

Grace and Peace

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: 28 May 2023

Preacher: Jack Gamble-Smith

[0 : 0 0] Amen. If you will open your Bibles with me, we'll be in Galatians, or I think it'll be, yep, it'll be on the screen as well.

If you're in a Pew Bible, I think it's page 1168, the book of Galatians, and I'll be reading just the first five verses of the first chapter. Galatians 1, 1 through 5.

Okay, Galatians 1.

Paul, an apostle not sent from men nor by a man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised him from the dead.

And all the brothers and sisters with me to the churches in Galatia, grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory forever and ever.

[1 : 1 4] Amen. And these first five verses we just read are the introduction, as you can tell, obviously, to the book of Galatians.

And they are what commentators often call a salutation, is kind of the formal word for what they are. And you might be wondering, if you have one sermon on Galatians, why preach the salutation?

That's like someone, if you gave them only five minutes of a movie to choose, they chose the intro credits, or reading the heading of an email and not the body. There's nothing really valuable in the salutation.

I think we just kind of all skip past that part when we get to Galatians or any other book in the Bible. But I think there actually is a lot of value in the first couple verses of any book of the Bible. This is the longest salutation, if you look at Paul's letters, of any of his letters.

And essentially, everything that is in the rest of the book of Galatians is packed, crammed into these first five verses, essentially. So actually, if I have to preach one, if I only get one message in the book of Galatians to you guys, the first five verses are the verses that I would choose to do it from.

[2 : 2 2] Because the whole theology of the letter is packed into these first few verses if you read them very carefully. So that's just a tip as you're reading them. Look at the words that are chosen in these first few verses and watch them as they kind of flower out in the rest of the letter.

And you see Galatians, Galatians is a book, and one of the main themes or motifs throughout the whole book, if you read it, is the idea of slavery and freedom.

Slavery and freedom is one of the main metaphors that's used. And you can see that if you look right in verse four. It says, Christ came to rescue us. Rescue, you hear that word.

And later in chapter four, Paul tells the Galatians that they are no longer slaves. And at the beginning of chapter five, Paul writes, for freedom, Christ is set us free.

And then he tells the Galatians something that you wouldn't think you would ever have to tell a freed slave. Paul tells them, stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

[3 : 23] Why would anyone have to tell a freed slave not to go back to slavery? Why would they even be tempted to go back to slavery? Why would he have to ask them to stand where they are?

And you see, it's for the same reason, if you've read through your Bible, that the Israelites in the wilderness dreamed of Egypt, the slavery that they had been redeemed from. It's the same reason that Gomer, Hosea's wayward wife, kept sneaking back to the brothel again and again.

And it's the same reason that if you were to read the end of the book of 1 Peter, Peter has to write, this is the true grace of God. And then what does he say? He says, stand firm in it.

This is the true grace of God. Stand firm in that grace. And you see, hopefully you're starting to see if, you know, if you hear that, the human heart actually has a hard time with grace, which is a weird thing.

The human heart is a really strange thing. You see, the guilty, tired heart won't just naturally think of grace as the answer to the problem that it's facing. No, the human heart actually longs for a way to redeem itself.

[4 : 36] And when the heart realizes that there's just no way to ever redeem itself, it just can't do enough, then it just retreats back into sin again. And it's just a cycle between trying to redeem itself and falling back into sin.

It doesn't think of grace. And the first thing that Paul says to them, to these Galatians in verse 3, is that you need grace and peace again.

You need grace and peace again. And that's the first heading, is grace and peace. That's what they really need. And if you look at verse 3, it says, grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

And as readers of the New Testament, we'd likely pass by this expression of grace and peace kind of quickly. We wouldn't ever stop and think much about it. It's kind of like saying, hope you guys are doing well or wish you all the best, right?

That's all he's saying by grace and peace. But I think there's more to it. I think this is Paul in some way, if you actually really think about what he's saying, it's kind of a shorthand for the gospel in some ways. See, grace was a standard Greek greeting at the time.

[5 : 39] But if you know anything about the book of Galatians, you realize grace is also what's at issue in this letter. That what's at stake here. The issue here was one of grace.

See, the Galatians had been told that they needed to be circumcised if they wanted to find God's favor. That was the lie that they had begun to believe, that they had to do this one last thing. They had to be circumcised if they would truly be acceptable to God.

