

Philippians 3 | Righteous through Christ

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Date: 30 August 2026

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[0:00] Hello? Are we good? Are we coming through? Sweet. Good morning, everybody. How are we doing this morning?! It's good to see you all. My name is Zach. For those of you that don't know me, I know there's some new faces here, and I need to do better at seeing you guys more often.

Obviously, I'm involved with worship and sometimes pack down and stuff, and I need to make a more intentionality of seeing you guys. But it's honestly such a blessing to have so many new faces, Lord willing that we have even more faces in the future.

But yeah, just such a blessing, and we just hope to echo what Joe said earlier, that you just feel so welcomed and loved to be here. So thank you so much. So as a means of introducing myself even more, one thing about me is that I, for the past five years or so, I've been trying to learn Spanish. I've got to the point now where I can understand somewhat of what Dora is saying, but as a whole, just been using Duolingo, so nothing really special about that. And they said the best way to learn a language is to immerse yourself in the culture.

And everyone that knows me knows that if I went to Central America and South America, I probably wouldn't end up coming back. So the next best thing I found is memes or things on Instagram that I've been sent by.

[1:10] For those of you that remember Marie and Jorge, they oftentimes fill me with these funny joke memes they sent through to me, which if it's in Spanish, the worst thing that you can do to understand anyways is to a joke is if you don't know the punchline and it's in Spanish, there's nothing worse than not knowing a punchline to a joke.

So you have to learn it to be able to learn that. So yeah, so as a result of that, my algorithm just ended up learning all things kind of Latin American. And one thing I came across was this popular trend at the moment currently that is called Flores El Patron.

And basically it's a birthday celebration. And to give you an example, there is this one particular video of this precious young girl, maybe like six years old or something like this.

And she's leaving the school gates and it's a special day because it's her birthday. And her mum has spent maybe like all morning braiding her hair all nice and pristine.

She's got her bright pink Barbie glasses on. She's basically holding on to this unicorn toy so tightly. And it's probably if you grew up like me, that one toy that you were able to open before school that just meant so much to you that you could show your friends throughout the day.

[2:21] And she's got it. And all of a sudden she's walking out the school gates and this loud music starts up. And this guy walks down the road in almost like a cartel uniform. It's hard to explain. With a painted on mustache, a cowboy hat, and this big bouquet of flowers.

And he approaches this little girl and she is overwhelmed. And he gets down on one knee and speaks to this girl. And she's trying to stand there all strong and confident in herself.

And then all of a sudden floods of tears just come over her. And you're just thinking to yourself, what is it that this guy said to her? It's her birthday, for goodness sake. Like, surely you want to build her up with confidence.

What is it that he said? So this is the words he said. To the beautiful birthday princess, these flowers are for you. And they come with a special message from your parents.

They are constantly reminded of how proud they are to have such a well-behaved, intelligent, valiant daughter achieving great things in school. Chase your dreams, little lady.

[3:24] And as always, we love you more than anything. And I think that that perfectly sums up the start of today's sermon, which answers the question, how truly insignificant other things we place value on when compared to the life-giving power of Christ's righteousness.

So we've got a long passage to go through. So if you want to turn your Bibles to Philippians 3, I'm sort of going to, as we're going through, I'll break it down bit by bit instead of reading it all through. So we start in verse 1.

Okay. Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you. So we're going to split this up into four points throughout the sermon.

Point one is going to be coming on the screen. And it's the R's. The righteous can rejoice and remember. So Paul is encouraging those at Philippi to rejoice in the Lord.

And so why did he say this? Well, we can see that the situation of those that they've been told to imitate from last week that Simon so graciously unpacked for us is looking bleak.

[4:37] Paul is in prison. Epaphroditus is sick. Timothy's situation over whether or not he's going to be sent to Philippi is uncertain. And Christianity as a whole, from what we read in Acts, is causing unrest and opposition.

And yet he's telling them to rejoice in the Lord throughout all of that. But notice his tone in that. He's encouraging. And he's almost relaxed, though. It's like in an action movie when the soldier is shell-shocked from all of the explosions going on.

I don't know if many of you have seen Saving Private Ryan on the beach where it's just impacts going on left, right and center. And all of a sudden it's gone from being such a calm, tranquil environment to all of a sudden being everything going on around them.

