

Are You Ready for the End?

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[0:00] The last chapter of Daniel, chapter 12. At that time, Michael, the great prince who protects your people will arise.

! There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time, your people, everyone whose name is found written in the book, will be delivered. Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake. Some to everlasting life. Others to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens. And those who lead many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever. But you, Daniel, close up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end.

Many will go here and there to increase knowledge. Then I, Daniel, looked and there before me stood two others. One on this bank of the river and one on the opposite bank.

[1:06] One of them said to the man clothed in linen, who is above the waters of the river. How long will it be before these astonishing things are fulfilled?

The man clothed in linen, who is above the waters of the river, lifted his right hand and his left hand toward heaven. And I heard him swear by him who lives forever, saying it will be for a time, times and half a time.

When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things will be completed. I heard, but I did not understand.

So I asked my Lord, what will be the out? What will the outcome of all this be? He replied, go your way, Daniel, because the words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end.

Many will be purified, made spotless and refined. But the wicked will continue to be wicked. None of the wicked will understand. But those who are wise will understand.

[2:17] From the time that the daily sacrifice is abolished and the abomination that causes desolation is set up, there will be one thousand two hundred and ninety days.

Blessed is the one who waits for and reaches the end of the one thousand three hundred thirty five days. As for you, go your way till the end.

You will rest. And then at the end of the days, you will rise to receive your allotted inheritance. How long?

There are many questions in the Christian life. Sometimes your heart cries out, why? Why is this happening? Why does it have to be this way?

Sometimes our heart cries out. Where do I go? Where do I go? Or when? When will I be happy again?

[3:19] Those questions come and go. But there is one question that keeps coming back again and again. And it's how long? How long will this world go on like it is?

I heard something of that. How long? In our brother's prayer. How long until everything is made right? How long until justice is finally and fully done?

How long will I be broken? Well, Daniel ends with this question. And I wonder, do you ever ask that question?

If you are a Christian, I know you do. Down in the depths of your heart, it's always echoing and rattling around there. How long am I going to be here?

And if you are, if you aren't a Christian, you probably don't ask that question. Because while things are bad in some ways, there's any other place that you would want to be.

[4:26] There's no other place that you would want to go. Things aren't what you would want them to be, but this is your world. But if you're a child of God, this question does echo down in the deep places of your heart all the time.

And in many situations, you want to go home, don't you? You want to go home. And so you can't help asking, how long?

How much further is it going to be? Well, the book of Daniel ends on a note of hope and of a warning as we wait to go home, as we ask the question, how long?

And so this evening is the last lap. It's the last time around Daniel, at least for a while for us. We met Daniel when he was 14 years old, and now he's about 86 or so.

He's an old gentleman, and he's lived quite a life. When he was young, he resisted the king, and he and his three friends stood up to the king.

[5:32] He resisted the king's affluence and promise of favor, and in faith, he gave himself to God. He lived in faith to God, and he stayed faithful.

Stayed faithful to the end. And so young people, he can be an example to you. You don't have to be in an ideal situation, an ideal setting, to be faithful to God.

Daniel never in his life has been in an ideal situation. He grew up in a doomed city, and he lived most of his adult life in a foreign country, and yet he went on believing.

And his three friends were with him, and they believed as well. And there's more to the book of Daniel than Daniel and his three friends, though.

We've seen that. There's these perplexing and mysterious heavenly visions, and I'm sure none of you are satisfied with what we've said about them, because there is something very unsatisfying about what we know.

[6:38] We are not sure what all of these things mean, and we've seen the history of the world.

We've seen the places that governments and kings are going to take. We've seen something of the demonic powers and heavenly places that are behind those governments and kings.

We've seen Jesus at the heart of Daniel is the Son of Man that's promised that he is going to come and he's going to set up his kingdom, and it's going to extend throughout the entire earth, and he conquers his enemies, and he judges in glory and splendor.

We've seen Jesus, and we've seen this one that's greater than Antiochus, one who is coming, the Antichrist. And we've learned a few things about him, and I hope in some ways that the book of Daniel has taken him out of the realm of the mythological and the movie and the legendary and made him real to you.

He's a real historical character that will come upon the scene. Now this evening we see the end. The end of the world as we know it.

And then we have an answer to the question, how long? How long? Well, first we want to see the end. The end of the world.

