

# How Are You?

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[0:00] The Gospel of Luke in chapter 16 where we read of one who had a security in this Christ of whom we've just sung and one who did not.

! Let's stand together for this reading from God's Word. Luke 16 beginning in verse 19. There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day.

At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side.

So he called to him, Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue because I am in agony in this fire.

[1:07] But Abraham replied, Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things while Lazarus received bad things. But now he is comforted here and you are in agony.

And besides all this, between us and you, a great chasm has been fixed. So that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.

He answered, Then I beg you, Father, send Lazarus to my father's house, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them so that they will not also come to this place of torment.

Abraham replied, They have Moses and the prophets. Let them listen to them. No, Father Abraham, he said, but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.

He said to him, If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead. How are you?

[2:06] We often answer that question in a superficial way, in a way that we don't give much thought to it.

And I believe we're the poor for doing so. But this morning I'd like to ask each of us to give serious thought to that question, believing that doing so will do us much good.

How are you doing? Helen Lemel was born into a minister's family in England in 1863. And when she was just 12 years old, their family moved to the United States.

She loved music, and her parents gave her the best training that they could find and afford. And later on, she even spent four years in Germany, further developing her voice.

When she returned to the States, she sang all over the Midwest in concerts. And eventually she was married to a wealthy European man.

[3:09] Things were going so well for Helen. And then two things happened that turned her world upside down. First of all, she became blind.

And second, when that happened, her husband left her. There she is now. Unable to hear or unable to see.

Rejected. All alone. But Helen looked to Jesus, and she found in him all that she needed. Later, at age 55, she wrote, Oh soul, are you wearied and troubled?

No light in the darkness you see? There's light for a look at the Savior, and life more abundant and free. Turn your eyes upon Jesus.

Look full in his wonderful face. And the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace. She didn't sit down to spend the rest of her life in self-pity or bitterness against God.

[4:22] But she found in the Lord Jesus all the motivation and power to serve him and to live for him all the days of her life. She eventually taught voice at Moody Bible Institute.

She wrote children's literature and over 500 hymns. She was found actively serving the Lord just 13 days before her 98th birthday when she went to see him face to face.

She made a huge impression upon a 13-year-old boy who used to call on her and visit her along with his parents. And that toward the end of her life.

And what impressed him was that he found her so full of life and joy and enthusiasm. And he later wrote that in spite of all her infirmities, her blindness, her old age, and being nearly destitute, living on government assistance in a sparse bedroom, yet whenever we asked how she was doing, she would reply, I'm doing well in the things that count.

Doing well in the things that count. So I'm asking you this morning, how are you doing? How are you doing? Can you say, I'm doing well in the things that count?

[5:47] I believe that some of you are far better off than you may initially realize. And others may be far worse off than you realize.

Well, right away, we need to define what we mean by the things that count. And the world has a definition, and God has a definition for the things that count.

There are two different value systems for determining how you're doing. There's the world's, and that's based on temporal things. It's based on earthly things.

And then there's God's, and it's based on heavenly things, eternal things, spiritual things. So in a sense, we're asking you to take inventory of your life to see how you're doing.

Now in accounting, there are at least two different methods used to value your inventory. There's cost, what you paid for it, and there's market value, what you could get for it today.

[6:49] And depending upon which method you use, you'll come up with two different numbers. And so in answering the question, how are you doing? Depending upon which method of evaluation you use, you'll come up with two different responses.

Let's consider, first of all, the world's value system. It answers the question, how are you doing? By looking at your health, and your wealth, and other earthly things.

If you come back from your checkup, your annual checkup from the doctor's office, and your blood pressure, and cholesterol counts, and all the rest are doing fine, well then you say, I'm doing well.

And if a visit to your financial planner tells you that you're right on track for retirement, whatever age you've desired and planned for, then you say, well I'm doing well indeed.

Health and wealth are a major part of the world's evaluation of how they're doing.

[7:55] These are the core value systems of the world for determining their well-being. That is why the health and wealth and prosperity gospel is so popular.

And it's nothing new. Our Lord Jesus exposed this temporal value system in the lives of his own hearers in his day. It's a clear note that sounded in his teaching.

Consider just two of his parables. First the parable of the rich fool in Luke chapter 12. Here we find in verse 13, someone in the crowd said to him, Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.

That's the situation, a real life situation. A parent has died and the inheritance needs to be divided and there's problems. And so the man is coming to Jesus asking him to be the arbitrator.