And you could be sat in this trench, sat in a daze. And then this captain comes along and wipes away the mud and just grabs hold of the shirt and says, here's what we need to do.

And this is kind of exactly what finally means here. Usually when Paul has these comparative structuring to his sentence, like finally concluding, it means a conclusive term.

[5:37] But here it's more of a lock in. Here's what's going to get you through this. He's saying, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. But unlike in the films where there's a false sense of security, where he's sending the soldier back out into battle with an uncertain future, rejoicing in the Lord is a covenant promise that we have strength to be found in the Lord.

And in fact, Isaiah 40, 28 says this. Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary.

His understanding is unsearchable. So that's the reason to rejoice in the Lord, despite their circumstances, despite oncoming persecution. That is the God that they serve.

And so they have every right to rejoice, that the everlasting God is on your side. But see how he also says to write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you.

Paul is setting a standard here about what true discipleship looks like. It doesn't grow tired of reminding others of the promises of God in their lives. Despite circumstances, despite what people may already know, what they've been told 100 times, 101 times, to remind them of who God is in their lives is a clear sign of Paul's intentional heart towards discipling these people.

[7:02] So what excuse do we have if Paul is in prison and he's still finding the time to encourage others? Do you know the God that you serve this morning?

Here's a reminder in Ephesians 2, verses 4 to 8. It says, Lamentations also says, Those are great words to remind us constantly again that we may have heard every Sunday.

The Sunday school answer, Jesus is the answer. Here is laying out who God is, what he's done for us, and why we can have confidence in him. So for those of you writing notes, we move on to point number two.

The righteous have received a reconciler. It's quite a ton of twisty in here. It says, Look out for the dogs. Look out for the evildoers. Look out for those who mutilate the flesh.

So, who are these people that Paul warns us against here? Well, contextually, these are Judaizers outside the church, and they are sowing discord among believers.

[8:47] Judaizers were those that believed in Jesus, but added circumcision and the Mosaic law as a necessary means by which to fulfill the fullness of their grace in front of the Lord.

So why does he call them such strong names? Well, dogs was a Jewish name for pagan Gentiles.

So it's kind of like an inside joke that they were using, or that Paul used against them as a means of saying, This is how they are categorizing you and seeing you as susceptible and easy.

And a good way of describing this, as many of you know, there are two sides to Hampshire. There is the dark side, and the light side, where all the light, I think, reflects off the silverware from all the trophies that they've won.

Some have called it maybe the eighth wonder of the world. I don't want to brag about it. But oftentimes, the names given to those are those people that live there in the sunny side. They're called skates. And then over here, they're called scummers. I don't know anyone that's ever used that phrase in. But basically, the analogy here is, is if Paul was explaining to someone from Southampton, Oh, you know, you're like the skates.

[10:06] And the comparative side there is kind of adding a bit of a sting to, you're trying to be everything Southampton, for who knows what reason. But here is, you are acting like a skate.

And so the reality is, is that it's a little slide dig at them there. But also, it's a double image, because the real dogs would harass people in the street.

And this is what they were doing. So outside the churches, they were coming up to people before they entered, and kind of pressing them on what they knew, pressing them on the circumcision, pressing them on the Mosaic law.

And these people were entering into a building of faith, and knowing who Jesus is, but being rattled by all of these other opinions coming their way. And he calls them evil doers as well.

Again, another play on words, evil doers. Those that feel as though doing the law is their means by which they can receive grace. And in part also evil, and the fact that they believe that that is the way by which to attain mercy from the Lord.

[11:08] He's also using those that mutilate the flesh. In Leviticus 21, we talk about those that use circumcision in ways that were mutilated in the flesh.

He's referring back to the Old Testament, and using this wording again, to have yet another dig at these people. So each of these examples that Paul is laying out, he's saying to them, look, this is your intention, this is what you are.

And he's using every part of their own law against them as a means by which to describe them. But what fights your confidence in Christ to believe in him today, and to believe that he is enough?

Oftentimes that can be like a mentality that we get drummed into by the world, that we just have to work hard for everything. And if we work hard enough, we'll find it. And it can quickly seep into our church mentality, into our Christian lives.

So what would they look like today? Anyone who believes in a gospel where Jesus isn't enough. And oftentimes we do see that. We see, you can see people oftentimes in the street being asked the classic Ray Comfort question, do you believe that you're a good person today?

