

What Is Our Only Comfort in Life and in Death?

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: 27 December 2009

Preacher: Jon Hueni

[0:00] Well, we're holding in our hands a brief statement of faith, actually a portion of a statement of faith written some 450 years ago. These are the opening words of the Heidelberg Catechism.

! A catechism is simply a summary of Bible teachings. And this, as I think every catechism, is laid out in a question-and-answer format. You have a question and then the answer. And it was written to instruct ordinary believers, even children, in the Protestant faith. It comes right out of the Protestant Reformation. In 1563, this catechism was published in Heidelberg, Germany, by two men, both of them in their mid-twenties. Zacharias Ursinus was the primary author, a 28-year-old theology professor at the Heidelberg University, and Caspar Olivianus, a 26-year-old preacher, a man who had already suffered for the Reformed faith, had been imprisoned for his faith. He studied under John Calvin. Well, this is the year 1563. Calvin will die in 1564, the next year.

And others will come along and bear the torch of the gospel of the sovereign grace of God. Now, this catechism became known as the Martyrs' Catechism. And he guesses as to why. Well, lots and lots of people lost their lives because they believed the catechism, these truths of the scripture. And so if you and I had been living 450 years ago in Europe, we too could have had our lives held in the balance. Many gave their lives in Germany, Netherlands, France, Bohemia, Hungary, Poland, Italy, and Spain during these years. Ursinus died at 49, leaving a widow and a son. And before he died, he reiterated his belief in the very first question of the catechism that he had written.

And he said this on his deathbed, I would not take a thousand worlds for the blessed assurance of being owned by Jesus Christ. Being owned by Jesus Christ. Now, we might wonder how many others then of our brothers and sisters of that day sealed these truths with their very lives. These were perilous times in which they lived.

And I believe it's fitting for us as we are moving into a new year with many uncertainties with regard to the economy, to the government of our nation, to our own health and family concerns, to look again at these truths that our brothers and sisters found were truths to live by and truths to die by.

[3:12] We're just going to study the first one today. Pastor Aaron should be back, Lord willing, next week to continue his study. But question number one is, what is our only comfort in life and in death? So we're dealing with the question of comfort, of peace, of encouragement. Where do you draw your encouragement and comfort?

It's the stuff that is not optional in this fallen, sin, cursed world. We need lots of it. Here in this statement, we have in a few words, a whole medicine chest of cordials that will encourage us in our lives.

And the scriptures tell us in Hebrews 12 and verse 5, where Jewish believers were being addressed. They were in a very dangerous situation.

And the writer to the Hebrews says, you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons. You've forgotten that word of encouragement. Well, what happens to Christians when they forget the word of encouragement that's been given to them?

Well, they grow weary and they lose heart and they quit and they turn back. And that was indeed the danger of the Hebrew Christians. So this is not a luxury.

[4:35] Encouragement is not a luxury to the Christian life. It is an absolute necessity that we have encouragements, comforts of the Holy Spirit found in the scriptures.

In fact, that's one of the reasons these things were even written down for us in the scriptures. Paul says in Romans 15, they were written that through the encouragement of the scriptures, we might have hope.

Hope. A Christian can't live without hope. So for our encouragement then, here is a small treasure chest of encouragement.

And it's memorizable. That's why I've given you a card. I want you to stick that someplace where you spend a lot of time and read it at least once a day for the next month.

See if at the end of the month you don't have the better portion of that memorized. Put it by the kitchen sink, on the fridge, on your mirror in the morning when you wake up.

[5:34] And places, perhaps in your car, if you can drive and text, then you can drive and read, can't you? So put it someplace where you can memorize this statement.

And in doing so, you will have your mind wrapped around many encouragements poured into this long paragraph. Well, read with me the answer then. The question is, what is your only comfort in life and in death and together?

That I belong, body and soul, in life and in death, not to myself, but to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ, who at the cost of his own blood has fully paid for all my sins and has completely freed me from the dominion of the devil, that he protects me so well, that without the will of my Father in heaven, not a hair can fall from my head.

Indeed, that everything must fit his purpose for my salvation. Therefore, by his Holy Spirit, he also assures me of eternal life and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him.