And Jesus replied, verse 14, Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you? Then he said to them, Watch out.

[9:05] Be on your guard against all kinds of greed. A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions. So that's the background to his story.

And now he tells a story to drive home his point, to expose the temporal value system of the world, indeed of his hearers.

The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. He thought to himself, What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops. Then he said, Well, this is what I'll do.

I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones. And there I will store all my grain and my goods.

And I'll say to myself, You have plenty of good things laid up for many years.

Take life easy. Eat, drink, and be merry. So you meet this fellow uptown one day. And you ask him, How are you doing?

[10:04] And he says, Quite well, thank you. You see, I've got plenty of good things laid up for many years. I'm financially set to enjoy early retirement, to take life easy, to eat, drink, and be merry.

I'm going to enjoy myself. He's not only looking to his wealth, he's also looking to his health because he's planning to have this party for many years, he says. A sick man, a man, a disease doesn't plan on many years, but this man is planning on it.

And so the world would agree with him. Wow, this guy is doing just fine. Put him on the cover of Forbes magazine and tell his success story. But we notice that Jesus comes to a different conclusion on how this man's doing based on God's value system.

Verse 20 and 21. But God said to this man, You fool. This night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?

Jesus steps outside of the parable and talks to his crowd and talks to us. This then is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God.

[11 : 23] Not rich toward God. That's a different value system, isn't it? Now we don't read that this guy was a bad guy as the earthly standards would judge him.

He was probably a hard-working man, probably industrious and a good planner. But the fatal flaw in all of his planning was that he failed to plan for eternity.

All of his plans and all of his wealth and all of his considerations were with this present life. He had nothing that would survive the fires of judgment.

He had nothing that would come out on the other side of death. What does death do to your portfolio?

Does it affect it? In what way? Do you have any investments that will survive death? Any treasures laid up in heaven? Are you rich toward God?

[12 : 22] You see, until we have factored in death, we really don't know how we're doing in the things that count. It's death that helps us see how we're doing in things that matter.

Eternity weighs in heavily with God's way of valuing things. And your spiritual relationship to God is more important than your bottom line financially or your present bill of health.

Just a few pages over in the scripture that was read for us, we have a story told secondly of the rich man and Lazarus. And so one day you stop in for a visit with the rich man and one of his servants ushers you in to his lavish palace and you say, I haven't seen you for a while.

How are you? And he tells you, well, I'm doing fine. You see, I'm dressed in the finest threads and I'm living in luxury every day.

Not very many are able to afford such a lifestyle as I have and besides that, I'm healthy. You know what they say, if a man's got his health, well then, he's rich.

[13 : 34] I've got it both, wealth and health. And on your way out, you notice the beggar lying by his gate with a longing look just to eat the scraps thrown from his table.

He's penniless. His health is not good. He's covered with sores that dogs are licking. And you don't even bother to ask him how he's doing because you think you know he's not doing well at all.

Be careful as you walk away from this scene because if you evaluate things by the world's value system, if you just take things as they appear to the naked eye, you will miss the truth of the matter. The truth of the matter is that the beggar is doing far better than the rich man inside the palace. Far better in the things that count.

And once again, what is it that will reveal how they really are? It's death. What happens at death?

[14 : 45] Death tells the real story. Who was really rich? Who was really poor? And upon death, we see how rich the beggar was. He knew God.

He knew the forgiveness of sins. He had eternal life. He's rich beyond telling. He went to heaven.

And this rich man that everyone thought was so well off, we get to see he really didn't have anything that counted.

Nothing that lasted beyond death. So Jesus is showing us the answer to this question. How are you doing? Cannot be measured by your net worth on your financial statement or by your present health condition.

Paul sums up the world's value system in Philippians 3.19 when he says, their destiny is destruction, their God is their appetite, their glory is in their shame, their mind is on earthly things.

That's it. The value system of earthly mindedness, temporal value system, present pleasures, passing treasures. So we go back to the life of Helen Lemel.

[16 : 06] How is she doing anyway? Well, the world looks her over and says she's blind, she's old, she's weak, she's rejected, she's alone, she's nearly broke.

She's obviously not doing well at all. And there's not a one in the world that wants to trade places with her. But Helen's not measuring with worldly standards, but with God's eternal and spiritual standards.

