

Philippians 3:1-3

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 21 March 2021

Preacher: Nathan Raynor

[0 : 00] Please take your copy of God's Word and turn to Philippians chapter 3. And I'm a little note heavy this morning.

So you may find my pace speeding up because I'd like to complete the notes this morning and to do so in a reasonable amount of time and certainly for the sake of parents with children this morning. So let's get right to it. But before we read the text, let me remind you, beloved, that this is God's Word to us. It was written for His glory and our good. So we would all do well to listen to it in order to believe its promises and obey its commands.

Philippians chapter 3, beginning in verse 1. Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same thing to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you.

Look out for the dogs. Look out for the evildoers. Look out for those who mutilate the flesh. For we are the circumcision who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh.

[1 : 40] Now, the Christian church has a problem in our day. The problem of false conversion. I believe this is largely due to the nature of our gospel presentations.

We offer the free grace of God to all people as it is and as we should. But we have largely neglected to balance this offer with the costly call of following Christ.

Today's church has almost altogether ignored texts like Mark chapter 8, verse 34 and 35, where Jesus said, If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

For whoever would save his life will lose it. But whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospels will save it. The cross was a place of death.

Someone who is willing to give all that they are for the sake of gaining Christ can have Christ. And Luke chapter 14, verse 28 and following.

[2 : 51] Jesus says, For which of you desiring to build the tower does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation, is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build and was not able to finish.

Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able with 10,000 men to meet him who comes against him with 20,000? And if not, while the other is a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace.

What is Jesus talking about when he gives these examples? Verse 33 tells us, So, therefore, if any one of you does not renounce all that he has, cannot be my disciple.

So, many people have made professions of faith in Jesus Christ, but have not truly been converted. This kind of easy-believe-ism, cheap-grace type of gospel that the church today presents so often. These people are false Christians, not genuine Christians. This should be a sobering thing to realize. It is altogether possible to declare that you are in the faith and not be in the faith.

[4 : 15] It is possible to think that you are saved and your end be destruction. This is not the first time we have considered this, and it will not be the last, because the Bible is packed with teaching on the matter.

New Testament writers are very concerned with this, that people would not truly respond to the gospel of Jesus Christ, that they would think they're saved and find that they're not in the end. Let me just give you a few quick examples of this teaching. Jesus was concerned about it. Matthew 7, verse 21 and following. He says, Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

On that day, many will say to me, Lord, Lord, do we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name? The people who claim Christ as Lord and do powerful signs in his name.

Verse 23 says, And then I will declare to them, I never knew you. Depart from me, you workers of lawlessness. Jesus also told the parable of the sower.

[5 : 29] You can find it in Matthew chapter 13 and Mark 4 and Luke chapter 8, where there's seed that falls on the ground, and it's snatched away by birds, which represent the devil, steals the truth away.

There's seed that falls on rocky soil, and because it has no depth, because it brings forth plant, but there's no root. The sun of tribulation comes and withers away.

So people make professions, and they seem to be in the faith, and yet we find that they're not. And there's some that falls amongst the thorns, and the thorns represent the cares of the world, and the cares of the world choke out.

The truth of the gospel. Paul's also concerned about this in our text today, and in many other places. Here's a few examples. He writes to the Corinthians, chapter 13 and verse 5.

Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves, or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you, unless indeed you fail to meet the test.

[6 : 38] He writes to Timothy in 2 Timothy 3, 5, as he's warning him about false teachers. He says, they have the appearance of godliness, but deny the gospel's power.

And then to Titus in chapter 1 and verse 16, same type of warning. They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.

You see, this problem that we have today is not a problem new to our day. In the various earliest days of the church, people sought what they could gain by professing to be Christians, but gave no evidence of their conversion.

Take some time on your own to note the life of Simon in Acts chapter 8. This is just when the first dispersion of the church from Jerusalem had happened. And we already see this kind of thing taking place.

As Paul writes to the Philippians, he has a particular group of false converts in mind. These false Christians did not seek to subtract from the requirement of faith, but to add to it.

[7 : 53] In the ESV translation, which I'm preaching from today, I know that many of you have in front of you. They are called the dogs, the evildoers, those who mutilate the flesh.

But the NASB translation, which is a wonderful translation of the Bible, renders the phrase, those who mutilate the flesh, as the false circumcision. There's a particular group in mind, as Paul is writing here to the Philippians.

These people were Jewish people who had professed to be Christians and made it their aim to convince Gentile converts that they must be circumcised in order to be genuine Christians.

They were adding the work of circumcision to the faith of these Gentile believers. And this made Paul furious. Many times in the scripture we read his indictment of these particular people.