[12:17] And many people will be able to list off, oh yeah, I've done this, I've helped an old lady cross the road, I've held a door for somebody, that I've given to charity. And those by which they quantify who they are in themselves to believe that they're a good person.

But that's what Paul is warning against here. It's similar to Joe's equation when he had the, from his sermon. But this is a new equation. So lock in with them.

It's not so much the mass with this one, but it's Jesus plus whatever equals eternity with our creator. So whatever you add to that, Jesus plus hard works, Jesus plus extra praying, Jesus plus all of these things that we can quantify, even within church actions, to believe that we are gaining ourselves a further place in the kingdom is just redundant.

There is nothing that we can add to Jesus that he hasn't already completed on the cross. Even scripture is clear. John 14, 6 says this.

Jesus said to him, I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. Acts 4, 12 says, And there is salvation in no one else.

[13:35] For there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. So what about the righteous? Well, for us, our worship comes from confidence in Christ, not in our own flesh.

Verse 3 says, For we are the circumcision who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh.

Notice again the reminder from Paul, like back in verse 1, his response to righteousness in Jesus should be worship out of adoration, not works out of obligation.

I'll say that again. Our, what, Jesus, if I could say it right. Our response to righteousness in Jesus should be worship out of adoration, not works out of obligation.

So what do I mean by that? Well, Paul is highlighting spiritual transformation, not physical condemnation. There's nothing we can do to add to the work that Jesus accomplished on the cross.

[14:44] And isn't that not only a relief, because, I don't know about you, but the amount of times I've even pulled over to the side of the road to try and help someone with their car and I've got no idea what I'm doing.

And I think to myself, wow, like at this point, I definitely will look at my record of things and times I thought that I was doing something good for the kingdom of God and that can be stroked out. But also, a burden lifted.

I don't know for many of you if you've read the, or seen films of the Pilgrim's Progress, where he comes up to the cross and it's a very great visual imagery of these, the weight of his backpack just overflowing with all of these burdens.

and just kneeling at the foot of the cross and letting them roll away. And I can imagine that many of the things that made up that backpack included trying the hardest to appease God in ways that we were never going to be able to because we couldn't match up to the standard.

So Paul says this in verse four, though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also, if anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more.

[15:55] Circumcised on the eighth day of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews, as to the law, a Pharisee, as to zeal, a persecutor of the church, as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. There's nothing that we can do to earn the favor of God that Christ hasn't already perfected and accomplished.

So the context of what Paul's listing off here, the eighth day circumcision was the Jewish standard by which the earliest point by which you could be circumcised is a declaration of your separation from sin in a physical form.

He was at the tribe of Israel, first king, the tribe of Benjamin, so he kind of held a prestige level from that because if you came from the same city of the king, it's kind of like saying that I came from the same city as the FA Cup 2008 winners.

All of these kind of things. Also, he was not ashamed to be Hebrew. At the time, they culturally also had a lot of people heading towards wanting to be more Greek.

[17:11] I can understand why with their feta cheese salads. But I think that they were ultimately attending things like Roman bars and covering the circumcision in a way that made them out to not give off their identity.

He was the epitome of the law as a Pharisee. He knew the Torah. He understood what it meant to be a religious zealot person.

And he persecuted those who didn't uphold the law as well. So he was even talking about his zeal went so far in his religious understanding of his works that he even went to the extent of persecuting those that stood for an alternate understanding of the Torah to what he knew and had researched and grown up in so much that, yeah, he was willing to push those people and say, look, I'm not just opposing them.

I'm persecuting them. He says that he was blameless at the end as well to conclude in a way that you can't get much better than that.

But also for those of you that know the story of the rich young ruler that came in the night to see Jesus and he said, Father, what must I do to inherit eternal life?

[18:27] And he says, keep my commandments. And he said, those I've kept from my youth. He was just sort of saying, look, yeah, I'm perfect. I've kept all those things from my youth. And that was the reality that kind of, that Paul had here that he understands that those zealots or those, sorry, Judaizers outside that were harassing the Christians as they approached the church, that they would have a similar mindset to that of the rich young ruler, that they would naturally believe that they were blameless.

But he gave it all up after the road to Damascus. If I could place this in a kind of image for you to understand, it's similar to if there was a university of heaven.