So she's able to say of the truth, I'm doing well in the things that count. And there's a coming a day when billions of people would do anything they could to trade places with her.

Now my concern this morning is not with the rich man or Lazarus or Helen, but with you and with me. How are you doing in the things that count?

The things that really matter in life. If you're lost without Christ, then you're doing a whole lot worse than you may realize. Regardless of all your health and wealth and friends and earthly things going for you, you're not doing well at all.

[17:21] In fact, you're to be pitied far more than this beggar with his sores. You're in the greatest need. You need Jesus Christ. In fact, everything that you need is in him.

All the things that really matter are found in Christ. Receive him. Receive him this morning. Receive him now. Whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

But my concern this morning is not only with those who are lost, it's also with believers. Because living in a world, in the world, where we breathe often the value system of the world, and we watch movies made by an earthly-minded value system, and we watch the news that has earthly-minded value systems, and we watch commercials, and we talk to neighbors, and we compare ourselves with the Joneses, and we easily slip into the world's value system.

Brothers and sisters, that's what worldliness is. To imbibe the world's value system, and so to miss the things that really count.

It's possible for Christians to be taking on board the world's value system and missing some of the things that are really important.

[18:51] That was Asaph's problem in Psalm 73. It nearly ruined him. He was evaluating life by the world's value system. And so we ask Asaph, how are you doing, brother?

And he says to us, not well at all. In fact, to be honest, I'm in a pitiful condition because I'm plagued with problems all day long.

They never go away. Every morning they meet me. Financial problems, health problems, nothing's going my way. No, you want to see somebody that's doing well, look over there at the prosperous wicked.

They have no struggles. Their bodies are healthy and strong. They're free from the burdens common to man. They're always carefree, increasing in wealth. Wealth, they are to be envied. I am to be pitied. And this scene was so oppressive to him. He tells us that. That his feet were slipping. He says he nearly chucked his religion.

[19:55] He nearly gave up on God and went back to the world. But a visit to the sanctuary straightened everything out, changed everything.

as there his thoughts were sorted out. And he came to understand their final destiny. Again, you see, it's the reality of death and the life beyond that helped him to see clearly what really counts in life.

And so we meet Asaph then, coming out of the sanctuary. And we notice immediately his countenance is lifted. We say, How are you doing, brother? And with a twinkle in his eye, he says, Oh, I'm doing very well.

Thank you. And we say to him, Oh, are the kids better? Are all your health problems healed? Your financial woes ended?

Did you get your job back? And he says, No, brother. None of that has changed. I'm still facing it all every day. But I'm doing very well in the things that count.

[21:04] Thank you. The things that count. You see, I've got God and they don't. They're a breath away from swift and eternal destruction.

Their feet are on slippery places. I have God holding me by my right hand and afterwards leading me into glory. Oh, yes, my flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

Oh, it is so good to be near to God, to have him as my constant refuge. God has really been good to me. And we say, what happened in there?

What happened in there, Asaph? Well, what happened is that he took off the glasses of the world's value system and he put on the glasses of God's eternal and spiritual value system and nothing looked the same.

The sick kids, his own health problems, his own financial problems, even when he looked over at the ungodly who were prospering, they didn't look the same either with God's eternal and spiritual

perspective.

[22:25] He now looks at himself and says, I'm to be envied. And he looks at them and says, they're to be pitied. And I ask you, what do you feel when you drive by the mansion of that rich man that does not know God and see all his cars and toys?

What do you feel? Pity or envy? When you watch the rich and famous on television who blaspheme the name of God, what do you feel in your heart for them?

Envy or pity? Be careful that you have the right glasses on because when you have the right glasses, you'll look at them and you'll say, poor, poor, pitiful people.

They don't know God. They don't know what's coming. They're not prepared for what's coming.

They're on slippery ground without a refuge in Christ.

It's so easy to slip into this method of evaluating our lives according to the standards of this world. I see something of it even in the 72 disciples that Jesus sent out to preach.

[23:50] You remember they went out and now they're coming back in Luke chapter 10 and they returned with joy and they said, Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name. They'd seen demons come out of people when they spoke a word in Jesus' name.

And they're excited and they're thrilled and they're telling their Lord about this powerful ministry that they've been experiencing. And Jesus replies, I know. I saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning. I know all about this authority that I've given you. However, and he has a word of correction to give, however, do not rejoice that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.

yes, as a preacher, I can get excited about this ministry or that thing that I'm doing for the Lord and be more thankful, more in awe of this than this fact that my name is written in heaven.

is my name written there on the page bright and fair in the book of God's kingdom is my name written there. That's the big thing.

