result. Faith is not the result.

And you remember from our study of Colossians, there is a strong interrelationship between three things. If you remember anything from our Colossians, there are three words that ought to stand out in your mind. Faith, hope, and love.

Now, by this shall all men know that you are My disciples, that you what? That you know the

Word of God? By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, that you minister in an active way? By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, that you love one another. And we studied in detail. Now, the relationship, where does that love come from? It starts back here with faith.

Faith has an object. We have to believe something. Now, I would submit to you the following proposition.

See what you think of this statement. If I have a vague and general knowledge of the Word of God, I'm going to have a vague and general faith. Because my faith is in something.

And if my knowledge of the Word of God is general and vague and non-specific, my faith is going to be what? Vague, general, non-specific. Now, we saw that undeniable link, faith and hope. That's the motivation and the means of living the Christian life.

And the result is love. See if we can follow this out now. If I have a vague and general knowledge leading to a vague and general faith, what sort of a hope am I going to have for the future? Vague, general, we'll understand it all by and by.

What kind of love am I going to have in this world? My testimony, the thing that tells people that I am a disciple of the Lord. Vague, general, sometimes unguided, maybe misapplied, misconstrued, just like my faith and just like my hope. And where did this all begin? Back with the preaching.

Why did Jesus come? For this reason I have come forth. I'm going to go to the towns and villages and preach. I'm going to communicate the truth, but I'm not all done.

That is the beginning of a process. Faith needs to be applied to that word and it needs to be a specific, detailed knowledge of the word that leads to a specific, detailed faith. A clear faith.

An understanding faith. A faith that gives me wisdom because I know where I am. I know what God has said.

I know the promises I can claim. And it's not vague. It's not ambiguous.

It's not confusing. Because I don't have a vague, ambiguous, confusing view of the Scripture. I know it by rote.

I know it by heart. I know it inside out. It's the thing I know the best.

My faith in that knowledge can now be strong and clear. I can have a clear, specific, well-educated hope. What did Paul say? I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.

That's hope. Paul says, I've got something that I've committed unto God's care looking ahead to that day. Do we know what that something is? What is it we've committed to God? What is it that we have confidence that He will keep it against that day? Our knowledge has to be specific, but that's not the end of the process.

It should lead to a specific, clear, strong faith that gives us a specific, clear, strong hope. And what will the outworking of that be? Now when it is time to seize and aggressively pursue an opportunity for ministry, when it is time to reflect the love and the compassion of God, it will be clear, it will be direct, it will be strong, it will be unmistakable, undeniable, not vague in general, not wondering and uncertain and half-hearted because who wants to leap forward in a strong fashion when you don't know where you're going to land? This is why Jesus, this is why the Word of God places so much stress on the knowledge of the Word of God, but it's so easy for us to make that knowledge an end in itself. And this is where the Scripture says, if that's as far as you get, knowledge is just going to puff you up.

Now, have you ever gone out to, for those of you that are males and married as I am, you get these various little errands and chores to perform that you really are uneducated about? I don't know anything about plants, but sometimes if Patty is away visiting her mother, I'm supposed to water the plants. Well, there's a pot that's a certain size and I get the pitcher or the hose or whatever and I start putting water into that pot. Now, if I put in more water than the pot will hold, there's no place for it to go.

It just spills out and it's wasted. It stops up. If I have a drain in my house and it gets plugged and I continue to try to put water down there, what happens? It backs up.

It swells up. It overflows. What is going to happen to knowledge if it doesn't go through this process of faith and hope and love? It's going to back up.

It's going to puff you up. We'll be puffed up with knowledge because it's not going where it's supposed to go. It's not working itself out in faith and hope and love.

This is the Lord's point. He goes out and He says, look, I'm going to preach the Word, but it's not an end in itself. Now, I want you to look at this group that He's teaching right here.

It says at the end of verse 2, He preached the Word to them. Now, there came to Him bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men. And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd... Now, let's think about this.

Let's suppose for the moment that everybody has come to hear the Word of the Lord because they are a faith, hope, and love person. They are Israelites that are gung-ho for the Lord. They are 100%.

This is the Messiah. I will follow Him wherever He goes. I'm going to learn what He's teaching and

so forth.

Let's suppose that this whole crowd is that way. And here comes this paralyzed man being carried by four of his friends. And if you have ever carried a human body, you know that they're heavy.

These four men have carried this man from somewhere on this pallet. They come to see Jesus. That's obvious.