Now, we notice immediately it's a Trinitarian statement, isn't it? You see, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Father and the Holy Spirit. We draw comforts from the whole Godhead and each person in the Godhead.

[7:14] We notice it's something from the very outset that's all about who we belong to. Notice that, that I belong.

That's where this comfort starts from. It's who you belong to. It's all about ownership. What's so comforting about belonging to Jesus Christ?

Well, it's the difference between being an orphan boy who's out on the streets of the big city all on your own. That means that you've got to fend for yourself.

If you're going to have food, you're going to have to get it. If you're going to have clothes, it's up to you to see that you have it. If you're going to have a place to lay your head, that's all on your shoulders. You belong to yourself.

But what a difference from the adopted son who has his two parents who care for him and provide for him.

[8:15] So he doesn't have to care for himself. He doesn't have to think about who will pay the bill for the electricity and who will buy groceries and who will provide clothing and a bed for me.

All that's taken care of for himself. Well, you see the tremendous comfort in being an adopted son rather than an orphan boy out on our own. Now, can you think of any scripture that supports this statement that we belong not to ourselves, but to Jesus Christ?

Excellent. Let's turn to that. First Corinthians six. Many of these statements are just lifted from the scriptures or or references. Biblical statements found throughout the scriptures.

First Corinthians six and verse 19 and 20. Do you not know this is something you must know? You must know it for your own sanctification.

You must know it for your own encouragement that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have received from God.

[9:20] You are not your own. You were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your body. You are not your own. What is your only comfort in life and in death that I'm not my own and I don't belong to myself, but to my faithful savior, Jesus Christ.

Romans 14, eight. Whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. In life and in death. You belong to him now in life.

And and when you draw your last breath and they put that body in the ground, that body belongs to Jesus Christ. And he will care for it and he will watch over it and he will raise it from the dead in the last day.

Tremendous comfort in life and in death. We belong not to ourselves, but to Jesus Christ. And that's one of the highest blessings of the covenant of grace.

It's the promise that we find right through our Bibles where God entered into a relationship with his people in which he says, I will be your God and you will be my people.

[10:27] And that language is found, as I said, right through the whole of our Bibles. Leviticus 26, 12.

I will walk among you and be your God and you will be my people. And the New Testament reveals that this is the same covenantal relationship enjoyed by all who belong to Jesus Christ.

Revelation 21, 3 says, and I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, now the dwelling of God is with men and he will live with them.

They will be his people and God himself will be with them and be their God. There's that. Covenant of grace again, that God enters into a relationship with the people and forever and ever we will be his people and he will be our God.

20 times in the Old Testament, he calls himself the God of Israel. The God of Israel. I'm yours. I'm your God.

[11 : 31] He's not ashamed to be called our God. Hebrews 11, 16. He's the God of Abraham. He's the God of Isaac.

He's the God of Jacob. He's the God of John. He's the God of Scott and the God of Sheila. He's he's he's your God. You put your name in there.

He he's willing to be known as such your God. And you are known to him as my people. Now, there's a lot of comfort then that flows from that.

That he thinks of himself as my God. And he thinks of me as his sheep, his son, his daughter. To belong to Jesus Christ is so comforting because it means that we are cared for by Jesus Christ.

He cares for what he owns. Think of what he will do for his people. Those that are his. He he looks down in into that nation of Egypt and he sees them oppressed by cruel taskmasters.

[12 : 34] And he sends a message to the Pharaoh of Egypt. Let. My people go. He saw their misery.

He was concerned. And he acted on their behalf with his mighty strong arm. They're my people.

They're my people. He's he's jealous over them. He cares for them.

Know that the Lord. Psalm 100. Know that the Lord is God. It is he who has made us and we are his. We are his people. The sheep of his pasture.

We're his. And he takes care of his people. He never slumbers or sleeps in his watch care over his flock. Now, what does the world think about this?

This idea of belonging not to ourselves, but to another. Well, they think that's bondage. I want to. I want to belong to myself. We have that right throughout the scriptures.

[13 : 33] My mouth is my own to say what I want. My eyes are my own to see what I want. My hands are my own. My life is my own to do as I please.