And that might sound a bit silly and very irrelevant here this evening in 2023, because I bet if we were to have a hand-raising system of how many of you are struggling tonight, the thing that keeps you up is whether or not the circumcision issue probably isn't our main issue here tonight.

But I think we would be wrong to just dismiss their problem too quickly. It would misunderstand how sin really works.

And we have to ask the question, what was it, what about circumcision was so tempting to the Galatians? Or why had they believed that they needed to be accepted before God again? What was it that they had accepted?

[6 : 46] The 19th century theologian, Gerhardus Voss, said sin essentially takes three forms. Sin takes three forms. Prophet, priest, and king.

Sin takes those three forms. Just as Christ is prophet, priest, and king, sin demands to be prophet, priest, and king in our lives. It wants those spots that Christ deserves in your life.

It wants to fight for those things in your life. And you see, this is how sin works. Sin is a false prophet who whispers lies to you. That's what sin does. It whispers lies to you. And the next thing that sin does is it's a false priest who tells us that we must do more.

If we ever wish to stand before God, we just have to do a little bit more. That's how it's a false priest to us. And then sin becomes something more.

It's a tyrant king that once we've believed the lie and accepted that we have to do something more to stand before God, then it rules us. Sin has mastery over us. And it enslaves us.

[7 : 46] And that's how we get to this issue of slavery. And you can see that reality playing out with the Galatians here. So what was told to them? The false prophet of sin whispered to the Galatians and said, there is something else you must do to earn God's favor in your life.

That was what sin told it. And the lie was priestly in nature. It said, if you want to stand before God and have him pleased with you, you must go find just one more lamb to slaughter. Just one more thing.

Just circumcision. Just one more thing. And then God will be pleased with you. And because these words and these ideas really begin to sink into the hearts of the Galatian people without even realizing it, they had a new king in their life.

They were slaves to a new cruel master. One who required their own perfection. One who required just a little bit more of them. And that had ruined grace for them entirely.

And as you hear that, you can probably hear those things and how they play out in your own life. And hopefully you can begin to see how beautiful and freeing it is of who Christ was always intended to be for us.

[8 : 54] He was made to be our prophet, our priest, and our king. See, as prophet, what does Christ tell us? Christ tells us we can find our rest in him and that he loves us while we are still sinners.

And that he actually came for us in our sin. And what does he say as priest? Christ says as priest, I have made a once and for all sacrifice for you. And if you try to go find another lamb to place upon the altar, my sacrifice is actually no good for you anymore.

You accept mine or you can't add anything to it. And as king, he says, I will be a kind ruler to you. I would never oppress you.

I would never hurt you. You see, the real problem was that the Galatians had separated, here's the real problem. They had separated grace from the person of Christ.

And they had to go do just one more thing to get grace and it didn't involve Christ. And if you know much about church history, this was really the problem that infected the church in the medieval ages.

[9 : 58] You see, the idea was that grace was a substance that you had to go out and get. Just like your car needs to be topped up with petrol after a long drive, you need to be topped up with grace after a long week.

That was kind of the idea of it. And this is actually where the phrase means of grace that we use so much comes from. You had to come to church and participate in the Lord's Supper just to be topped up with grace, to get some more grace back into your life.

And you had to confess your sins just to get a little bit more grace back in your life that you had lost throughout the week. You needed just a little bit more of a top up. And this thinking has weirdly lingered even through the Reformation.

And it's still in our minds that we just need to be topped up with a little bit more grace. But it forgets what the heart of the Reformation was all about. The spark that lit the Reformation was that grace wasn't something you went out and got.

You see, the Reformation was all about that grace had a name. And his name was Jesus. In other words, as the text says in verse 3, grace comes from Jesus Christ and nowhere else.

[11 : 04] Which means that grace has come. And if you've been united to Christ, you never need another drop of grace because you are united to grace himself. And you begin to see the problem that Galatians were facing.

They were being told that they needed a top up of grace. And that ran contrary to the whole of the work of Christ. And that top up would come through an act that they did.

And the little lie in all of that was that they still needed grace. And the deeper lie was that you could get grace apart from the person of Christ. That was the deep lie that had sunk into their hearts.

And that's why it says in verse 6, you've deserted not just the gospel, but if you look, it says you've deserted him. In other words, you've walked away from him to go find grace somewhere else.

Grace had already come and his name was Jesus. And if you went on a trek to find grace anywhere else, you had left the only place that you could find grace behind. And the reality is until they understood this grace, until we understand how grace actually works, we will never find peace in our lives.