[25:12] That's the treasure. That's the thing that counts most. And so we need these correctives. Get your glasses off, John.

Get the world's glasses and be done with them. Get the glasses back on. That's why Bible reading is so important. Every day you're putting on the glasses of God.

You're saying, how do I need to look at my neighbor today, God? Oh, give me your eyes to see them. Give me your heart to look on myself today and to see myself as I really am, to look upon my family, upon my job.

Help me to see through your eyes, through your value system. What are some of the other things that count? We can only begin to touch on the unsearchable riches that are ours in Christ.

Let me just say as we begin, all of them are summed up in Christ. To have Christ is to have all the things that count. Well, what are they?

[26:17] Again, we could be here, we will be there to all eternity, rejoicing in the things that counted. But the first thing, surely this is something that counts.

The righteousness of Christ. What's that? Well, it's the one thing you need to be right with God. This surely qualifies as something that counts.

Without this, no one will see the Lord. You see, God is so holy that he cannot grade on the curve. He demands straight A's, perfect righteousness. He must, because he's holy.

He's light and no darkness can dwell with him. But where will we get such righteousness? For we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. Well, there's two ways that men pursue righteousness.

And you can put all the religions and all the men in all the world into these two categories. They seek righteousness in one of these two ways. Either working to establish a righteousness of their own, or trusting in Christ's righteousness that is given to them as a gift.

[27:33] Trying to obey God ourselves, trying to obey his laws enough to tip the scales of his favor in our direction, or trusting that Christ has obeyed enough to satisfy God on my behalf.

And trusting in him to make me, to give me his righteousness. Well, trying to establish your own righteousness before God is as futile as trying to jump to the moon.

There's this thing called gravity. And there's this thing called sin. And it taints everything that we've ever done. It's tainting our worship as we're here this morning.

And so nothing that we do is perfect righteousness before God. it contaminates all that we do. And our sin is so offensive to God's holiness that no amount of our obeying can make up for even one

sin.

The very thought that we can is offensive to God. And though this is so futile to try to establish our own righteousness before God, if I just get a second chance, if I just try harder today, next week, maybe I can achieve it.

[28:44] It is so futile. And yet nothing is more common the world over. It's the way that the natural heart defaults. Trying to earn God's favor by doing deeds of righteousness.

You know the Apostle Paul was once on that rat race. He was trying to work out his own righteousness before God before he met Christ. He's one of the most religious men in Israel. But he was as lost as could be.

He could never be sure he had done enough to please God. Then God opened his eyes to the gospel. The good news that Jesus Christ, the sinless man, has perfectly obeyed all of God's commandments, and so he has a righteousness to give to every believing sinner.

That's the gospel. And Paul says as much in Romans 1.17, for in the gospel, a righteousness from God is revealed. A righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written, the righteous will live by faith.

It's faith alone in Christ that receives this righteousness of Jesus. So we become righteous before God, right with him, not by our own obedience to the law, but through Christ's obedience to the law, which is received by faith.

[30:09] Romans 3.20, and following, no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law, rather through the law we become conscious of sin. But now a righteousness from God apart from law has been made known to which the law and the prophets testify.

This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe, for there is no difference. Romans 5.19, For justice through the disobedience of the one man, Adam, the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man, Christ, the many will be made righteous.

How are they made righteous? Through the obedience of the one man. Not through their own obedience, but through his received by the empty hands of faith.

That's the gospel and that's what was burdening Paul so much for his fellow men, his countrymen, the Jews. They were still on the treadmill of trying to do enough works to earn righteousness of their own.

And that's what grieved him and moved him to pray and to labor for their salvation. He says, Though they're zealous for God, their zeal is not based on knowledge. Since they do not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.

[31:37] For Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes. As long as you are hoping for God to say, yes, you and I are friends, you and I are right, as long as you're hoping that you can achieve that by anything that you do, you are not submitting to the righteousness of God that is received by faith alone.

You're still leaning on your own righteousness or the imagination of righteousness instead of the real righteousness of Jesus.

The one thing that mattered now to Paul was to gain Christ, Philippians 3, 9, and to be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.