And the world thinks this is liberty. But there's a flip side to this liberty. And it's this that if he doesn't belong to another, then he's on his own in this big, bad world.

And that means that he goes into a world that's filled with devils. Every one of them that's more powerful and more deceitful and more wise than he's ever been.

And he goes into a world with all kinds of allurements and false teachers who are telling lies. And he's got a heart that's deceitful and that would rather believe a lie than the truth.

And he's on his own. He's out there to fend for himself. He doesn't have Jesus Christ. He doesn't belong to Christ. He doesn't have him as his prophet to teach him the will of God.

[14 : 30] Doesn't have Christ as his priest to die for his sins and to pray. For him, he doesn't have him as his king to rule over him and to defend him.

No, he's all on his own. He's got to fend for himself. And so outside of Christ, you're out there all on your own. And that which the world calls liberty is really bondage.

To be left all on your own is to be in bondage to fear. You've got to do for yourself. Oh, but it's so freeing and so comforting. It's so encouraging to belong to another because what happens when you belong to another?

They care for you now. And so all your worries are theirs. And so why does the world chase after things such as what shall we eat?

What shall we drink? What shall we wear? Why are the why is the world chasing after these things as the worry that drives them and that they run after? Why are they enslaved by such earthly pursuits?

[15 : 35] Well, because they have no heavenly father to care for them. They're not children of God. They don't belong to him. And so they've got to do for themselves. And so Jesus says, you children of God, don't worry about anything.

You have a father in heaven. He knows what you need. So you can trust him. You don't need to worry. Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. And all these other things will be given to you as well.

Your father will take care of you. So J. Adams tells a story. He says, suppose you met a man who used to be the world's worst worrier, who's been cured of his worrying.

And you ask, what happened to you, Fred? You look as if you haven't a care in the world. And he says, I don't. Well, that's great. How did you get rid of all your worries?

Well, I hired a man to worry for me. You did what? Well, I said I hired someone to worry for me.

Well, that's different. Say, what's he charge?

[16:40] Five hundred dollars a day. Five hundred dollars. Where are you going to get that kind of money? Well, that's his worry, you see. And Adams says, wouldn't it be great to live like that?

As if you had somebody whose job it was to worry for you and your concerns and your cares. He says, you have such a one. And you don't you don't pay him five hundred dollars a day.

You're his. And so he cares for you. And so you cast all your cares upon him. Why? Because he cares for you.

And why does he care for you? Because you are his. You don't belong to yourself. You belong to him. And so you transfer all your concerns onto his shoulders. If I was not a human being.

And a sheep is what I was. And I lived 3,000 years ago in Bethlehem. I would want to be a sheep.

[17:46] In Jesse's fold. Because his son David was watching over that flock. You say, why would you want to be one of his sheep? Because I've heard what he has done for his sheep.

That when a bear came along and took one in its mouth. That he went out. And single-handedly struck the bear. And recovered and protected that sheep.

He did the same with a lion. So I would not want to be a sheep on my own. Out on the hills of Bethlehem. With bears and lions to feed on.

I would like to be one of his sheep. One of the sons of Jesse's sheep. And so the New Testament comes and tells us that we have a greater than David.

As our shepherd. The good shepherd. The Lord Jesus Christ. And he says, I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

[18:53] And so when my sin said, damn him. Jesus stepped in. And took the damnation. To set me free. Why? Because I'm his. And he cares for his sheep.

What a comfort to know that I don't belong to myself. But to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ. Who at the cost of his own blood is fully paid for all my sins.

Well, how did we become his? The passage before us there in 1 Corinthians says that we're not our own. We have been bought with a price. And indeed, that's what our catechism question says.

That who at the cost of his own blood has paid for all my sins. When he speaks of the blood of Christ. He's speaking of his whole bloody death.

That has had this blessed effect of purchasing us for God. For we've been redeemed from this vain way of life that we've received from our fathers by tradition.

[19:58] Not with silver and gold. But with the precious blood of Christ. As of a lamb without blemish and without spot. 1 Peter 1. 18 and 19. So Jesus has already proven what he does for his sheep.

He lays down his life. For them. That they might be his. That they might be saved from their greatest. Christ of enemies. He's no hireling, is he?

