

What Is Going On?

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[0:00] Please remain standing as we read God's word. Again, 2 Peter chapter 3 this time.! 2 Peter chapter 3.!

I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles.

First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, where is this coming, he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.

But they deliberately forget that long ago, by God's word, the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed.

By the same word, the present heavens and the earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. But do not forget this one thing, dear friends.

[1:23] With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar. The elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be?

You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat.

But in keeping with his promise, we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless, and at peace with him.

Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote to you with the wisdom that God gave him. Well, what is going on in the world?

[2:37] Where is world history going? Is there a plan that is being carried out, or is it just chaos reigning? Or we might ask it this way, what is the news behind the news?

When I was a boy, there was the nightly news for about 30 minutes, and a daily newspaper if you wanted to go deeper, and a couple magazines if you wanted a deeper dive into news events.

But today, every day and all day, we have news bombarding us. And if you wanted to, and I do not suggest it, you could do nothing but watch or read the news all day, every day, couldn't you?

There's scores of podcasts, evaluating the news, interpreting the news, plenty of documentaries that will take you back to catch you up on what you missed, and what happened even before you were alive, or were too young to care.

But for all the world's news outlets, there's important news that is not being reported. And that is this news behind the news that I'm referring to.

[3:55] You see, the news outlets only report what can be seen, what can be sensed by the five senses. But according to the Bible, there's another entire reality.

There's the reality of the living God, the one God in three persons, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

And though he is unseen, he is actively involved and working in the world today. There's his unseen, holy, elect angels that are carrying out his purposes on earth.

God's ministering spirit sent to serve those who will inherit salvation. And then there's also the unseen realm of the fallen angels, that is the devil and his hellish crew, opposing all that God and his angels and his people are doing in the world.

You see, you can't really understand what's going on in our world without understanding what's happening in the invisible world behind it.

[5:05] We see that clearly in the book of Job, don't we? If we had a newspaper, or if they had a newspaper in that day, it would tell us how a godly rich man in one day lost all of his wealth to some raiding bands of the Sabeans and the Chaldeans, how he lost all ten of his children by a tornado that hit the house that they were all in, taking all of them.

Later, how Job lost his health as he was covered with boils from head to foot, and then how he lost his closest friends who turned against him and accused him of great sin. And the headline might have read, A string of bad luck ruins one of the world's greatest men.

But there was much more going on, wasn't there, than just what could be seen and reported by men. Behind the news of the physical events of Job's life, there was another spiritual unseen realm that explains why these things were happening in the seen realm.

We only know this because God revealed it to us in the first two chapters of Job. Satan was accusing Job of only serving God because of the good things God gave him.

And he told God, You take them all away and he'll curse you to your face. And God gave Satan permission to take it all away in order to prove the genuineness of Job's faith and godliness.

[6:39] This is the news behind the news. And it's only found in the Bible. God's word. Even so, what is going on behind the news today is a higher unseen spiritual warfare between God and the forces of evil.

The book of Revelation gives us this same view of world history. From the birth of Christ until his return in glory. There's a lot happening here on earth. But the Bible uncovers the supernatural actors behind the scenes.

And is that not what Paul is wanting to not let us forget in Ephesians 6, 11, and 12? Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

For our struggle is not with flesh and blood. It's not with human beings. Be they kings, armies, whoever they be.

No, our struggle is against the rulers, authorities, and powers of this dark world, the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. So this is not just a theoretical matter.

[7:54] This is the world that you and I live in. This is the spiritual conflict that you and I are engaged in, whether we're aware of it or not. But we need to be aware of it.

We only get on the nightly news what can be seen. But to know what's going on behind the scenes, we must turn to the Bible.

So what is going on in the world today? Where is world history going? What is Satan doing behind the scenes? What is God doing behind the scenes?

Are you aware of it? Do you think of it when you watch or listen to the evening news? Are you viewing human history in this light? The news behind the news.

What is it? Well, I'm not talking about finding a Bible verse in prophecy about every single event that's happening in the world today. We've seen that fascination with end time prophecies, come and go and come and go and come and go again.

[8:58] No, I'm talking about the big picture. What's happening in the big picture today of the unseen world that we glean from the Bible alone? Well, we can trace what's going on through human history using three words.

And kids, I think you should be able to understand these three words. Creation, fall, and restoration. That's what's going on in the world.

Creation, fall, and restoration. And if you understand that, then you understand a whole lot more than most newscasters who are only telling us the surface stuff but don't know what God is doing and don't know what the evil one is doing.