They get there, and here the place is jammed with people like Walmart now between Thanksgiving and Christmas. Can't even find a parking place. Can't even get in the door.

Now, if these people have this process of knowledge being the object of their faith and resulting in hope and working itself out in love, what is a love response to four men carrying a paralyzed man trying to see Jesus? How difficult is this for us to comprehend here? In the Navy, they say, make a hole. Make a pathway. Get yourselves to each side.

The Admiral's coming through. A lady with a baby. You know, they used to say that on the old trolley cars.

Stand aside. Make a hole. A lady with a baby.

And everybody would park because this is a case where you need to let somebody through. This doesn't happen, does it? Does this tell us something about the people in Capernaum? We saw them once before, didn't we? Why did they assemble to see the Lord? They're sitting and listening to Him preach, but why did they really come? And why did He leave the first time? Remember that? They weren't there to pursue a rock of faith and hope and love. They were there to see the razzle-dazzle.

I wonder if He's going to heal someone today. Or they might have been there to be healed. But what's more important? To have a withered hand restored or to have a withered relationship with God restored? What's more important? To have your blindness removed or to have spiritual scales fall from your eyes and see the living God and see His glory and His power in the incarnate Messiah of Israel standing right before you.

There's a difference, isn't there? And there's a difference for us. What is it that we're looking for in our lives? What are we trying to pursue? Why are we sitting under the preaching of the Word of the Lord? Are we wanting to see miraculous things happen? Are we wanting to see tremendous ministries? Are we wanting to see overt fruits? Or are we first and foremost wanting to be drawn into active, healthy, vital relationship with the God that purchased us with His own blood, with Jesus Christ? These other things have their place. Jesus Christ was moved with compassion and performed these healings because He cared, because there was a physical problem that could be solved.

But we can discern in His treatment of this crowd and these episodes that are recorded for us that there's a priority, isn't there? There's a kind of first things first. Why are we there? And notice that these folks have sat under the teaching of the Lord and yet it's not working itself out in love. These men can't get through.

Now think about a church where people might want to come and might want to come into contact with Jesus Christ. And the obstacle to their contact with Jesus Christ are the very people that are assembling ostensibly around Jesus Christ. Those very people are the obstacle.

That's the situation here. We don't want to fall into that pattern, do we? We do not want to be sitting under the Word and not have it work itself out through faith, through hope, and through love. That process, the worthy walk that we saw in Colossians, it's not happening here.

This man can't get through. These men can't get through. And it's because of the people that have gathered themselves supposedly to follow Jesus Christ.

So when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. And thanks be to God where there is motivation to find God, God will provide a way. These houses, as you may know, had a lot of times both an internal staircase and an external set of steps.

So everybody's crowded on the front of the house. So these men carried the paralytic around to the back of the house where the outside stairs were and went up to this flat patio-type roof. A lot of these houses had a... It's kind of like here.

We have a shingle roof over wood and then we may have some other structure underneath that makes our ceiling. In these houses, a lot of times they would construct a framework into which they would drop large stone tiles or stone slabs. But of course, there are cracks between those.

So on top of this, they would put a layer of dirt, tar, mortar, sand, and so forth. And a lot of times, seeds would grow up there and they'd actually have a little lawn up there on the roof. And the words here in Greek tell us, coupled with some details over in Luke, tells us that that's the kind of roof that was on this house because it says they had to dig their way through.

And in Luke, it tells us that there were tiles that they removed to let this man down through. So they had to dig through the dirt. They had to pick up this heavy tile and move it aside.

And then by careful maneuvering, they could angle this paralyzed individual down through this hole and drop him directly in front of the Lord. And when Jesus saw their faith, notice it doesn't say his faith, it says their faith. This man had faithful friends.

He had men who believed, just as he did, that if he could come into the presence of the Lord, the Lord would have compassion on him. And that faith produced an action, didn't it? They didn't get

to the edge of the crowd and say, oh, let's try tomorrow. Let's come back another day.

Or let's lay you here and hope that when he leaves the house you may be able to catch him with a word or with a glance. These men put their faith, their loyalty, their compassion for their paralyzed friend into practice. It resulted in action.

The beautiful song that our choir sang this morning, what does it say? God so loved the world that... and then we have an active verb, that he gave. Love, if it's genuine love, results in action. It motivates us to do something.

Faith, hope, love. And we can look at ourselves. We can measure ourselves by this standard.