[12 : 18] Ever. Peace will never be in our life until we understand where grace is actually found. That's why grace and peace is what he offers to you.

And the word peace is probably a spin on a standard Hebrew greeting at this time. It's the idea of shalom. It speaks of peace and freedom, of health, of rest from battle and strife.

You see, because the Galatians had misunderstood grace, their lives were in absolute turmoil, unrest. Look down at verse 7 and it just shows you there are some who, you see that?

There are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel. Trouble you. The Galatians' hearts were in unrest. They were disturbed. They were unsettled.

The idea of being troubled is being stirred up or shaken, thrown into violent confusion. Why? Because, again, they had changed the gospel. They had looked for grace outside the person of Christ.

[13 : 18] There is no rest for the one who thinks he has to earn God's favor. He will forever be pillaged with discouragement and have your joy ransacked.

You just can't do enough. It's exhausting to have to work for the favor of someone else your whole life. Think of someone like Martin Luther who would go sleepless nights and through fits of terror just trying to figure out how do I earn God's smile.

How do I actually earn the favor of God? Unrest. See, the lie of sin is that peace comes only through our deeds, but the truth of the gospel is that peace comes only through grace.

There's no other way to have peace in your life. And I would just maybe say this evening, if you're coming this evening and your soul is disturbed, or if you're sitting there and you're thinking, you know, I haven't had peace in a long time, and you know that in your life, a good question to begin to ask yourself is, what have I started believing in my life?

If peace has been absent, what have you started believing? Maybe subtly. What gospel have you begun to preach to yourself? Have you begun to think that if grace is somewhere outside the person of Christ, disturbed describes the effect of the graceless gospel in the mind and hearts of these Christians.

[14 : 35] You add one deed to the gospel and it will not let your soul rest, because what you believe really, really matters. Let me just try to give you an example of that. This letter is called a polemical letter, and polemics is probably a word that has a negative connotation for all of us in this room.

How many of you have ever heard, like, he's a very polemical person, you just want to start spending time with this person. But this letter is called a polemical letter, and it kind of rubbed me the wrong way for a while. But when you begin to understand that what you believe actually matters, then all of a sudden polemics become very important.

Let me just try to give you an example of that. There are a lot of students in this church, and let's say that two of you students, wherever you are, two of you students were at the university, and you applied, and you were in this gripping field of random French literature that you just think needed to be explored and studied for the world to see.

And so you both, two of you both apply for funding for this program that you think, you know, this French literature just needs to be studied. And so you submit this proposal, and then you open up your email.

One day you both open up your email, and both of you have been rejected. The funding is not there. You do not receive the funding. And you meet up for coffee to talk about how you've both been rejected for this funding.

[15 : 56] One of you comes to coffee, and you're just angry. You just can't believe that they don't see the value of this rare form of literature that you think needs to be studied. And you say to your friend, you know what, I'm going to show them.

I'm going to study even harder. One day they're going to come, and they're going to sit in my lectures, and they're going to read my books about French literature, and they'll pay that day. And yet you have a completely different response.

Your response is, you know what, you throw away all your French literature books, and you say, you know what, it really wasn't that good of a topic, and, you know, I'm really not that smart, and you know what, they're really right.

What caused this different reaction between you and your friend? Why would you respond differently? It's not the circumstance, because you had the exact same circumstance, and that you responded differently to it. You see, the thing that created the difference was what you believed about yourself.

What you believed about yourself shaped the way you viewed the world and shaped the course of your life. You each believed something different about yourself, and that changed the rest of your life. And you see, that's why your beliefs are important, because we all filter all of life through the lens of our beliefs.

[17 : 05] All of life is filtered through the lens of our beliefs. And if you believe the wrong things, you will think, feel, and live in the wrong ways for the rest of your life. Your beliefs hold the reins of your emotions, and ultimately the reins of your entire life.

And that's what Paul is telling the Galatians. He's saying, Galatians, somewhere along the line, you believed a lie. And that lie is buried so deep down that you don't even realize it has poisoned everything about the way you view the world.

See, he's telling a bunch of people who profess to be believers, who meet for church on Sunday, who sing songs together, you think you know the gospel, but you actually don't. You think you're earning God's favor, but you've actually abandoned him.