You've got to bear with me on this. It's got some work, some movement in there. but a university of heaven and the dean is sat behind the desk and two CVs get put on the desk. It's yours and Paul's. And yours could say, yours or mine could say, it goes to church often, is written on your CV. Paul's, on the other hand, says, it's part of the most elite members of religious society.

So already you've got a bit of a sweat going on looking over saying, oh, I think he's kind of the guy that they're going to go with here. But it gets better. Yours would say, comes from the city of

Southampton or Portsmouth.

[19:49] His would say, comes from the tribe of Saul, Israel's first king. Again, that ranking. Yours could say, listen to every John MacArthur sermon at this point.

And he could say, memorize the Torah. And the dean says, as he looks at these two CVs on the table, it's just never going to happen, I'm afraid.

And so, even despite yours, even despite Paul's almost pristine CV, he's saying, there's no chance that you're getting into this university.

But at the bottom, there's a small print on both of your CVs that says, Jesus died for you. And he has to get the magnifying glass out to look at it in comparison to all of the stuff that you've tried to put in large font because you've tried to share all of the good assets that you've done in your life and you've just thought, ah, you know, but Jesus died for me as well.

And he says, no, this, this is the reason. You can't minimize that which the Lord has done because this is the one reason today why you are welcome in the blood of the Lamb, not in the blood of circumcision.

[21:07] Titus 3, verse 5, says this, Ephesians 2, verses 8 to 9, says, for by grace you have been saved through faith.

And this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God, not a result of works so that no one may boast. I love the analogies that a lot of the street preachers give of that gift of God.

That if this gift has been given to you, how many times are you given a gift and you have to pay for it? Or there's something in return that the person requires of you. A gift is given freely.

A gift is given with the intention of love, compassion, and kindness from the person giving it to you as a means by which they can prove and show to you how much your worth is to them. It's a free gift of God, not a result of works.

So the third theme, the righteous are renewed in a redeemer. So pick up verse 8. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus, my Lord.

[22:27] For his sake, I've suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him. Not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead, straining toward the goal.

Not that I've already obtained this or I'm already perfect, but I press on to make it my own because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I've made it my own, but one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and straining forward towards what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Paul shows us here by letting go of worldly confidence and suffering for Christ's sake, we are truly responding to the upward call in Christ. But why did he suffer though?

I really struggle with that. If you are in a position where you know that you finally found the truth, why would Paul use such a word as suffering? Like the things that he'd given out, he suffered. Well, because if you think about it, for Paul, his career and his ministry as a Pharisee were one and the same.

Once he gave up his standing in society as one of these elite, almost famous athlete-style members that we would see in our world today, for them, it was these Pharisees, these members of society that everyone looked up to for understanding from religious perspectives everything, the way by which they should live, the way by which the word says that we should talk to one another, deal with one another.

[24:07] And so these were the people of society that were looked up to and there was a great cost to it as well for qualification for Pharisees, for qualification to be even part of the Sanhedrin and things like that.

There was a lot that these people had to give up and go through as a result of that. And so for Paul, he didn't only just give up his ministry and his religious beliefs and that essence of the things, but his whole career as well, everything that defined him up until that point was lost.

The second, that he confessed that Jesus was his sufficient righteousness. But do we still believe there are other ways to gain merit with God?

Oftentimes, I think that because of the uniqueness of Paul's situation, because of the fact that within our society today and oftentimes our culture, we don't necessarily look at these Bible teachers as up on the pedestal of everyone looks up to these guys.

It's usually, like I said, the pop stars, the athletes, those within society that oftentimes excel in those areas of entertainment. But for us, can we still get drawn into that trap?

[25 : 21] Maybe it's the style of worship that we listen to. Oh, I listen to, we just sing purely hymns over here. That's what sets us apart. We, you know, we listen to all of these other worship bands over here that have got five or six members within them that all are excelling at the instruments that they play, that they've been playing since they were young.

Maybe it's even the teaching. Maybe it's the teachers we listen to sometimes. I've heard oftentimes within Christian circles almost like bringing top trumps, as it were, and comparing whose teacher, oh, you listen to that teacher.

Okay, well, I listen to this teacher, so therefore, you know, this teacher here knows all of these things inside out and there's a comparison that's made there. Maybe it's the preachers or theologians we associate with as well that we say, oh, you know, I don't want to even think for myself when I approach the text or when I approach the Word of God.