[8:04] So you've heard of, maybe you've heard of the doomsday clock. It's this symbolic clock that scientists at the University of Chicago, since 1947, they've had this clock that shows how close they think we are to destroying ourselves.

Very cheerful thing. Not to totally undermine what they're saying or to throw caution to the wind or anything like that. But God tells us how the world is going to really end.

They think it's nuclear war or some global climate change or some sort of massive virus or some outbreak or something like that. But in the book of Daniel, we have God telling us how it's going to end.

He started it. He created it. He's written the story for it. And in Daniel, he tells us the end. And it's not going to be like the earth is going to float off into the sunset.

It won't enjoy or ease its way into retirement. No, look at what Daniel 1 says.

[9:22] There will be a time of distress. This is the middle of the verse. There will be a time of distress such as not happened from the beginning of nations until then.

He's talking specifically about God's people. It's going to be a time of distress for them. It's going to get worse before it gets better. And it's going to get very bad before the end.

And so what will we see? What will God's people face as we come to the end? Well, we know from Matthew 24, Jesus talking about the end of the age, that all the nations of the world will hear the gospel.

People's languages, tribes, they will hear the gospel. God will be calling people from every nation from around this world. And so the gospel will win. The gospel will win its way all the way around the earth.

And the son of man will have his kingdom that extends to the ends of the earth. But that's not going to lead to the Christianization of this earth.

[10:33] It's not going to lead to some golden age, golden sunshine that we're all going to live in for God's people. Daniel tells us it's going to be a time of great distress.

Well, what will it be like? Well, Jesus talking about it and basing much of what he says off of Daniel, he talks about it in the context of the destruction of Jerusalem.

So what is it going to be like for God's people to end? It's going to be like a siege. It's going to be like the destruction of a city. So you remember in Matthew 24, Jesus' disciples are admiring the temple.

They're admiring the buildings. And Jesus says, I tell you the truth, not one stone here is going to be left on another. Everything will be thrown down. And this leaves the disciples perplexed and wondering.

And later they say, they come to Jesus and they say, tell us, tell us, what is it going to be? When will this happen? What will the sign of your coming be in the end of the age?

[11:37] And Jesus goes on and he talks about earthquakes. And he talks about nations fighting against each other. And he talks about persecution. And then he says that when you see the abomination that causes desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

And so he describes how terrible it's going to be. From his perspective in the future in 70 AD, when the Romans come in and destroy Jerusalem, it's going to be horrific.

And then listen to what Jesus says. For then there will be a great distress unequalled from the beginning of the world until now and never to be equaled again.

And if those days had not been cut short, no one would survive. But for the sake of the elect, those days will be shortened. So Jesus picks up Daniel's words.

He picks up some of the themes of what Daniel's talking about. And he puts them in context of the fall of Jerusalem. He's showing us what is the end going to be like for God's people. Well, it's going to be like the fall of Jerusalem.

[12:53] It won't be glorious victory. The church is going to be destroyed. Its witness is going to be destroyed. The worship of God on earth is going to be destroyed.

It will be like a terrible siege. Now, this is a theme that the Apostle John talks a lot about in Revelation. So if you turn in your Bibles to Revelation chapter 11.

There's so many common connections between Revelation and Daniel that if I were to go through and show you all of them, it would take all of our time.

But I do want to show you this. Daniel picks up this theme of a city besieged and a temple given over to idolatry and the destruction of the church's witness.

Listen to what he says. In this passage, he uses two different pictures. The picture of the temple and the city. And then the picture of these two witnesses.

[13:56] I was given a reed. This is verse one. I was given a reed like a measuring rod and was told, Now go and measure the temple of God and the altar and count the worshipers there, but exclude the outer court.

Do not measure it because it has been given to the Gentiles. They will trample on the holy city for 42 months. 42 months, three and a half years.

Time, times, and half a time. So you see, it's the same sort of picture. The inside of the temple is protected, but the outside of the temple and the city is destroyed for 42 months, for time, times, and half a time, for three and a half years, for 1,260 days.

Now, in the middle of all this trampoline, in the middle of this great persecution, the church is not quiet. It continues to witness, and that's what these two witnesses represent.

If we were to read through it, it says, And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth.

[15:15] And he goes on to talk about them. And then go down to verse 7. Now, when they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the abyss will attack them and overpower and kill them.

And their bodies will lie in the street of the great city, which is figuratively called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. So do you see verse 7?