Paul was very clear about the matter of circumcision. Romans chapter 2, beginning in verse 25. For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law.

[9 : 02] But if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. Everybody's broken the law. So if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision?

And how do we keep the law? We keep it in Christ. Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision, but break the law.

For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart by the Spirit, not by the letter.

His praise is not from man, but from God. Righteousness, or perfect law-keeping, comes by faith in Jesus' perfect law-keeping.

We are incapable of keeping the law. The Old Testament is predominantly about proving this very point. We're given a standard that we cannot keep so that we would look to another source for our salvation.

[10 : 19] Right? The law is a teacher to us of our need of a Savior. We cannot find ourselves approved before God by our works.

It will never happen. Listen to the words of Paul to the Galatian believers whose consciences have been swayed by these Judaizers, as they were called.

He says in chapter 3, verse 1 and following, O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified.

Let me ask you only this. Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? The answer is by hearing with faith. That's how they received the Spirit. Are you so foolish?

Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? Did you suffer so many things in vain, if indeed it was in vain? Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law or by hearing with faith?

[11 : 24] Just as Abraham believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness. Abraham's righteousness, the father of the Jews, was given to him not because of works, but because of faith.

Today's text is meant to serve both as a warning and as an encouragement. For those not in Christ this morning, weigh out whether or not you have repented of your sin and thrown yourself on the mercy of God.

For those of you who are in Christ this morning, have your hope in the gospel of Jesus Christ spurred on. We have a great hope in Christ.

In Philippians chapter 3, verses 1 through 3, Paul means to juxtapose for us the false Christian and the genuine Christian. So our outline for this text will be as follows.

genuine Christians, Christians, excuse me, questions, clear my throat, genuine Christians, one, rejoice in the Lord, two, look out, the way ESV renders that, look out, three, worship in the spirit of God, four, glory in Christ Jesus, and five, put no confidence in the flesh.

[12 : 55] And I'll repeat all those for you, of course. Genuine Christians, number one, rejoice in the Lord. He says in the first part of verse 1, finally my brothers, rejoice in the Lord.

Finally could also be rendered furthermore or so then. In this case, it's a transitional word.

Half of the letter still remains, so it's reasonable to feel like this conclusion word is out of place. I think we do well when we get to chapter 3 and go, finally, what do you mean?

He's not about to wrap the letter up. And I don't think that Paul gets to this place and makes a mistake. Like he thought he was about to conclude the letter and yet he didn't quite.

So I think we ought to see here, furthermore, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. Paul has spoken much in this letter so far about rejoicing.

[13 : 54] You can see chapter 1, verse 4, and verse 18, and verse 25. Chapter 2, verse 2, verse 17 and 18, and verse 28 and 29. There's much of the theme of the book of Philippians is about joy or rejoicing.

Here he specifically says that genuine Christians rejoice in the Lord. Joy should not be seen as happiness.

We confuse those two words in our English vernacular. Happiness is a feeling that is based in circumstance. The root word of happiness is the same as the word for happenstance or circumstance.

Happiness is not bad. Don't hear me say that it's bad to be happy. It's a joyful thing to go to a birthday party and enjoy the cake. Happiness comes from that.

But joy is much better. Joy is the superior emotion to happiness. Joy is a divine emotion rooted in the future promises of God regardless of our circumstance.

[15 : 11] Let me say that again. Joy is a divine emotion rooted in the future promises of God regardless of our circumstance.

We cannot produce it on our own. It's divine. It's birthed in us by the power of the Spirit and so it is a mark of genuine Christians.

Bulletin says, the quote on your bulletin says by Martin Lloyd-Jones, God's people are meant to be people who are always rejoicing in the Lord. Who he is to us and that we belong to him.

I hope that when we speak of joy, you know what we mean. And when I talk about it being this divine emotion rooted in future promises, you can say, yeah, yeah, I have that joy.

I recognize that regardless of the circumstances I'm walking through, there is promise for me that you get pulled through the sorrow that this life delves out and it is full of sorrow.

[16 : 16] Young people, the longer you live, the more you will feel the weight of the utter brokenness of this world. And if you don't have gospel joy to override that, you will be left despondent.

But if you are in the Lord, if you are in Christ, you have much to have joy in. I hope you know what we're talking about when we say this.

If you don't, you may not be in Christ. You may not have a reason for joy at all. So do you experience this joy in the deepest recess of your soul despite what's going on around you, despite the sorrow that this life just serves up again and again?

Do you rejoice that you are God's and He is yours? Do you hang on His promises? Genuine Christians rejoice in the Lord.