I just want to take 100% what this person said because that person is going to excel me. Now, within themselves, I'm not saying, this is a massive disclaimer, I'm not saying that within your own right to have a specific preference, to listen to certain music, to listen to certain preachers is the wrong thing.

I'm not saying that at all. But what I am saying is it's important for us to focus on the fact that there shouldn't be this internal judgment or even elitism that can come as a result of believing that these understandings or these teachers or these stars of worship give us a certain elevation when it comes to how we are approached and seen by God.

[26 : 55] It's through Christ and Christ aligned. 1 Corinthians 3, verses 3 to 5 says, For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way?

For when one says, I follow Paul and another, I follow Apollos. Have you not, are you not being merely human? What then is Apollos?

What is Paul? Servants through whom you believe as the Lord assigned to each. Again, it's Paul reiterating here the importance of the fact that who are these people within society.

I can imagine that a lot of, I've even heard people talk from time to time about the first person I want to meet when I get into heaven is Paul. I'd love to pick Paul's brains about these things. Let me tell you now, Paul's not the guy you want to meet first in heaven.

It's Jesus. Okay? So he's just reiterating here, we're just servants. We're just humans. We're vessels by which the Lord is being used and we're trying to point you in the direction of the Lord.

[27 : 58] Paul, in that passage as well, in Philippians 3, reflects that he's not perfect, but that he lives free according to what Christ has called him to do.

Finally, we get on to the last section. The righteous will rise for a reward. Let those of us who are mature think this way.

And if anything, you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. Only let us hold true to what we have attained. Brothers, join in imitating me and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.

for many of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. The end is destruction, their God is their belly and they glory in their shame with minds set on earthly things.

But our citizenship is in heaven and from it we await a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

[29 : 06] Amen. This last passage is simple. We should imitate and encourage one another in the upward calling until the return of Christ and our bodily transformation.

Someone touched on it last week that Timothy and Epaphroditus, these people that Philippi had potentially to look forward to in Timothy but also with Epaphroditus that inquired after them that they are an imitation that we should, that they should look to as a result but only because of the fact that those themselves were imitating Christ and Christ was the ultimate goal.

So how, but how can we encourage one another today? The reality is that they still serve the purpose. They were still a great image to look at because they still lived in accordance with what Jesus had called them to be.

Paul was mindful of their problem. He didn't talk at them. Okay, there's like a, an understanding here that this isn't Corinthians. This isn't the Corinthian church. Paul had a way that he knew how to speak specifically to the people of Philippi and his call was to rejoice in the Lord, to focus, to imitate them, to believe that there is nothing more valuable, nothing that can put you forward in life further than the righteousness of Jesus.

And so, when we encourage one another, having that understanding that there is a whole Bible of knowledge and understanding that we can go to that the Lord has shared with us, but sometimes there's a specific word in there.

[30:39] Sometimes there's a sensitivity to the Spirit that we need to have when encouraging one another to know maybe that today isn't the day that we share about the specifics of, like oftentimes you think of like a job opportunity that you go to and people say, oh, you know, you didn't get it, oh, God's got something better.

It's great. It's a great encouragement. Don't get me wrong. But in the sensitivity of understanding, could we not say that it's raining? could we not say that there is a focus that needs to be had about the fact that in that moment it could be that encouraging somebody that their worth is not found in their job is more of a place to be found.

Oftentimes, do you feel like you see injustice, even selfishness and pride and greed of the world and at the end there, that this place is not my home?

Sometimes, it oftentimes can be that we see everything going on in the news and of course at the beginning of the message, Paul encouraged them to rejoice in the Lord, to keep that focus on the things that are heavenly.

We will look in Philippians 4 at the specifics further of focusing on those things. But as a reminder, Ecclesiastes is one of my favorite books for a lot of people.

[32:06] They think that's such a crazy, crazy thing. But the reality is that by reading Ecclesiastes, you get a greater understanding how meaningless the pursuits of the world are in comparison to understanding who Jesus is.

And once you understand how meaningless they are, you can understand how freeing it is that we live in the world, that we have no chains. We have every ability to be able to share with everyone else about who Jesus is and his meaning because nothing in this world has any value to us other than the things that we are using as a means to show even more glory to God.