The beast from the abyss will come up and destroy, overpower, and kill them. And that corresponds to Daniel chapter 12, verse 7. So if you would, go back to Daniel chapter 12, verse 7.

And there it says, When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things will be completed.

So, what does the church have to look forward to? Well, on this earth, it's not this glorious victory. It's only when they're finally broken will all these things be completed.

[16:31] It's only when they're finally broken will the end come. And it's only when, for all intents and purposes, their witness to this world has been destroyed, has been wiped out, will the end come.

Now, the church, I'm not saying, and God is not saying, that the church is going to be totally destroyed, it's going to be totally annihilated. We're talking about its witness, its visible presence, is going to be completely eliminated.

Now, why tell us that kind of news? Why tell us that terrible news? Why tell us how bad it's going to be?

And the answer is, so we can prepare for it. So we can prepare for it. God doesn't want us to have a romantic vision of the end, that we're just going to traipse into heaven, that the church is just going to have a good time until the end.

When you go to boot camp, the drill sergeant doesn't tell you, well, this is going to be like a five-star resort, and you're going to have a great time, this will be the best time of your life. They don't say that.

[17:38] They say, you are going to want to die. You are going to be broken. You are going to be destroyed. We're going to rebuild you as a new person. Well, why tell the recruits that?

Why tell them how bad it's going to be? So they can prepare. And so when it starts to happen to them, they don't grow afraid. They don't give up. They keep on going.

And it's the same here. So I ask, are you ready? Are you preparing for it?

Well, how do you prepare for something like that? Well, you begin by not acting like this world is your home, by not getting comfortable where you are, because it's going to be torn away from you. And you prepare for it by saying no to this world. By saying no to this world.

[18:45] When it offers its pleasure, when it gives you persecution, you resist. Or when you start cutting off right hands and gouging out right eyes, when you get serious about sin, then you are preparing for the end.

When you are growing closer and closer to Jesus, when every day he's becoming more and more to you, then you are preparing for the end. I am not saying that right now you have to be ready to go, because in that hour, grace will be given to us.

You don't have to feel ready, but are you getting ready for it? If we don't prepare, then how will we survive? If we don't prepare mentally and we're not thinking that way, then how will we survive? It will be so bad that no one would survive, but God has to cut it short for the sake of the elect or there would be no one left. Well, is that all there is to say about the end?

Thank God. Hallelujah. No. Because that's just the black backdrop to God's glorious salvation.

[19:55] Because at that time, when things are at their worst, we're to look up, lift up our heads, lift up our eyes, your salvation is at hand.

Over the horizon is coming God's glorious salvation, and it will shine. So look at verse 1. But at that time, your people, everyone whose name is found written in the book, will be delivered.

So your deliverer, our deliverer, will come. It will be bad, but we will be saved. Who will he save?

Who does he come to deliver? All those who are found written in the book. Only one thing will matter in that day. Is my name in that book?

It won't matter who your parents were. It won't matter what you did. Were you a good person? Were you a bad person? I was a pretty nice guy. My mom and dad loved Jesus. Those questions will be irrelevant.

[20:56] Irrelevant. The only question will be, is my name written there? Have I passed from death to life? Have I been joined to Jesus? And so now I am written. My name is down.

My name is in the book of life. So have you believed? Has your name been written down there?

Does God have you down?

Because on that day, if your name is there, if you have been saved, if your name is written in the book of life, then you will be delivered.

Michael, the great angelic champion of his people, the great warrior against Satan, the angelic warrior against Satan, will ride, and he will ride behind the white rider.

The revelation talks about the rider on the white horse, whose name is faithful and true. With justice, he judges and makes war.

[21:53] His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but himself, and he is dressed in a robe, dipped in blood, and his name is the word of God.

The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses, and dressed in fine linen, linen white and clean, and out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. Daniel has said a lot about the nations and about governments, hasn't he? They're like terrible beasts. They're horrible monsters. But look who rides against them.

Look who will stand against them. Michael, the great archangel, the warrior of God's people, the entire host of heaven, all the armies of heaven, and then at the front is the Son of God himself. And out of his mouth comes a sword. Now that's not a real sword. That's his spoken word. That's the power of when Jesus speaks.

[23:04] And so when Jesus speaks, what happens on that last day? From the breath of his mouth, the Antichrist, the worst person, the most powerful person, the most horrific person in the whole world, oblivion, lake of fire.