So, first of all, creation. God had a plan to glorify himself by creating a universe. All things were made by him and for him.

For his glory. That's the plan. I'm going to make a world. And he tells us about it. No man was there to witness this. There were no newscasters taking notes.

[10:13] But God was there, and he doesn't let us guess. He tells us the very first verse of the Bible. Say it with me. Genesis 1.1. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

Now, the heavens and the earth is just the whole universe. It stands for everything that was made. And in the beginning, before anything else existed, God was there.

Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world from everlasting to everlasting, you are God. Psalm 91 or 90 and verse 2.

He's the uncreated creator of the heavens and the earth. And God's glory was displayed in that creation of his universe.

The heavens declare the glory of God. The skies proclaim the work of his hands. Isaiah 6.3 says that the whole earth is full of his glory.

[11:13] The heavens, the earth, all that God made demonstrates something of the glory of God. It's a stage on which God displays his glory. The glory of his wisdom.

The glory of his power. The glory of his greatness. His goodness. His beauty. His creativity. Now, men have been striving for thousands of years to discover the origin of the universe.

The origin of human life. And here in Genesis 1.1, the only one who was ever there to witness it tells us what's happened. But man thinking he is wiser than God keeps on coming to different conclusions, doesn't he?

So Darwin and others came up with this idea of evolution that life begins from just a little soup of chemicals in a puddle. And somehow it generates the smallest, most basic form of life.

But over millions and billions of years and just by chance and natural processes, it becomes a higher form of life and a higher form and a higher form until finally the monkey becomes a man.

[12:25] And here we are. That's the way the world tries to figure out the origin of human life. But the news behind the news tells us that Satan is the father of lies.

He's the father of lies. That means that, yes, evolution is his lie. And he has no problem finding men and women to tell his lies.

But God didn't create the world by the process of natural evolution. No, he made it by divine fiat. He just spoke and it came into being.

Let there be light. And there was light. That's how God created. It wasn't there one moment and then the next moment it was there.

Out of nothing, something. And all by the mighty power of the spoken word. By the word of the Lord were the heavens made. Their starry host by the breath of his mouth.

[13:29] Speaking of the world. He spoke and it came to be commanded and it stood firm. Bringing it all from nothing into something.

And after separating the sky and the waters of the sea and the dry land. He then filled the sky with stars. Filled the waters with fish. Filled the dry land with plants and animals.

And last of all, he took some of the dust of the earth and he formed it into the shape of a man. And he breathed in his nostrils the breath of life. And Adam became a living being. And then he put him to sleep.

And he opened up his side and took a rib out. And he formed it into a woman. And he woke the man up and brought her to the man. And performed the first marriage ceremony.

Uniting them. In that blessed state of marriage. Both of them made in the image of God.

[14:30] Made to reflect his glory. His character. And so the first two chapters of our Bible give us the news behind the news of creation. How the universe was formed.

How mankind got here. And because he made it, it all belongs to him. And he has authority as the potter over the clay to command it.

And he has given laws. Good laws. Laws that are good for us. To mankind. Now notice the order of creation.

God first set the table. And then he created man and invited him to the table. And said, come and dine. It's kind of like mom does on Thanksgiving. And she sets the table.

And she maybe decorates the table. And then she bakes the turkey. And the mashed potatoes. And all the fixings. And she puts it on the table. And then she says, come and eat.

[15:28] That's the way God did it. He created the whole thing first. Filled it with good things. And then he created man and woman. And gave them five senses to enjoy.

All that he had made. Perfect harmony. A world without sin. Without sickness and death.

Without pain. A perfect marriage. A harmonious relationship with their environment. And sweet friendship with God their maker.

Seven times in the first chapter of Genesis. God says, as he looks at what he has made. It is good. It is good. It is very good.

You see, creation magnifies the goodness and glory of God. That's the news behind the news that you live in. Telling us how we got here. But we no longer live in this perfect environment of the Garden of Eden.

[16 : 29] Do we? No longer at peace with God. No longer at peace with ourselves. With our neighbor. Our environment. Well, what has happened?

Well, we come to the second word, kids. It's what theologians call the fall. The fall. You know what a fall is. You go from a higher state to a lower state, don't you?

Well, that's what happened in Genesis chapter 3. And God tells us. Gives us the news behind the news. What happened? What is to account for the world being in the mess that it's in today?

It was the fall. Adam and Eve fell from their sinless state when they were put to the test. To not eat of the forbidden tree. Or they would die.

They had all the other trees in the garden to eat from. Why would they ever rebel against such a great and good creator God and friend?