And that's a really scary reality to read. A simple belief can poison every corner of your life, and that's how easily it can happen. If your life is feeling warped, and your emotions seem off, and your thoughts run away, the first question is, what are we believing?

What have we begun to accept about grace in our life? And I just wonder how our souls are this evening. Are we, are our souls turning? Are we in turmoil? There's a close connection between what you believe about Christ and how tense and tight and twisted your soul and mind are.

[18 : 21] Are you troubled this evening? And if so, ask yourself this, what have I done with the gospel? Or even better, what do I think about the person of Christ? So Paul offers the Galatians freedom.

He offers them rest from strife. And notice that the order is important. This is what is at the heart of this letter. Grace must precede peace. If you just fight for peace, you'll never get either of them.

And it's the grammar of the gospel. And immediately in this letter, in shorthand form, Paul is pushing the gospel into them. Grace and peace. Grace and peace.

Trying to get them to see that peace, that thing that they so long for, only flows from grace. Grace. And here's the message for us this evening. If you're here and you feel like you always need a top up of grace.

If you're here and you think, you know what, I'm actually, I don't have much peace really in my life. And maybe you're saying, maybe I've tampered with the gospel in my own life in some subtle ways. Here's the reality for you.

[19 : 25] Be with Christ. Don't do things so that you would be with him. Be with him. Enjoy him. Because the second you try to earn his favor, you're telling your heart that you need more grace from him in order to have peace.

And the only way to peace is to realize you have more grace than you could ever, ever use this side of glory. And if they truly believed this, it would lead to their rescue. And that's the second thing that Galatians needed was their rescue.

If the first is grace and peace, it's rescue, deliverance. Look with me at verse 4. It says, Who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age.

To rescue us. This has the idea of setting free. Believers are set free. And look what he gave himself specifically for. He gave himself for our sins.

Do you see that in the text? For our sins. See, if Satan can't get us as a church to just forget about Jesus, he'll try to convince us that Jesus came to do everything but what he really came to do.

[20 : 30] See, I came up yesterday evening on the train. And I had the privilege of being hosted by Judy and Norman. And I came up because Joe reached out to ask if I would come and preach while he was away.

And if when I woke up this morning, just to clarify, this did not happen. But if when I woke up this morning, Judy and Norman said over breakfast, You know, we thought it would be great to take you around the city this morning.

To see the university. To walk on the beach. There's this really good brunch place. Like, you're in Aberdeen. You should really see Aberdeen. And, you know, if there's time, we'll definitely be at church.

For sure. If there's time after that. How silly would that be? I came to preach. This is what I came to do. That was the whole point. But how often do we forget what Jesus came to do?

We say he came to do everything else, but the thing he said he came to do for. And it says he came for our sins. He came for our sins. And yet how often we try to make him into someone who came to transform politics.

[21 : 31] Or as an advocate of some kind of change that we want done. Or as an interesting topic to debate. Or some form of literature that we enjoy reading every while. And yet when we sin, we distance ourselves from Jesus.

Because surely he won't accept us in our sin. But that's like going to your doctor only when you want to hear a joke and for financial advice. But not going to your doctor when you're sick.

Afraid you're going to get him sick. That's what your doctor is there for. However, Jesus came himself for our sins. He came for sins. And there's a reason that sinners clung to Jesus so closely during his earthly ministry.

And it's because he solved the exact problem that they had. They had sin. And they saw this person who could fix their problem of sin. And notice that the verse says sins.

Plural. Sins. Not just sin. See the grace that comes in the person of Christ. Is not just slapped like a sticker over your life. And you can tuck all of your sins underneath it.

[22 : 37] The blood of Christ is carefully applied to each and every one of your little sins in your life. Christ died with each of your sins in mind. To that resentful comment you made.

To that thought that you had. To this. Christ considered all of those and died for those specifically. The blood of Christ is carefully applied to each and every one of your sins.

And that plural sin should give us comfort. Because you can rest knowing that the specific sin that is plaguing you is considered and covered specifically by the blood of Christ.

And how does Christ solve this problem of sin? What does he do? How does he solve this problem? Look again at verse 4. What did he do? It says he gave himself.

He gave himself to solve this problem of sin. His person. Himself. Is the solution that sin has. Is the solution to the problem of sin. And this is where faith comes in.

[23 : 37] This is where the idea of faith comes in. Faith is just as one writer put it. I really like this. Quote. Enclosing Christ in our hearts from all sides. Enclosing Christ in our hearts from all sides.