It's that simple message engraved on that Irish tomb. I traded my sin for his righteousness. For God made him who had no sin to become sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

John Bunyan, the author of Pilgrim's Progress, struggled for some two years in his conversion experience before he finally broke through into the assurance that he was the Lord's and the Lord's was his, that he was saved, that he's right with God.

[33:16] He says of those two years, no one knows the terrors of those days but myself. But then one day as he was walking through the field, the truth that came home to his heart was this, your righteousness is in heaven.

Your righteousness is in heaven. He says, I saw with the eyes of my soul Jesus Christ at God's right hand. There I saw my righteousness so that whatever I was or whatever I was doing, God could not say of me, he lacks my righteousness for that was just before him.

I also saw moreover that it was not my good frame of heart that made my righteousness better, nor yet my bad frame that made my righteousness worse, for my righteousness is Jesus Christ himself. The same yesterday, today, and forever. now did my chains fall off my legs indeed, and I was loose from my afflictions and irons, now went I home rejoicing for the grace and love of God.

I'm asking you this morning, how are you doing? And if you are in Christ, your righteousness is in heaven this morning. Behold him there, we say, behold him there, the risen lamb, my perfect, spotless righteousness.

[34 : 50] So that on your best days and on your worst days, your righteous standing before God is perfect, it's unchanging, it's constant, it's a righteousness by God himself approved, it's the righteous life of Jesus, it's him that God is satisfied with on your behalf.

Our righteousness is a finished righteousness. Our life already lived by Jesus. It's a perfect obedience already given to the law.

It was an obedience that led him to death, even the death of the cross, where he cried, it is finished. So the basis of my standing before God is not the righteous life I am now seeking to live.

No, the basis of my standing before God is always and ever the perfect obedience that Jesus gave to the law on my behalf. So tell me, are you in Christ?

Then you are to be envied. You are doing well, brother, in the things that count, for you have Christ's righteousness covering you, the one thing to make you right with God forever and ever and ever.

[36 : 10] Rich beyond telling, wealth is worthless in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death. If you have Christ, you have his righteousness.

Secondly, if you have Christ, you have his blood. You say, what would I want with blood? What would I want with his blood? Well, this, you'd want something that can cover your sins in the day of judgment.

And there's only one thing that can cover your sins. So that God will never see and punish them. It's the blood of his own son. We're taken back to Egypt and nine plagues have already fallen.

Now the tenth has been announced. The destroying angel is going to pass through and take the life of the firstborn in every family.

But to Israel is given this special process. whereby if they will go out and kill a Passover lamb and spread its blood upon the doorposts and stay in that home where the blood is applied, then when the angel of death passes over in destruction, he will pass over you.

[37 : 31] What's the message? there's one thing that saves from eternal damnation. It's the blood of the sacrifice. And Peter says, you know that it was not with the blood, it's not with silver and gold that you've been redeemed, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or spot.

Paul says, in him we have redemption, the forgiveness of sin. Through his blood, the blood of bulls and goats could never cleanse from sin, but the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin.

And so I ask you how you're doing, and dear Christian, you have Christ's blood, you can say I'm doing well in the things that count.

I have his righteousness, I have his blood. Another thing that counts is the presence of Christ.

Christ, to have him with you in time and eternity, in joy and sorrow, holding your right hand with you, with you.

Do we understand what it means to be in Christ, to be married to Christ? It means that we are never apart from him, one second of our life, here or in eternity, never again to be separated.

[38 : 58] That means, Christian, you should never ever think of yourself apart from Christ.

Remember, you're always joined to him. You never face a decision alone. You never have a problem to face alone.

He's always with you. He goes with you to work. He goes with you to school. Goes with you into your home. Goes to the hospital with you. Goes to the funeral home with you.

Goes with you even into the very valley of the shadow of death. he's with you as you say goodbye to the dearest of friends on earth. And he's with you and leads you through the Jordan River and safely onto the other shore where there is unmixed joy and unmixed pleasures in his presence forevermore.

To be with him forever who bore! The crown of thorns for you. The presence of Christ. To have him with you in the day of judgment. When to stand alone is to be damned.

But to have him as your advocate. Who even now speaks to the father in your defense. For he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins.

[40:11] Jesus Christ the righteous one. What is that worth to you? That is to change the way you view life. It's to change your whole outlook. How are you doing?

I'm doing well in the things that count. I have Christ righteousness. I have Christ's blood. I have Christ's presence. And I have Christ's promises.