Secondly, genuine Christians look out. Last half of verse 1, Paul writes, to write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you.

[17 : 29] The verse numbering is not inspired. And I think that in this case, we need to move that little two elsewhere in the text. I don't think he's writing about joy when he says to write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you.

It's about the warning he's about to give to these believers and to us. Verse 2, look out for the dogs. Look out for the evildoers. Look out for those who mutilate the flesh.

The text says, look out. Some translations say, beware. I want you to see that what Paul means is discern. Actively be looking, being careful, thinking clearly and biblically about what it is you're being told.

Genuine believers are to grow in their knowledge of the truth and, therefore, their ability to spot counterfeit truth. If we know the truth, if we are versed in the Bible, it's not all that difficult to spot those things that are untrue, those things that don't reconcile with what the Scripture teaches. Paul says to write the same things to you, which means that he must be reiterating a point that he has previously made. I think sometimes this is why our mind ties to the idea of joy because he's repeated joy, rejoicing over and over again, but I think he's referring back to Philippians 1, verse 27 and 28, where he wrote, Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.

[19 : 23] The faith of the gospel. Right? And not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation and that from God.

This is the writing the same things to you, I believe that he's referring to, that we would be as a church, as churches, the Philippian church, would be standing together, firm, right?

Discerning the truth. We are to discern those who teach in contradiction to the gospel of Jesus Christ. The good news that we are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, through Jesus Christ alone.

There are so many false gospels and peddlers of false gospels, right? They abound. And the genuine Christian must be trained in the word in order to not be led astray by such teaching.

Paul exhorts us to look out, beware, discern, because it is safe for us. Open-mindedness in the church is the siren call of the false teachers, right?

[20 : 38] Oh, tolerance seems to be the highest order of our day, right? As long as somebody's intentions are good, then let them say what they will. The genuine Christian will not lay aside loving kindness and gentleness, but they will contend for the truth.

They will consider those who add to or subtract from the gospel of Jesus Christ dogs and evildoers. We must hold firm the gospel once for all delivered to the saints because it's good for people.

We must not tolerate false teachers. And beloved, I will tell you that they are in our backyard and they're influencing your friends and your co-workers and your classmates and your family.

There are false teachers abounding around us. The dogs that Paul is referring to were not the domestic cedokine that may come to your mind.

This is not your lap dog that he's referring to here, but they were wild, ravenous, dangerous dogs. In fact, he's doing a turn of phrase here because often the Jews referred to Gentiles as dogs and here he's calling Jews who would lead the Gentiles astray from the true gospel of Jesus Christ dogs.

[22 : 01] They were dangerous men that he's talking about here. He's calling these teachers destructive for the good of people. He further declares their teaching evil and calling them evil doers.

Beloved, we tend to give ear to many false teachers because of this presumed good intent. Paul does no such thing and exhorts us to the same.

And let me just as an aside say of pastors who are false teachers, they bear a responsibility for the word that they preach. We can be heartbroken for them, but they have the same text.

It is inerrant and it is sufficient and all they need to do is open it and read it. Deliver it to their people. They really have no excuse and I can tell you they'll have no excuse on the day of judgment.

If we're going to love our community with the love of Christ, we must be discerning. We must help people. We must lead them to the truth, the truth that is safe for us and for them.

[23 : 13] We must look out. We must each of us be more and more like the Berean brothers and sisters we can read about in Acts chapter 17.

Paul came to them, to the Jews in Berea, teaching them of the gospel of Jesus Christ, saying this Jesus is the Messiah that the Old Testament speaks of. In Acts 17 verse 11 says, they were more noble than those Jews in Thessalonica, who had rejected the gospel because they received the word with all eagerness.

They were willing to be taught something new. What do they do with it? They examine the scriptures daily to see if these things were so. This is how we are meant to be, to hear things, take it, discern it by the scripture, the only standard of truth.

truth. So, genuine Christians look out. Are you working to be trained in the truth? Do you read your Bible?

Do you sit under faithful teaching? Not personality driven teaching, but truth driven teaching.

Someone who's willing to open up the text and show you what it says.

[24 : 29] Help you to see it for yourself. I know we move so fast, but it's why I reference everything. I don't want to just say, and somewhere in Matthew it says. I'm going to give you the reference.

You can go look at it for yourself. This is the standard of truth. Are you part of a community of faith that values the truth?

Genuine Christians look out. Third, genuine Christians worship in the spirit of God. First part of verse three, for we are the circumcision who worship by the spirit of God.