We may learn the Word of God. We may even trust in and believe the Word of God. But if that cycle is not being completed, if it's not going through all of the plumbing in our soul and working itself out in a love that is willing to act when the occasion calls for it, we're jammed up.

And sooner or later, it's going to back up into the sink and that knowledge is going to puff us up. It's going to back up and become an end in itself, an object in itself. It has to work itself out in love.

Look at the difference between this crowd who won't even step aside to let these men through and these men that have carried their friend all the way to this house, have climbed the stairs, have dug through the roof, and are now holding him in front of the Lord on these ropes. That's the difference between sitting under the preaching of the Word and having no result of love and understanding the Word of God and having it result in faith, in hope, and in love. And notice that Jesus can work backward from that.

Where you see manifested love, you know that there is hope and you know that there is faith. How could Jesus see their faith? Had they expressed knowledge of a promise of God in the Old Testament? Had they quoted some Scripture as they were digging out the ceiling? How is it that Jesus knew they had faith? Because that process was completed. The outworking of their faith was expectation, confident expectation that God would act in the person of Jesus Christ, and love that manifested itself in action.

That's how Jesus knew that they had faith. Jesus saw their faith because it was faith working through love. Faith without works is dead, being fruitless.

So, we see that principle that we studied so thoroughly in Colossians working itself out here. Now, this crowd, we see that at least a portion of this crowd is composed of scribes. And this is the first instance in the Gospel of Mark where we start to see opposition to Jesus Christ.

What do the scribes represent? They're the established religion. They are the expected example in the community. They are the ones that hold up the traditions.

They are the protectors of the faith. They are the transcribers of the law. They are the readers and the expounders on the law in Israel.

They are the establishment, if you will, of the spiritual life of Israel. And notice what happens. There is a tremendous manifestation of faith, a tremendous manifestation of love.

And here we have the response of the Lord when He says, Son, your sins are forgiven you. Now, they immediately react in their theological knowledge, don't they? They've got knowledge of the Word of God. They've memorized it.

This man is speaking of blasphemy. Nobody can forgive sins but God. Now, if there was ever a classic case of having knowledge and not working it out in faith, this is it.

Let's see if we can construct a little geometric proof here. Only God can forgive sins. This man is forgiving a sin.

So is this or is this not someone equal to God or at least claiming equality with God? If only God can forgive sins, this man is forgiving sins, we are now faced with a question, is this man God? Very simple and very direct. Their theological knowledge is there. They know the principles that ought to get them to arrive at the conclusion between this and His miracles, His self-identification that was prophesied in the Old Testament.

It should be a very simple, logical deduction. This man expresses the power of God. This man expresses the love of God.

This man is forgiving sins. There's only one man foretold in the Old Testament that can do this, and that is the Messiah. That is the man from God, the suffering servant, the Son of God Himself.

Their theological knowledge is there, but it has hit some big grease clog down there in the plumbing, hasn't it? Because now it's backing up and they're becoming full of themselves. This man is blaspheming. They don't even consider, could he be the Messiah? They've already made up their mind, so now their knowledge is backing up.

Who can forgive sins but God alone? Jesus perceives this immediately in His Spirit. He says, Why do you reason about these things in your heart? What He's saying is, Why do you keep on reasoning about this? It's a simple deduction. There's no need to go around on this over and over and to have your knowledge back up.

It's a simple thing. I have demonstrated to you who I am. I am now functioning as the Son of God in pronouncing these sins forgiven.

And you're faced with the simple issue of do you believe it or not? Will you place your faith in this Messiah or not? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, Your sins are forgiven you, or to say, Arise, take up your bed, and walk. But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on

earth to forgive sins, He says to the paralytic, I say to you, Arise, take up your bed, and walk. There are two wonderful principles here that I hope we can catch this morning.

The first of them is the purpose of Jesus' miracles. They were not an end in themselves. The miracles were not a ministry in themselves.

Were they? There were many sick people in Israel. Jesus healed many of them that came to Him, but He did not heal them all. And there were new demon possessions, new blindnesses, new lameness that came after Jesus came.

These miracles, these healings, were designed to serve a purpose. Turn over to John 10. John 10.22 We looked at this passage when I was explaining to you the significance of the Hanukkah feast that was just observed by Jews here a week or two ago.

The feast of dedication. This is Hanukkah. This is this time of year.