See if you're going to be free from the slavery of sin. You need to stop listening to sin as your prophet. Stop accepting sin as your priest. Stop bowing to sin as your king.

Instead what does Christ as your prophet say to you this evening? He says I've given myself for you. And applied my very life to you. So that you are freed from sin. As priest Christ says my whole life on earth I suffered for you.

My whole life I suffered for you. Every day I bore the wrath of God in your stead. Even in the womb I obeyed for you where you disobeyed. You think you need to be circumcised Galatians?

I was circumcised for you. The fear you struggle with at night? I was awake, alone, praying for you through many nights. The worry that you have? I was so anxious I sweated blood so that you wouldn't have to be.

[24 : 42] The guilt you feel? I felt more guilt on the cross than you could ever bear to imagine. And as king Christ says because of all of that. Because of all that I have done for you.

Can't you trust me to do what's best for you? I'm not a king who will take from you. I'm not a king who will demand things from you. I'm a king who gives myself for you.

And says I want you to. I do this because I want you to have peace in your life. See, God doesn't just comfort us with obscure abstractions.

I think too often we think of the comfort of God in abstractions. But he said, look at the life of Christ in the Gospels. As you read the Gospels, look at the life of Christ. Look at my tears and hunger and sorrow.

And realize I did that for you. I resonate with you and your weaknesses. And I suffered so you wouldn't have to. So that you could be free. That's the rescue that Galatians needed.

[25 : 39] That's the rescue that we need. And that's the only way that we'll be free. Is by believing that. And the third and final thing the Galatians needed from this passage.

Was they needed to remember their sonship. Their sonship and daughtership. You see, the rescue from slavery was, if you look again, according to the will of our God and Father.

It was an outworking of the kind and long-standing purposes of the Father. And notice that it says, our Father. Our Father. And this really gets to the bottom of his message in this book.

And that's that you're a son. You're a daughter. You're not a slave. He's your father. You're a son and daughter. Not a slave. Yet you've been treating God like he's your taskmaster.

And yet he's your father. And just as a diagnostic test, how would you here this evening know if you're treating God like a master, not like a father?

[26 : 36] How would we know if that was what we were doing this evening? Here's one test. If you look at verse 10, Paul asks them, Am I now seeking the approval of man or of God?

You see that verse 10? Am I now seeking the approval of man or of God? And here's the interesting reality. You can actually tell a lot about your relationship to God by your relationship to other people.

You can tell a lot about your relationship to God by your relationship to other people. And the question is, are you working yourself out trying to earn their favor? Do you find yourself terrified of what others will think of you?

Do you always need to have just the right outfit? Spend time with just the right group of people? Need everyone to think you have the perfect marriage, the perfect children? And why do we do that? Why do we all do that?

Why is that so ingrained in us? And it's because the reality is we're afraid of condemnation. We're afraid that if we don't, the sentence will be put over our life, You are condemned.

[27 : 36] You're condemned. And that right there is something that we've believed. And if we look underneath that reality, if we were to like pull that up, it would show our view of grace. And it would show what we believe about the Father.

And it's because we, underneath, somewhere deep, deep, deep, deep down, we haven't internalized the words fully, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ.

And if we truly believe that reality, our relationship to other people would begin to change, because our relationship to the Father has changed. And here's the reality.

Just because someone, and I need to hear this, just because someone is disappointed with you, doesn't mean the Father is disappointed with you. And this was the struggle of the Galatians, wasn't it? This was the struggle.

A group of people had told them, if you want to earn God's favor, you have to do this thing. And they found themselves bound to the expectation of someone else, because they had a misunderstanding about where grace came from.

[28 : 36] So if we struggle with that, if you're like me, if you struggle with that, because I struggle with that, how do we get out of that slavery? How do we find our way out of this? That bondage we have to other people, and that misunderstanding that we have of grace.

How do we live in light of our sonship and our daughtership? We have to ask the question. Here's the solution. We have to ask the question. What or who tells me that I am a son or a daughter, not a slave?

Where do I go to hear that reality daily in my life? And once we find out where to find that reality, we have to tune our ear to that reality. How do we put that reality before us every single day of our lives?

And the answer actually is found in Romans 8, verse 16. Listen to this. It says, The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

Do you hear that? The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. The interesting thing, just to give you a free grammar lesson, because that's what you all want on a Sunday evening, the Spirit in the Greek is a neuter word.