Again, I'll refer to the NASB translation of this verse which renders circumcision as true circumcision. So the NASB calls the one group the false circumcision and the Philippian believers the true circumcision.

You see, circumcision was a sign of the covenant that was always meant to point to a greater reality that will be realized in Jesus Christ. The Old Testament speaks of this.

[25 : 33] Let me give you one example. Jeremiah chapter four, beginning in verse one. If you return, O Israel, declares the Lord, to me, you should return. If you remove your detestable things from my presence and do not waver, and if you swear as the Lord lives in truth, in justice, and in righteousness, the nation shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory.

for thus says the Lord to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, break up your fallow ground and sow not among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, remove the foreskin of your hearts.

O men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, lest my wrath go forth like fire and burn with none to quench it because of the evil of your deeds. The prophet Jeremiah is already getting them to learn, helping them understand that circumcision was not merely an outward thing.

It was meant to be an inward change. Recall Paul's case from Romans chapter 2. I read to you previously verse 28 and 29.

For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical, but a Jew, here God's people, is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart by the spirit, not by the letter.

[26 : 55] His praise is not from man, but from God. Salvation does not come from our keeping of the law because this is impossible. Salvation comes by faith in the completed work of Jesus Christ, imputed or given to us by the power of his spirit.

Let's look briefly at a longer explanation of this in John chapter 4. So join me there if you would to John chapter 4. I'm going to read the account of the Samaritan woman at the well.

This sets up the same problem of, in this case, a woman, not these Judaizers, but a woman who was looking to the outward expression of what it meant to belong to God.

And Jesus says something striking and helpful too here. So we're going to begin to verse 1 and I'll read fairly quickly and maybe pause and make some remarks along the way. I don't have any remarks planned, but we'll see how it goes.

Beginning in verse 1. Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John, although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples, he left Judea and departed again for Galilee.

[28 : 11] And he had to pass through Samaria. Now Samaria was an area of the land where people who were half-breeds lived.

People who in the return from exile had gone intermarried amongst the people of the land, so they were seen as lesser people. They were kind of cast out from the Jewish purity otherwise.

They were looked down on people. So verse 5. So he came to a town of Samaria called Sakaar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, so Jesus wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well.

It was about the sixth hour midday. A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, give me a drink. For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, how is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria, for Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

Jesus answered her, if you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you, give me a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water. The woman said to him, sir, you have nothing to draw water with and the well is deep.

[29 : 20] Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself as did his sons and his livestock. Jesus said to her, everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again.

The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life. So Jesus is speaking metaphorically of life of the spirit and she's still thinking real practically, right?

She just wants to have her physical thirst met. Verse 15, the woman said to him, sir, give me this water so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here Jesus said to her, go call your husband and come here.

So he's exposing her sinfulness. He's showing her her need of living water. The woman answered him, verse 17, I have no husband. Jesus said to her, you are right in saying I have no husband, for you have had five husbands and the one you now have is not your husband.

What you have said is true. The woman said to him, sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshipped on this mountain where they are, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.

[30 : 37] So she's getting it, right? Jesus is teaching her a spiritual thing. She's recognizing her sinfulness and she's trying to understand how it is she's to be restored to God. We worship here, but you say we're supposed to worship there.

Outward sign. Verse 21, Jesus said to her, woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.

You worship what you do not know, we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming and is now here when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.

God is spirit and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth. inner devotion, change of heart. We will do things as outward expressions of who we are, but at the core of it, we must be fundamentally changed.

We're going to worship in the spirit of God because we have the spirit of God. And I think in this moment, she's being changed.

[31 : 52] verse 25, the woman said to him, I know that Messiah is coming, he who is called Christ. When he comes, he will tell us all things.

And Jesus said to her, I who speak to you am he. So, we worship God in the spirit of God.

We are given the ability to bring forth fruit, bring forth devotion to God because we have the spirit of God. So, do you place confidence in anything other than the power of the spirit of Christ to effectually apply the work of Christ on your behalf?

If you place confidence of your worship in the mode of worship, in the feelings you have in worship, all the good things you do, it's very likely that it's misplaced.

Many of you know I worked for some time at a local university called Truett McConnell and I was the director of admissions and part of the way the school expressed that it was a Christian college

is that the application had a testimony section on it.

[33 : 01] We didn't grade them. It wasn't like you got demoted points and couldn't get into the school if you weren't truly a believer. It was just a way of saying, oh, don't miss the fact that we are a Christian school. How people got to that point and missed it, I don't know, but they seemed to.

And I had to stop reading most of them expressed the things I do that make me a Christian.