[17 : 27] When he's just said, don't eat from this one tree. Once again, we find the Bible giving us the news behind the news. It was God's spiritual enemies that were involved.

Striking out in hatred against God. Satan and all of his demons are now involved. They had been sinless angels created by God to serve him.

But unsatisfied with their position, they rebelled against God. And since God's glory and goodness are revealed in his creation, and especially in mankind made in his image, where are they going to attack?

Well, they'll attack that which displays God's glory. They'll attack his creation and his highest creation, man and woman. And so Genesis 3 tells us how Satan brought his rebellion from heaven down to earth.

Striking against God. We're told it was him speaking to Eve in the form of a serpent. He told Eve the first lie in world history, that God was a killjoy and he was withholding something good from Eve just because he didn't want her to enjoy it.

[18 : 54] And if she ate from the tree, she would not die as he had threatened, but she would actually be like God. So listen to me, not him, he tells her.

I'm for you, he's against you. And she listened. And she was deceived. And she took the bait. She not only ate, she got her husband Adam to eat.

And rather than the blessings that Satan had promised, instead of being holy and happy, they became sinful and miserable. Instead of sweet friendship with God, for the first time they experienced fear, dread, guilt.

They tried to run and hide from God. They experienced marital disharmony, defending themselves, blaming each other, covering themselves.

So Satan and his forces of evil scored a great victory on the planet of God's image bearers, winning them over to his side of the rebellion in enmity against God.

[20 : 03] And that's how all of us come into this world. Adam being the representative of the human race means that when he fell, all of his descendants fell in him.

Romans 5 shows that we were all piggybacked on top of him. And kids, if you're on daddy's shoulders and he's giving you a piggyback ride through the backyard and he steps in a hole and he falls, what happens to you?

You fall. And that's the way the whole human race was. Piggybacked on Adam, our representative, and when he fell into sin, we all fell into sin. And that's why every single baby is born with a sinful human nature.

She's not a clean slate. She is bent toward sin, bent away from God, back toward God, faced toward sin and self and Satan.

That's the way we all have come into this world. We're born sinners with a rebellious nature that chooses ourselves over God.

[21 : 10] And then Adam's descendants were also born under the condemnation of a broken law. He was to obey, and if he obeyed, we were piggybacked on him, and we would bear the fruits of his

obedience.

But no, he disobeyed, so we bear the curse, the condemnation of a broken law, the curse of death to our bodies. That's why everybody dies.

The spiritual death of alienation from God, separation from God. And then when this life is over, we have the second death, the lake of fire, eternal separation from God.

You see, that comes upon us because our representative, Adam, fell. You can read that in Romans chapter 5, that it was through the disobedience of the one man that we were all made sinners.

And that's why death has come to all men, for all men have sinned in Adam. And Adam's sin also brought the curse upon our environment. Remember what happened? God cursed the serpent.

[22:18] He cursed the woman. He cursed the man. And thorns and thistles suddenly grew up in this wonderful garden. Wouldn't garden be easy without thorns and thistles, without weeds?

But now there are such things. So his habitat was also cursed, not only himself. And now his environment is full of destructive storms.

Isn't that what we read in the news? All kinds of destructive storms. But this gives us the news behind the news. Why is that? Hostile animals, bugs, bacteria, plagues, diseases, earthquakes, disasters.

Because of Adam's sin, Romans 8 says that the whole creation was subjected connected to frustration and bondage to decay. This world is winding down.

It's decaying. It's frustrated. It is not what it once was. And it's all because of the curse that came upon man's environment because of man's sin.

[23:30] So at the fall, the world got into the wrong hands. Satan is called the god of this world. 2 Corinthians 4.4. The god of this world, the god of this age.

Fallen sinners are now under the tyrannical reign of Satan. He's usurped the place of God in each heart. He's the master that now controls the world of lost sinners as his slaves. They do his bidding. 1 John 5.19 says, John says, we know that the whole world is under the control of the evil one. Do you know that?

John says, we know it. We know as much as that we are the children of God that the whole world is under the control of the evil one. Paul says in Ephesians 2.3 that Satan is the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.

Do you know any disobedience in the world? Whether it's talking about your two-year-old or your teenager or some rogue terrorist.

[24:42] He is the spirit that is now at work in the children of disobedience. Sinners are his possession, Jesus says. He stands guard over them and he's standing there and he's making sure that no one gets in to steal his possession as he has them walked up in his prison house of sin, Matthew 12.29.

The greatest bondage of all for sinners is to think that they're free to do their own thing. Isn't that strange that the greatest slaves of Satan are those who say, I'm free.