Because a hireling runs at the first sight of danger. But why does he run? Why does the hired hand run? Because it's just a job.

And the sheep aren't his. But the shepherd who owns the sheep. Cares about his sheep because they're his. We're not in the hands of a hireling.

We're in the hands of shepherd Jesus. Whose sheep we are. And so he does not run in the face of danger. He lays down his life.

[20:59] And then takes it up again. That he might deliver us from eternal torments. It was at the cost of his own blood. Fathers, which children in your neighborhood do you take care of with the greatest concern?

Well, you say that would be the ones that are mine. Yes, that's right. And in that respect, Jesus Christ is no different from you. Yes, he has a general love for all mankind.

But he has a special love for his own. And for them, he lays down his own life. That they might live. Now, what two things has he done then at the cost of his own blood?

You see it here. Who at the cost of his own blood, first of all, has fully paid for all my sins. That's the first thing that this good shepherd has done for us.

Our Savior, Jesus Christ. He's fully paid for all my sin. Just one of those sins is enough to damn you forever. What is the comfort in knowing that he has paid for all my sins?

[22:08] That whatever debts my sins have in the books of heaven, he's paid it all. Paid in full. It's finished. Blessed comfort to know that Jesus Christ is mine and I'm his and his death has paid for all my sins.

That means there's nothing left to pay for me. Because God is just. And he does not demand payment twice. Once at my dear substitute's hand and then again from mine.

Okay, John, you have sins. You must pay. There's a hell to pay for your sins. And Jesus steps forward and says, I will pay. Well, then there's nothing left for me to pay.

The debt is wiped clean. And so, because he's paid for all my sins, I have this joy, this comfort, this peace of being able to live knowing that my sins are paid for in full.

For Christ died for sins once for all. The just for the unjust to bring us to God. First Peter 3:18. But his blood has done something else.

[23:25] The cost of his own blood is fully paid for all my sins. And secondly, has completely freed me from the dominion of the devil. These statements just take in their arms dozens of scriptures.

But it especially reminds me of that day when Jesus was talking to the Jews who prided themselves that they were the sons of Abraham. Abraham's our father. Abraham's our father.

And he says, no, you've got it wrong. You are of your father, the devil. And you desire to do the things that the devil wants to do. You're of your father, the devil.

These were religious people. But all people that don't belong to Jesus Christ belong to Satan and his dominion, his kingdom, his rule.

In fact, all of Jesus kingdom is built out of the rubble of Satan's kingdom. He comes and takes a rock out of his kingdom and makes it a rock in the temple that he's building in which he dwells by his spirit.

[24:27] But we belong to the devil. We were under his dominion. And what a dominion that was. He ruled over us.

He owned us. We were his willing slaves. He tempted us to sin and we wanted what he tempted us to. And all the while that he was promising us the world, he was leading us to hell.

We were under his dominion, his rule. But my faithful savior, Jesus Christ, to whom I belong, has completely freed me from the dominion of the devil. He no longer rules over me.

I'm no longer his. I've been set free. And how does he do that? Well, Hebrews 2 tells us he took on flesh and blood like we have and came and died in our place.

That he might set us free from him who holds the power of death, the devil. How? And 1 Corinthians 15 tells us that he has taken away the sting of death.

[25:38] How? By dying for us under the curse of God. Because what is the sting of death? It's sin. And if you take sin away, then death has no more sting.

There's no more punishment to receive from the God I'll meet after death. And so the stinger is pulled out of death. He's freed me from the dominion of the devil who held me under his grip of fear. Aren't you afraid of dying? And now in Christ, by his blood, by his death, he has set us free from the dominion of the devil.

That's why he's come. 1 John 3 and verse 8. Why has Jesus been born? 1 John 3, 8.

The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. 1 John 3 and 2. And you and I were his work. 1 John 3 and 2. And he was building his kingdom over our backs.

[26:43] 2 John 3 and 2. And he's destroyed. He's come to destroy the works of the devil. 2 John 3 and 2. Remember how Jesus put it in that parable?

2 John 3 and 2. 2 John 3 and 2. That Satan stood as a strong man guarding his house. And he's loaded to the hilt. 2 John 4 and 2. Lest anyone should come into his house and steal his things.