My God will supply all your needs according to his riches and glory by Christ Jesus. What's that one promise worth to you? Would you take a check for \$20,000 right now for that promise?

Would you rather have \$20,000 in a bank that could fail tomorrow or to have a promise from God? I will meet all your needs according to my glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

You're rich. If you're in Christ, you have his promise. That's just one of hundreds. I give them eternal life and they will never perish. No one will be able to snatch them out of my hand.

[41:23] Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ, the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

And we know that all things, in all things, God works for the good of those who love him and are called according to his purpose. And God is faithful and he'll not let you be tempted above what you're able.

But with the temptation will make a way out that you might bear up under it. In all your ways acknowledge him and he will direct your paths. Great and precious promises, all yours in Christ.

Yea and amen, in Christ Jesus. He's the seal. He's the one that makes all of them good to us.

They're yours. You're doing pretty well, brother.

You're doing pretty well, sister, if you have all the promises of God. So if you're joined to Jesus Christ by faith, you have his righteousness, you have his blood, you have his presence, you have his promises.

[42:33] And I say whatever else may be happening in your life or not happening, you're doing great. Great in the things that count. You may be living on charity. You may have one leg in the grave.

You may be blind. You may be rejected by your spouse as Helen was. But if you are in Christ, you're doing well in the things that count. And that should shape the outlook with which you view yourself.

You view this day. You view this coming week. How are you doing? Oh, think of all that is yours in Christ. The world may pity you today, but there's a tomorrow coming when they will envy you.

because you're rich in the things that count and they are bankrupt in all such things. So, believer, what are the problems that are plaguing you?

Put them all in the balance. Put them on one side of the scale. Take every... You know, God is not afraid to have his people look reality in the face. He's not afraid to have you tell him all your troubles and all that's happening, to look it in the face.

[43:49] Go ahead. Put it all right there. All your loneliness, all your rejection, all your doubts, your confusion, all your sorrows, all your problems.

Put it on there and let it weigh in. And then on the other side, put all the things that really matter, the things that really matter.

You have Christ's righteousness, his death, his presence, his promises, his blood. Stop. So Paul says, I reckon, I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes.

We're back to the glasses. We fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

[45:03] So if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven. This is why we do not lose heart in any situation in life, because we are still doing well in the things that count.

And God has just put me in the pulpit another week to remind you of that, brother, to remind you of that, sister. You are doing well in things that matter.

Horatio Spafford was another songwriter, and we meet him out on the Atlantic Ocean, and we say, how are you doing, brother? And he says, I'm doing fine.

But it was just there in that dark water that you've lost four daughters in the ship that went down. Yes, but it is well with my soul, because Christ has regarded my helpless estate and has shed his own blood for my soul.

It is well with my soul. My sin, not in part, but the whole, was nailed to his cross, and I bear it no more.

[46:21] Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Oh, my soul. It is well with my soul. I'm doing fine in the things that count. May the Lord give us that perspective.

It's reality. The sad thing is, is we take the world's glasses, and we live so much of our life out of touch with the reality that ought to send us on our way rejoicing, praising our God for all the goodness and mercy to us shown in Jesus Christ.

Could I assign to you this afternoon, if you ever have any trouble with these glasses of the world, could I assign for you Psalm 73? And you go and read that chapter and see how Asaph had the wrong glasses on, see what a difference it made when he put God's eternal spiritual value system back on.

God. Well, let's sing that song. Something, isn't it, that we have a blind woman to thank for those words. Turn your eyes upon Jesus.

That's the key. Fix your eyes on him. See what is yours in Christ and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace. our father, the words of this song are convicting to us because we realize that the things of earth are often not the dim things but are the bright things, the brilliant things, the things that weigh in so heavily with us and the things that grow strangely dim are the things that count the most, even our Savior and all that is ours in him.

[48:03] We realize that we make poor representatives of our Savior when our eyes are upon earthly things and forgetful of the glory and grace of our Savior.

So for your own namesake, come and help us, strip from us these worldly value systems that we have imbibed even without thinking about it and replace them with the value systems of your own word and your own heart and help us to treasure being near to you more than anything else.

Oh, how good it is to be near to God through Jesus Christ. So unpack the glorious riches that are ours in Christ, go on opening the scriptures to us, showing us wonderful things, even our wonderful Savior.

We ask in his name. Amen.