I get to do my own thing. I do whatever I choose. All the while, they got a hook in their nose and they're doing exactly what Satan wants them to do which is to sin against God.

That's the bondage he carries over this entire world. That's the news behind the news. Remember that when you see disobedience in your world, when you see rebellion, when you see evil.

You know why? The God of this age. So we see how the devil has wreaked havoc on God's good creation and especially on his highest creation of man made in the image of God.

[26:03] Man who was made to know God and worship God and trust God and obey God is now worshipping the creature rather than the creator who is blessed forever.

Oh, he has messed things up big time, hasn't he? That's the explanation for it. The good creation that God made has fallen and this is the Bible's explanation of all the evil that we see in our world that is reported every day in our homes.

Well, that is true and yet God loved his fallen handiwork. He had made it.

He loved what he made. He loved what he made even after it was fallen, after it was perverted, after Satan had gotten in and caused them to rebel against God.

Yet he loved his creation and he was not about to trash it on the ash heap of history, to walk away from it. No sooner had mankind rebelled but that God announced his eternal plan for the restoration of his fallen creation.

[27:20] We've seen creation, the fall, now the restoration. When something is restored, it's put back in its original state. And there is a restoration that is being undertaken right now as we sit here.

God is restoring his fallen creation. Genesis 3.15 As soon as Adam and Eve had sinned and he comes and he brings the curses, his first curse is for the devil and he says to the serpent, I will put enmity between you and the woman.

I'm going to put enmity between the two of you. Right now, the woman and him were friends in their enmity against God. But God says, I'm going to put the enmity between you two, which means I'm going to bring the woman and her seed back to my side.

No longer enemies against me, but now my friends and their enmity will be against you, Satan. I'll put enmity between you and the woman, Satan, and between your seed and hers.

He will strike your head and you will strike his heel. So there's a seed of the woman. There's the offspring, those who will be redeemed through this coming Messiah to be born of the woman.

[28:47] And there's the evil seed, the children of the devil, all who do his will. But this coming male, singular seed of the woman is going to strike his head.

And that means deal a decisive blow that will finish him. And in the process, his heel will be bruised. Of course, speaking of the cross where Jesus, by his death, crushed the head of the serpent. So, that's the promise. God loves his fallen creation. He's going to redeem out of it a people for himself. This was the amazing grace of God, the amazing love of God that had never been demonstrated had there not been a fall.

You see, this was nothing new to God. It wasn't like the fall was a surprise that he made this creation and it was so wonderful. And now, oh, what happened to my world? No, that was all part of his plan and decree because it would be by restoring and redeeming his fallen creation that his glory and goodness and love and mercy would be put on display in a way that it otherwise wouldn't have.

You know, if God wanted citizens for his kingdom, it would have been cheaper just to create new ones and to let the fallen ones just go to hell. I mean, he could create new ones with just a word of his mouth.

[30:18] Let there be new children for me, new citizens for my kingdom. That's all it would take to create new citizens. But if he's going to redeem fallen rebel citizens, it's going to cost him his own son, his own son being damned in the place of those rebel enemies of mine.

And that's what he chose. Amazing love. Magnificent mercy. Wonderful grace. God's eternal plan of redemption was out of the wreckage of fallen humanity to save for himself a remnant.

Kids, you know what a remnant is? You go into Joanne Fabrics, are they still around? You have rolls of material and then there's a box that's got a sign on it.

Remnants. It's the end pieces that are cut off. It's not the whole role. God is not going to redeem all people who have ever lived. That's a lie of the devil.

To think that everyone's going to end up in heaven one day. No, he's going to redeem a remnant. You find it throughout the Old Testament. He's going to redeem his elect, those that the Father has chosen to save and given to his Son.

[31:43] Set his love on them and said, Son, you go and redeem them. You go and die in their place. You go and suffer the punishment they deserve that they might be redeemed, restored, back to fellowship with us.

It was no surprise. This is love. Not that we love God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

1 John 4, 7. A propitiation for our sins. A sacrifice that would propitiate God's wrath. It would pacify God's wrath. It would satisfy God's wrath.

It would turn God's wrath away from the remnant by taking it upon himself. That was the love of God on display. Restoring fallen rebel sinners to himself.

We have that wonderful passage in Isaiah 53 that describes the cross and our Savior's redemption. Verse 6 says, We all, like sheep, have gone astray.

[32:47] We have each one turned to his own way. That simply means that, yes, we were born with our backs to God, and when our feet hit the ground, we've all gone astray from God.