Maybe that could be sitting down for fellowship with friends over a good meal. That within itself is not a bad thing but Ecclesiastes talks about, you know, bread is made for laughter. These things where their great glory that the Lord has poured out just great mercy that he's poured out that even in the simple things in creation we can find just simple joys.

I'm reading this book by Francis Chan and he spoke about how one of his friends was in the rainforest and they saw this tree producing tons of cocoa beans and the majority of them were just falling to the ground.

Now the husband and wife that were there at the time had two different responses to it. The husband thought very logical and said man it must frustrate the living daylights out of God that half these cocoa beans are falling to the floor and they're just rotting away and they're never going to be used.

[33:43] And the wife obviously with the sensible understanding said what is it that God made that cocoa bean tree in the forest just simply to produce cocoa beans and that was his purpose.

And he has simple joy in seeing it produce that and that is enough that is sufficient. That's the understanding oftentimes that we can get caught up in is believing that there has to be a logical answer for everything but if we can see the world through this lens that God created the world as a means by which to bring him glory we can see the simple things that draw us closer to him that bring us joy even when everything including the news including these external sources trying to impose in on us all their views and things that we can hold fast to that rejoicing in the Lord.

So I'll close with this the image again of the Flores El Patron this little girl what is it that we're holding on to?

For her it was this this little unicorn toy she had a hold a grip fast on she was stood there in her pride in her strength to be I'm going to be this strong person despite all of the chaos that's going on around me she had her hair pristine everything that for a girl of that age would just be seen as the coolest girl in her class I'm sure but the second she heard how much worth she had in her parents how much they really loved her in spite of everything that she might be thinking that they would see

her worth in her she could stand there and cry and the onion factories always open up whenever I watch that video but yeah just to be in that moment to understand what it is truly to speak life into somebody and often times the comparison can be here as well that this guy walking down the street in a cartel uniform with a painted on mustache looked like maybe one of the stupidest guys dancing really silly and had this big old

JVL speaker blasting out this music but the reality is that he held something that spoke life into that girl it doesn't matter what this guy looked like it didn't matter how bad his dancing was how silly of an impression that he was trying to put on he held the key to life in this girl's eyes and we have that we have an opportunity today to be able to share that life with others it doesn't matter what we look like we hold the answer Jesus is enough Jesus is sufficient his righteousness is enough all we have to do is accept and believe that he is adequate in order to be able to access the father to be able to inherit eternal life and Paul talks about the body the transformation into a new body he's out here struggling at the end of his ministry he's under house arrest there's a lot of speak around whether or not his eyes were completely faded at this point I'm sure he was just almost wasting away or feeling this wasting away and he's got this promise of a new body a new transformation that is what is awaiting those who trust in the Lord and for anyone here today that doesn't know that that doesn't know the depths and the lengths to which Jesus goes in pursuing us to draw us back to him to reveal to us his righteousness and his righteousness alone

[37:17] I'd encourage you to seek out somebody seek out myself seek out Joe on notices we'd love to speak to you about that but I'd love to close with this final song it's a verse from a Stephanie Gretzinger song called no one ever cared for me like Jesus and it says this no one ever cared for me like Jesus his faithful hand has held me all this way and when I'm old and grey and all my days are numbered on the earth let it be known in you alone my joy was found shall we pray heavenly father lord thank you thank you lord that you don't judge us based on our actions lord that we would always fall short of that goal but father thank you that you not only went to the cross lord with a heart willing to die on our behalf lord but that you bared our sin and our shame lord father that we there's no condemnation now for those in

Christ Jesus lord we can look to you and understand that the price has been paid in full lord you said on the cross it is finished father may we have that in our minds lord as we leave here today lord free of the burdens lord free of that which weighs us down to believe that there's things that we need to do in order to gain our salvation lord because that's not what your gospel says but father knowing this truth knowing the righteousness of Jesus lord may we just live our lives as a worship to you father give us minds lord that focus on what it is that you've called us to the upward calling lord as Paul calls it lord the the greater race the run lord straining lord father because we know at the end of it lord we will be reunited with you in heaven father and that is the goal but this world is not our goal father be our wisdom be our encouragement lord be our everything lord in your son's name

Jesus amen father and that is that is the goal of the the the the!
the! the!!