He speaks, and the nations are cut down. He strikes them down, and they crumble. And so all these horrific, powerful beasts, this beast that has iron teeth and iron fangs, and he grinds up the people of God, Jesus comes and cuts them down, and he will rule them with an iron scepter. That is not a scepter of gentleness and kindness. It's a scepter of pure power over them. He treads the winepress of the wrath of God Almighty on his robe and on his thigh.

He has this name written, King of kings and Lord of lords. Sometimes we can get afraid when we think about that end.

Sometimes I can get scared of the end because I don't want to go through a great distress like no one's ever seen, and you shouldn't either. But I'll tell you what, something always shakes me out of that fear, and it's this, that if I live to see that day, and I live through that terror and that horrible thing, then I will surely see this, my white rider coming and striking down the nations, cutting down his enemies, and then we can say, well, come what may.

[24:44] Let's bring it on because on the other end of that terror is my Savior, and he's coming and he's going to deliver his people. God's people will be overcome, but that's just the beginning of the end.

Jesus will come and they will be delivered. And then the judgment. All men are destined to die to face judgment. It talks about, in verse 2, multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.

There will be a resurrection. Every grave will be overturned, every gravestone thrown down, every coffin emptied, and with a shout, the dead will rise.

But what different places they will go. What different destinies they will experience. Some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

Now that separation is good news for God's people. How long, we ask.

[26:04] How long will I have to live with people who don't love you? Who take your name in vain? Who live so godlessly, so unrighteously? The answer is not forever. There's coming a day when there's a great separation.

When some will go to life, and others will go to contempt and shame. And the righteous, the wise, they might not be delivered from death.

Some will die. Many will die. But we will certainly be delivered out of death. We might face death, but we will be delivered out of it. And we will shine like stars in the heavens.

Christ was glorified. And on that day, we will be glorified as well. The road is difficult. The task is hard. We're called to witness to this world who doesn't want to be witness to.

We're called to lead many to righteousness when people love their wickedness. And even in the darkest times, there's going to be a witness. The faithful ones will keep on speaking even though it costs them their life.

[27:11] And then in the end, they will receive their reward, glory, and life. But not the wicked. Let me talk to you for a minute.

If you're not a believer in the Lord Jesus, you're not saved. If your sins are not forgiven, you will rise. The grave is not your last stop.

You might wish that your bones lie in that grave forever and ever, but they won't. You will rise to not life, but shame.

Contempt. Contempt is how you treat a disgusting thing. Contempt is how you treat a dirty diaper or a dead animal.

You say, get it away from me. Get it out of here. Get rid of it. Get it away from me. And so Christ will say to the wicked, away from me. I never knew you. Get rid of it.

[28 : 12] And you will awake to shame and everlasting contempt these words might sound hard, but they are true. Then at that time, everything will be right in the world.

Everything upside down will be put right. Everything that's been backwards and everything that's been broken will be fixed. every injustice will be made right.

And every hard and mean and cruel word, every slight and every scorn and every sword stroke, it will all be made right.

Justice will be done. Because he comes. He comes. He comes to judge the world with justice. And so, brothers and sisters, if you are in Christ, that day is good news.

That day of judgment is nothing to fear because that is a day when you will be vindicated. That judgment is your deliverance. When he strikes down your enemies, you are saved.

[29 : 22] And so, the judgment is our day of reward. And then, on that day, we will see just how great and awesome and wonderful and perfect Christ's righteousness is.

Then, we will see just the glory of justification by faith alone, not by my works, but by his works.

Then we will see just how marvelous Jesus' obedience is.

Because when I am standing there and I am seeing others go off and I am seeing others, Jesus saying, get away from me, I don't know you. And when we're standing in a robe of righteousness, perfect and clean, then we will understand just how good the gospel is and just how wonderful Jesus' righteousness is.

Our records will be perfect, our lives will be perfect, and there will be nothing to fear. There will only be grace to rejoice in. Then we'll see the wonder of the cross.

That he took all my sin and he bore them. He took that penalty. And I'll see the glory of the cross there. And I'll say, it's amazing.

[30 : 35] It's amazing that he took that for me. He took hell and pain and punishment for me. And then we'll understand the cross. Then we'll see the glory of it. That will be a great day.

It's the day we long for. Isn't it? It's the day of our deliverance. And we say, how long? How long will it be until everything is made right? And how long will it be until I'm fixed?