And I go to church and I go on mission trips and I go and like listing out the things that are these evidences in their minds that they were in fact in the faith, but very little talk about the completed work of Jesus Christ.

Do we have evidences that we're in the faith? Absolutely. But more than that, when you're sharing your testimony, you want to talk about the completed work of Jesus, right? Because it's because of that that we're found in Christ and we can worship in the Spirit of God.

So genuine Christians worship in the Spirit of God. Fourth, genuine Christians, glory in Christ Jesus. Never fear, these are going to get faster. Glory in Christ Jesus, the last half of verse 3, and glory in Christ Jesus.

[34 : 11] John MacArthur in his commentary on this text stated, glory describes boasting with exultant joy about what a person is most proud of. I really like that, and I knew I couldn't pass off exultant as my own word.

So, John MacArthur said, glory describes boasting with exultant joy about what a person is most proud of, right? It's what we brag about.

Genuine Christians know that we have nothing to boast in except for the person and work of Jesus Christ. If we glory, we glory in him.

We do not commend ourselves to God or to anyone else by anything that we have done, but by what God has done. 2 Corinthians chapter 10 verse 17 and 18, let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.

For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends. in contrast, the false Christian boasts in their works.

[35 : 19] This must not be and will not be so among genuine Christians. To be a Christian is to be humbled before God.

So, do you glory in Christ alone. Would you say that you are accepted by God because of Jesus and because of Jesus alone?

Do you find yourself believing that you have anything to offer God apart from Christ? Genuine Christians, glory in Christ Jesus.

And lastly, genuine Christians, put no confidence in the flesh. You see this in the last part of verse 3. The flesh represents our unredeemed humanness.

It represents any work that we can do apart from the working of God in us. Genuine Christians recognize that the words of Jesus in John 6 verse 63 are true.

[36 : 20] He said, it is the spirit who gives life. The flesh is no help at all. And agree with Paul's declaration in Romans 7 verse 18, for I know that nothing good dwells in me that is in my flesh.

Genuine Christians put no confidence in our flesh. We'll explore this idea much further next Lord's day. The genuine Christian places no confidence in the flesh because the genuine Christian knows that they have no reason to place confidence in the flesh.

The genuine Christian is aware of their own sin brokenness apart from the delivering grace of Jesus Christ. Galatians chapter 6 beginning in verse 12.

This might feel a little bit familiar to you. As a quick pause, I am so thankful for how often the Lord knits together our services.

I know that you don't have the text for the morning living in your head, but I often do. I've been preparing notes all week. how often the cross references used, this text, at least a portion of it, maybe more of it, I'm not sure now, Darrell read this morning.

[37 : 40] I think it was just verse 14 that he read this morning. Some songs that we sang earlier directly speak to this very issue that we're talking about. It's just a glorious thing that the Lord orders our time.

Even as we're making plans, he plans in and through our planning. So Galatians chapter 6, beginning in verse 12, it is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh who would force you to be circumcised and only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.

These are Jewish people who wanted to take up Christianity but didn't want to leave behind Judaism because they were being persecuted for being Christian. So they still were keeping these outward signs and convincing others to do the same.

Verse 13, for even those who are circumcised do not themselves keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. But far be it for me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world. For neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. So do you ever place any measure of confidence confidence in your flesh?

[38 : 57] It should not be so. Now if you are in Christ this morning, I hope in looking at these things you have been encouraged that you've been able to say, I do rejoice in the Lord.

I care to be discerning. I want the true gospel to be preached for my good and for the good of others. I don't think that I can worship God unless by the Spirit of God.

I glory in Christ Jesus and I put no confidence in the flesh. I hope this is massively encouraging to you. Paul here in the text would call you brothers, brothers, beloved.

It's a wonderful thing to be found in Christ and as we're gauging out whether or not we are in Christ to see evidence that we are in fact in him.

If you have any concern of this this morning, if you're just not sure, let me just invite you to repent and believe. To recognize that you have nothing to offer, that's the beauty of the gospel, that you need nothing to offer except your faith.

[40 : 08] Just believe, just believe that Christ came, he lived a life that we could not live, perfect righteousness, he fulfilled every requirement of the law, that he died the death that you deserve, so that by faith in him you can have his righteousness, God will see you, declare you righteous, and that your punishment will be taken away by him.

Believe that he's resurrected, that he's seated at the right hand of the Father, that he rules over all things, that he has sure promises for you, one day he will return for you, throw yourself on the abundant mercy of God in Christ.

grace. It's a wonderful free offer of grace that will cost you everything, but it is so worth it. Let's pray together.