And we were his things. We were his possession. Well, there's only one way to be set free from the dominion of the devil. And that's if a stronger man from heaven would come. And would disarm and would conquer the strong man guarding the house.

And overpower Satan and disarm him and bind him. And then go on into his house and plunder his possessions. That's Luke 11, 21 and 22.

And that's what our Jesus did. He came from heaven. The strong man from heaven. And overcame Satan. And entered in and set us free from his dominion.

[27 : 49] What confidence does that give to the Christian? To know we're not open game to the devil anymore. He cannot rule over us.

We've been delivered. We're not his property anymore. We belong to Christ. And then the statement goes on from there. And states something of our father then.

And yet it's still talking about Christ. This faithful savior to whom we belong. And so the next paragraph says that he protects me so well.

That without the will of my father in heaven. Not a hair can fall from my head. My head. There's comfort in knowing we're protected. And how well does he protect me?

Well, so well that apart from the will of my father in heaven. Not the least thing in life can happen to me. We're constantly shedding hair.

[28 : 46] But not one hair can fall from our head apart from the will of our father. As long as Jesus is protecting us. That's how well he protects me.

Matthew 10, 29 through 31. That's detailed protection, isn't it? That's down to the nitty gritty. If each hair is considered.

Can't fall unless it's the will of the father. Well, then that speaks about everything that's happened in your life this past week. This past year. He protects me so well that not any of that can happen.

Apart from the will of our father in heaven. Indeed, he says that everything must fit his purpose for my salvation. That's how well he protects me.

Nothing can happen except what fits his will for my salvation. It fits. It must fit. Picture puzzles are things that get stuffed away at our house into closets and are forgotten for decades, it seems, until the closet is cleaned and then out comes a puzzle and we all play at it for a week.

[29 : 59] And it's in the way and we have to put it under the table and under the bed and come out and work again on it. That happened with us recently with a puzzle of 500 pieces.

It was a ship. Of course, it's on blue water and even more blue sky. So there was a lot of blue pieces of the puzzle. But, you know, having the picture on the box was a help to us as we began to arrange the pieces of the puzzle and we saw the different shades of blue and the different colors of the ship.

We had the picture to help us along. Real life isn't like that. In many scores, first of all, there's thousands of pieces of the puzzle in our lives.

But the other thing is that we don't have the picture. We don't have the finished product of our lives. Who I'm going to marry. How many children I'm going to have. Where I'm going to work. I mean, there's millions of things, isn't there, in our lives.

We don't have the final picture, really, in the detail form as we do in the puzzle. But God does. And that's the comfort of belonging to Jesus Christ.

[31 : 12] That he protects us so well that nothing will happen in our lives that doesn't fit the purpose of our Father in Heaven. And fulfill and work for our good.

Even our salvation. Every piece of the puzzle must fit his purpose. If it doesn't fit his purpose, it's thrown out. It's not allowed in.

Even. The smallest pieces of the puzzle. And there's some that are tiny. Ephesians 1.11. In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will.

He works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will. So that means that if that situation you're in, that the devil would like to bring into your life is not in conformity with the purpose of his will.

It's not on the picture. Then the puzzle piece is thrown out. It doesn't belong to that puzzle. We had one such piece. It's somehow gotten in the box. And we threw it out. It didn't belong there. So it is in your life.

[32 : 21] Jesus is the great one who is so protecting you so well that he doesn't allow anything into your life that will not fit his purpose for your good, your eternal salvation.

Do you taste something in the sweetness of that? You can know that not only as to what's happened this past year, but what will happen in this coming year. It must fit his purpose.

He's working all things together for our good. We who know God, we who love him and are the called according to his purpose.

And so we can know that if it's something we're dealing with or will deal with, that it's past the protecting screen of my faithful savior, Jesus Christ.

He's doing this for me. Why? Because I'm his. He's bought me and he takes care of that which is his. You know, as we got closer to the end of the puzzle, some of those pieces are stubborn and they don't seem to fit anywhere.

[33 : 25] But but there's a comfort in knowing that time's on our side. We know they fit. We know they go somewhere in here. It's just a matter of time. We will beat them. And it's the same way with what God brings in your life.