In this world, fixed, how long will I be broken? And that's what an angel asks. This is our second point. How long will it be?

One of the angels asks in verse six, how long will it be before these astonishing things are fulfilled? And what's the answer?

Well, like so many things in Daniel, it's not as clear as we would like. But here's the answer in verse seven. The man clothed in linen who was above the waters of the river lifted his right hand and his left hand toward heaven.

[31 : 40] And I heard him swear by him who lives forever, saying, it will be for a time, times, and half a time. Now, this is a phrase that's repeated throughout Revelation, or throughout Daniel.

It's found in Revelation. It comes in various forms. Sometimes they give it in days. Sometimes in months. And so, I don't think I've ever made it clear exactly what it means.

And so, let me take that opportunity now. When will it come? How long will it be? Well, it will be for a time. A certain length of time.

And that length of time will seem like it's going on forever. Like, it's never going to end. It's going to be a long time. And just like when, just when it doesn't seem like it could go on any further, it will go on for two times.

Twice as much for one time and then for two times. So, when it seems like it couldn't go on for any longer, it goes on twice as long as before.

[32 : 54] And so, now we're up to a total of three times. We had one time and two times together. That's three times. Now, what do you expect next? Well, as a modern reader, you don't know what to expect.

But as an ancient reader, as someone used to this kind of talk, you're expecting, after one time and two times, you're expecting four times.

Because two is one and then two is twice as many and so you're expecting, it's getting a little complicated, but you're expecting four because four is twice as many as two. And when you add one, two, and four together, you get seven.

So, for a total of seven times, in other words, it's going to, seven times would be forever, the number of completion. And so, that's what it's going to seem like.

How long is it going to be until we are delivered? Well, it's going to seem like it's going to go on forever. And just when it doesn't seem like it could go on any longer, it's going to go on again and again.

[34:03] And just when it seems like there is no end in sight, this will never, ever, ever, ever end. It will end.

It will come crashing to an end. Just when it seems like it's going to be four times, it's cut in half. It's not even a full time. Just when things couldn't get worse. Just when the Antichrist is at the height of his power.

Just when the city and the church is surrounded and overcome and overwhelmed and overran, the end will come. So how long? Well, it's going to seem like a long time.

Doesn't it seem like it's taking forever? It does. But the end will come suddenly and quickly, unexpectedly. No man knows the time. And it will come.

That's the first answer. Not very specific, but it does tell us what to expect. We can't expect the end to come quickly, at least from Daniel's perspective.

[35:08] And then we get another answer. Daniel hears this and he says, I don't understand. That's a good thing to say. So I asked, my Lord, what will the outcome of all this be?

How is this all going to end up? Tell me more. Tell me more about the end. Give me more signs. His question is. And the answer, the angel says, and this is very important for every single one of us.

He says to Daniel, go on your way. Go on your way, Daniel. The words are closed up and sealed until the end. Daniel says, Lord, I want to know more.

Tell me more about the end. And the angel says, Daniel, you know enough to go on. Now go on your way. These things won't happen until the prophecy is unsealed.

And when God says the times to come, when his word comes forth, then it will end. Until then, you know enough to do what you're supposed to do.

[36:14] You are to go on your way. Now, the angel isn't dismissing Daniel, like patting him on his head and saying, oh, go on, you know, like it's not go on your way, that kind of thing.

It's not run along. He's saying, keep going the way you are going, Daniel. Go on the way that you have been going. Go on your way.

Keep resisting. Keep believing. Keep holding on to the hope that you have. Go on your way. In the last verse, the very last verse, the angel says, and when the end comes, you will rise.

You will rise and you will receive your allotted inheritance. What inheritance had Daniel received on this earth? This is an interesting place to stop with an idea of inheritance.

Daniel was 14 or 15 when he was taken away from his country. He was taken away from the promised land. He was taken away from ever owning anything good in this life that came from God's hands.

[37:24] In the sense of the promised land that he promised to his people, he didn't have a share in that inheritance. And now that he comes to his death or he's facing his death, God promises that you keep going and you will receive the promise.

You will receive the inheritance that you've been looking forward to. Daniel was looking forward to a better country. His whole life he had never experienced God's blessing in the land with God's favor and smile.

It wasn't something he enjoyed, but by faith he was looking forward to something better. And so he lived that way. And so the angel could say, keep on going. The end is good.