Jesus is walking in the temple in Solomon's porch. John 10.24 The Jews surrounded Him and said to Him, How long do You keep us in doubt? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you and you do not believe.

The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me. These healings, these miracles are not an end in themselves. They are designed to communicate the character of God, to communicate the Person of God, to identify Jesus Christ as the embodiment of God, God incarnate, the fullness of deity in bodily form.

That's the purpose of these healings, the purpose of that ministry. I would submit to you that the purpose of our service, the purpose of our ministry, is not an end in itself. It is not to look and say, we have ministered, any more than Jesus could look and say, I have healed.

It is designed to be a revelation of God. It's designed to be an identification of Jesus Christ in our soul. That's the difference between gathering and sitting and listening to the Word and being an example of love.

Our lives, our ministry, is to reveal Jesus Christ. That's how a wife can win her husband without a word, because her very life communicates and reveals Jesus Christ. Jesus said the works that I do reveal who I am and that I come from the Father.

The works that we do have the same purpose. They're not an end in themselves. The poor we will have with us always.

The unsaved, the unchurched, we will have with us always. And it is not to diminish the importance of ministering to them any more than anyone would diminish the value of Jesus' healing ministry. But we have to understand the priority.

It has a purpose. And it is meaningless if we do it and it doesn't accomplish its purpose. If Jesus had simply gone about healing, His purpose would not have been accomplished.

God would not have been revealed. He would not have been identified as the perfect, unique Son of God. That was the purpose.

The works without the purpose are not worthwhile. Our works have to accomplish this same purpose. Therefore, we have to go back to the beginning.

How can we minister? How can our actions accomplish their purpose? We go back to what we have learned and what we know so well. But we've got to put it into practice. We have to make it more than a thought, more than an acknowledgement.

It has to be put into practice. It has to be the object of our faith. We need a detailed, clear knowledge of the Word of God.

We need to have a strong, clear faith in that Word. We need to have a strong, clear hope, expectation for the future. And that needs to work itself out in our lives as a defined, motivated, aggressive love.

A love that sees the need of the world and sends, that gives, that goes. But the sending and the giving and the going are no good if they don't result from that process because the power of God is not in it. The person of God is not revealed through it.

Revelation of Jesus Christ is the message. That's the purpose. That's why we are here.

And we have to ensure that we are not just going through the motions as the Israelites did in sacrifice. We're not going through the motions of assembling and hearing the Word of God. We need to judge ourselves and see if we are in the faith.

Faith leads to hope, which leads to love, which leads to actions that reveal the person and the character of Jesus Christ that reflect His glory. That's our challenge. That's our challenge this holiday season.

That's our challenge every day that we live. Many times that revelation of Jesus Christ is simply in the serenity and the peace that we have in our soul under adverse circumstances. All of us are older this week than we were last week.

We have degenerated according to the laws of entropy and the second law of thermodynamics. Everything goes from a greater to a lesser state of organization. I see that in my study.

I see that in my garage. I see that in my human body. Every week that goes by, we're slowly falling apart in the physical realm.

But it doesn't have to be that way in the spiritual realm. The power of God reverses those supposed laws of the universe. And we can be on that upward way, treading on that upward way, gaining new heights every day, achieving that higher ground.

And it isn't simply through ministry. It's through letting the power of God work in us. Faith, hope, love, expressing itself in action and ministry that reveals Jesus Christ.

That's our challenge this holiday season. That's our challenge today and tomorrow and the next day. Let's close now in a word of prayer.

Father, we thank You for the wonderful privilege that we have of being called by Your name. We thank You for the supreme example of love and compassion as Jesus Christ came and gave Himself for us. We recognize that we have appropriated that gift by faith.

And we hope to share the message that if there is anyone who is looking for the great vacuum in their soul to be filled, if there is anyone that is seeking to satisfy the hunger and the thirst that we have as human beings, it is found in the person of Jesus Christ. It is found in relationship with You through Him. And we ask, Father, this morning that if there is anyone here that has never made that decision, that we may be used, that our lives, our communication, whether verbal or by example, will show forth Your Son, Jesus Christ, so that those who seek Him will find Him.

We pray, Father, that these things that we have learned will become a part of the resources in our soul, that Jesus Christ will be revealed and glorified in our lives. For we ask it in His name. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Verse 3. Verse 4. As Paul told the Thessalonians at the close of his second letter, Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always in every way. And that's a wonderful thought as we enter into this season that commemorates the Prince of Peace. And he closes by saying, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Amen.