We have the comfort. It's all going to fit the blessed scheme that God has designed for us. And so. It contributes to the great comfort in life.

How well does Jesus Christ, my faithful savior, protect me? Well, just that well. And then he passes on. The statement passes on to the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, by his Holy Spirit, he also assures me of eternal life. Still Jesus Christ. He still is doing this. We belong to him. But he works by his spirit in assuring me of eternal life.

The Holy Spirit is the guarantee of eternal life. Ephesians 1, 13 and 14. You also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.

[34 : 31] Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal. The promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession to the praise of his glory.

So when you believed the gospel and trusted in Christ, you were marked. You were sealed. You were given the Holy Spirit that is the down payment, the deposit that guarantees your final and full salvation.

So the Holy Spirit is put into our hearts. He's the person of the Godhead that lives within us in order to do all sorts of things. But one of his jobs in there is to assure us of eternal life.

Just to make it certain to your own heart and mind that I am his and he is mine and that's forever.

He's the one who works in our hearts so that when we address God, we say our father.

In heaven. Abba father, we know that he's ours and we are his. And he testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

[35 : 46] What's the comfort of knowing that? Again, the assurance of eternal life that that we're safe in the hands of our mighty shepherd and no one or no thing can pluck us out of our father's hands or out of our good shepherd Jesus hands.

The Holy Spirit convinces us of these things. And so assures us of eternal life. And then the last thing that we see stated. By his Holy Spirit, he also makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him.

Because, you know, only those who go on living for Jesus will make it to the end and be saved.

Well, then that stirs up my discomfort. Will I make it to the end? Well, yes, because my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ, by his spirit, makes me both willing and ready from now on to live for him.

He doesn't just leave me and say, OK, sheep, you follow me all the way and you'll make it. No, he puts his Holy Spirit in us and makes us willing and makes us ready to follow on all the way to heaven.

What a comfort. What encouragement in the Christian life left to myself. I know I'd roam. I know I'd turn aside. I'd be deceived by the world, by the devil, by my own heart.

[37 : 06] But my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ, by his spirit, makes me willing. How does he do that? How does he make you willing to follow him? He opens up to you more and more of his love for you.

What he's done for you. And you say, I love you because you first loved me. And those who love him, obey him. And so you follow on. But he works that willingness in you.

Philippians 2, verse 13, tells us the same, that he works in us both to will and to do his good pleasure. Where did you get that willingness to get out of bed and come and sing his praises today? Well, he works it in you. That's your faithful Savior, Jesus Christ. His troops are made willing in the day of his power. Psalm 110 and verse 3.

And he makes me ready. By fully equipping me with everything I need to live for him. Hebrews 13, verse 21.

[38 : 06] This God of peace, he equips you with everything good for doing his will. And works in us what is pleasing to him through Jesus Christ. So that from now on, I will live for him.

The love of Christ constrains us to no longer live for ourselves. No longer. But from now on, to live for him who died and was raised to life.

Well, these are a few clusters of flowers planted here in this one vase. And if you memorize that, you'll have within you a tremendous source of comfort for the new year.

These were the truths that our brothers and sisters who believe the things that we believe, lived on and died on. They found it to be the kind of stuff that gave them hope in life.

And do a little reading of what life was like back in the 16th century. Not just religious persecution. Just making a living.

[39 : 21] Just the expectancy of life. How many children died in childbirth. Think of the perils and the troubles that our brothers and sisters lived with.

And yet they said, this is our hope in life and in death. That we don't belong to ourselves. We belong to him. And that made all the difference. That we'll make differences in the way we face the troubles of our coming year.

If we can say with Racinas and on any day of this coming year and even on our deathbed. That I would not take a thousand worlds for the blessed assurance of being owned by Jesus Christ.

Let's pray and ask the Lord to seal these truths to our hearts. O bring to our hearts, Lord Jesus, the reality of these words.

That we see you as our living Savior. How can we thank you for such truths, such realities. Help us to show you our gratitude by living upon them this year.

[40 : 28] Taking you at your word. Thank you for these reminders. Seal them to our hearts with the comforts that they have been intended to give.

We ask in Christ's name. Amen.