The inheritance is coming, Daniel. Now I wonder if God could say that to you. Could he say go on the way that you're going? Keep on?

Stay on that path? Believer, could he say that of you? Are you on that narrow road? pilgrim's progress talks about the Christian sometimes got off the narrow road, didn't he?

[38:40] He went into bypass meadow and he went into places that he wasn't supposed to go. And so I wonder, are you on the narrow road?

You're a believer, but are you on the path that you should be on? Are you resisting the trinkets of vanity fair? Christian, and faithful put up their collars and closed their ears and they ducked their heads and they walked through vanity fair, the picture of this world?

They were staying on their path. Are you fighting Apollyon? Are you fighting Satan? Or have you made your peace with him? I leave him alone, he leaves me alone, and we get along just fine.

Brothers and sisters, the narrow road leads to life. And so I wonder if an angel were to visit you, would he say, keep going on the way? Keep going the way you're going?

Or would he have something to say to you about coming back? Get back on the road. Because at the end of the road is home.

[39:49] It's home. You won't say, how long? Forever. one day you will say, at last, I'm home.

I'm where I'm supposed to be. And you'll say, it was a well-spent journey, those seven deaths lay between. You know, I had to go through all sorts of terrible things, but it was worth it. I'm home now. And we'll live. We'll rise to everlasting life. And what that means, no eye has seen, no ear has heard, what that's going to mean.

We'll see Christ and we'll be like him. And he'll be with us, we'll be with him, and we'll never have to depart from each other. And we will live happily ever after.

Now, as we close, let me read to you probably one of my favorite pages in all of Scripture, or in all of literature outside of Scripture.

[40:55] It's the last page of the Chronicles of Narnia. It's in the book, The Last Battle. And it sums up our hope so beautifully and so simply.

Let me read it to you. Then Aslan, he turned and he said, you do not yet look so happy as I mean you to be.

And Lucy said, we're so afraid of being sent away, Aslan. You have sent us back into our own world so often. No fear of that, Aslan said.

Have you not guessed? And their hearts leaped, and a wild hope rose within them. And there was a railway accident, said Aslan softly.

Your father and your mother and all of you are, as you used to call it in the shadow lands, dead. The term is over.

[41:58] The holidays have begun. The dream has ended. This is the morning. And as he spoke, he no longer looked to them like a lion.

But the things that began to happen after that were so great and beautiful that I cannot write them. And for us, this is the end of all the stories, and we can most truly say that they all lived happily ever after.

And for them, it was only the beginning of the real story. All their life in this world and all their adventures in Narnia had only been the cover and the title page.

Now, at last, they were beginning chapter one of the great story, which no one on earth has ever read. which goes on forever, in which every chapter is better than the one before.

It's going to be worth holding on. It's going to be worth resisting to the end when we make it home. Let's pray.

[43:04] Our Heavenly Father, we thank you that you've prepared such a beautiful and wonderful place for us that we cannot even begin to imagine what it's going to be like, to have a perfect body, where we know that we have broken bodies here, and to have a perfect heart fully in love with Jesus, where we know that at best our love grows cold, and we're so half-hearted about loving you.

thank you that there is a place that you are bringing us to where everything wrong about us will be made right, and everything wrong about this world will be made right.

Thank you that though the end is going to be terrible in many ways, that we will be delivered out of it, and that that is not the last word, that Satan and his powers and the evil of this world and the sin of our own hearts do not have the last word in our stories, but by your grace, you've reached down and you've delivered us from his kingdom, and you are now delivering everything and this whole world from his power.

And thank you that you will write our story chapter after chapter after chapter for all of eternity, and we will know you, and we will be known by you, and we will love you, and we will know that you love us, and that we will see and experience marvelous things that we can't even imagine now.

Thank you that that is waiting for all those who have their names written in the book of life. Lord, I pray that you would send your spirit abroad even this evening to call in the lost sheep, to call in your people, to speak into the graves of their heart, heart, and to give new life where now there is nothing but death.

[45 : 28] Join them to Jesus. Make his life flow into them. Make his righteousness to cover them. Make his holiness to be their glorious dress.

Lord, thank you that the gospel is so real. It's for us. It's our constant resource, and it is our hope. And so I pray that you would give us greater faith, every single one of us, as we wait and as we continue to ask how long.

Thank you that we will not ask that question forever, but one day you will come. In Jesus' name, amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.