[29 : 49] I don't even know why I'm telling you this. I know I'm telling you this. It's a neuter word, meaning it doesn't have a gender. So all of the pronouns that refer to it should also be neuter. But the writers of the New Testament break the rules of grammar, and they assign the spirit masculine pronouns.

Do you get that? So they're trying to convince you that the spirit is a personal being. They're breaking the rules of grammar to tell you the spirit is personal, because he tells you things. The spirit testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

One author put it this way. It is the spirit obtained by Christ who affects all the workings of grace in the sinner. It is the spirit obtained by grace who affects all the workings of grace in the sinner.

In other words, Christ gives you the spirit to convince you that you are a son or a daughter, not a slave. That's the spirit's role. Which is why, in conclusion, Paul tells the Galatians to do two things later in the letter.

I can't preach this whole book, but he tells them to do two things if they want freedom. Number one, walk by the spirit. And number two, keep in step with the spirit. That's what he tells them to do.

[30 : 56] To truly be free. Walk by the spirit, keep in step with the spirit. And that's, for those, you've probably heard this before, that's military language. That of marching.

In other words, when the spirit steps, you step. Marching. You step along with the spirit. You keep right in line with him. Move where he moves. Walk as fast or as slow as the spirit walks in your life.

Because you need to hear his reassuring words day after day after day. As you walk alongside the spirit, you have to be right with him. Just really quickly, I was in a marching band when I was in school.

And one of the things that would happen, if any of you had been in a marching band, we had to be in straight lines and we had to be on the right step. And so the person at the end of the row, if you were out of step, would yell at the top of his lungs, guide right, is what he would yell.

In other words, that means you're out of line. Guide right. Either check your feet or check where you are in the line. And I can still hear his words, hear his voice to this day yelling, guide right to me.

[31 : 58] And that is what your life is meant to be. A daily, slow walk with the spirit. And month after month, year after year, you'll grow used to his voice. Except he will not yell, guide right at you.

And so the question is, what will he tell you? What will the spirit tell you? And the reality is he'll tell you of the works of Christ. And I think it was Samuel Rutherford who put it this way.

The spirit sings to you love songs of Christ. Now, some of you might be saying, okay, that's kind of beautiful, kind of weird. What does that actually mean? What does it mean for the spirit to convince you that Christ loves you?

Well, that leads us to the deeper question. What does it mean for Christ to love you? And the Bible tells you what it means to love someone. It's very clear. We don't have to guess what it means to love someone.

1 Corinthians 13. I don't know if anyone's ever told you before to put your name in for love every time in 1 Corinthians 13. 1 Corinthians 13.

[32 : 59] In other words, Jack is patient. Jack is kind. And then you, like, look at the end and you're like, I fail. Like, I'm not good at this, apparently. You see how far short you fall.

How much more effective would it be for our lives if we put Christ's name in there instead of our name in there? In other words, if you want to know what it means for the spirit to convince you that Christ loves you, it's this.

Christ is patient with you. Christ is kind to you. Christ would never dishonor you. He doesn't seek his self-interest, but he lays himself down for you. Christ is not easily angered with you.

He no longer keeps a record of your wrongs. Christ will always protect you. Christ is eminently trustworthy. Christ will always persevere in your stead as your intercessor.

Christ will never fail you. And that's what the spirit says to you. And as you, that's what the spirit tells you if you would but walk and listen to him. And yet, how often our hearts tell you exactly the otherwise.

[34 : 01] That Christ is done with me. That Christ is fed up with me. That Christ is frustrated. That Christ doesn't honor me. That Christ is angry. And that's that old prophetic office of sin, again, that's trying to take the place of Christ.

But if you would yet walk with the spirit, he would tell you. And your life would be changed by those truths slowly, day after day after day after day. And slowly, you would begin to see small signs of growth in your life.

And you wouldn't need to please others so much. Because you would be so accepted and loved by Christ that you would know that reality in your life. And here's the last word.

The more you march right in line with the spirit, the more you will come to know and hear his voice. And hear him telling you, 1 Corinthians 13, but with Christ's name in it towards you. And eventually, eventually, Romans 8 tells us that as you do that, over time, eventually your spirit will cry back to him, Abba, Father.

In other words, it will sink into your soul that you are a son and a daughter and not a slave. And our spirit will know that reality. And that is what the book of Galatians is all about.

[35 : 12] Let me pray for us.