We've all gone our own way. I went my way, you went your way. What they have in common, they were not God's way. They were our way. And what do we expect the last half of the verse to be?

And so God sent them all to hell. That's what we deserve. But it's not how the last part of the verse goes. We all, like sheep, have gone astray. We have turned each one to his own way.

And the Lord has laid on him, the suffering servant of the Lord, the iniquities of us all. He took our sins off of us and put them on his son.

And then his son bore our sins in his body to the tree where he suffered the punishment. He was wounded for our transgressions.

[33 : 44] He was bruised for our iniquities. And the punishment that brought us peace was on him. And by his wounds, we are healed. Healed from our waywardness and going our own way.

We've returned to the chief shepherd and overseer of our souls. fellowship with God, the aim of restoration, to bring us to God.

Christ died for sin once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring us to God, to bring us to God. And so you see the love of God the Father in giving his son.

He didn't even spare his son, but gave him up for us. And we see it in the son willingly, voluntarily, laying down his life. I'm the good shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep.

No sooner had the father said, go, the son said, I'm on my way. That's exactly what I was thinking. I'll go and suffer in their place. And so God was determined to restore this remnant of fallen, guilty sinners from Satan's kingdom, to win them back through a redeemer he would send.

[34 : 59] And then to restore his environment. The creation that had been brought under a curse by his sin. Remember, just as man's environment suffered because of man's fall, so man's restoration will bring about the restoration of his environment.

The creation, the natural order. But the order is just reversed from creation. In creation, remember, he created the habitat for man first and then he made man and dropped him into that world of plenty.

Now the order is just the opposite. In restoration, God is first restoring men and women by a new birth, giving them new hearts.

By repentance and faith, they're turning away from their way and trusting in the Savior, turning from their sin to follow him. and then, when he comes back, then he will transform the environment and will bring in a new heavens and a new earth, the home of righteousness that was read in 2 Peter 3. So there, it's redeem, restore man first and then restoring his habitat. that day will bring about that day when Christ returns.

[36 : 23] We will see him as he is and be made like him. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire and the elements will melt in the heat.

But in keeping with his promise, we're looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. righteousness. He restores his people first by saving grace and then restores the universe at the end of time.

So what's going on? What's the biggest thing happening in the world today? It's not the midterm elections. It's not corruption found in government. It's not wars in Iraq and Ukraine or Iran.

All these things that dominate the news. That's all they have to record, right? Is what they can see. What's happening? No, the biggest things, the biggest thing that's happening is Jesus Christ is building his church.

Jesus Christ is gathering his remnant. He's gathering his bride to live with him and his father and his spirit forever and ever in the new heavens and the new earth.

[37 : 30] That's what's going on today. Nothing is bigger than that. Are you caught up in the big thing? Is mission on the front focus of your life to bring the...

How is he gathering a bride? It's through the preaching of the gospel. How shall they hear? How shall they call upon the Lord and be saved unless someone goes?

How shall they call on him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear if no one preaches? And how should someone preach if he's not sent? You see, missions is at the bottom of Christ gathering his bride.

Are you praying for missions? Are you evangelizing? Are you a part of this greatest thing that's happening in the world today? He's setting free those taken captive by the devil.

And instead of their enmity and their heart toward God, he's turning that enmity toward the devil and love toward God. He's changing their heart. He takes out the old heart, puts in a new heart.

[38 : 37] He changes their loyalties. He frees them from Satan's iron grip upon them. And if the Son shall set you free, you shall be free.

Indeed. Amen. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. And that's what he's doing. He's translating children of darkness out of the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of the Son he loves.

And he's preparing them for glory. And one day he will make a new heavens and a new earth for them. Well, you'll not see that on CNN or Fox.

You'll read of it here in the Holy Bible. And you'll see it happening here as God is redeeming sinners one at a time. And around the world, the missionaries we support, the missionaries we pray for, we hear of conversions, people being baptized, saying, I'm done with the old way.

I have a new master. I am joined to Christ by faith. There was an eternal covenant of redemption where the Father gave a people to his Son and said to him, you go and redeem them.

[40:01] You go and restore them. Do everything that they need to be reconciled to us. That means you obey perfectly because they broke the law. You need to obey all of it on their behalf.

And then you need to suffer the punishment that they deserve because of breaking it. You go down and do that for them. And here, I will make a body for you. I'll prepare a body for you.

And the Son willingly came. And Jesus said this in John chapter 6, all that the Father has given me, given me from before the creation of time, all that the Father has given me will come to me.

Every single one. And whoever comes to me, I will in no wise cast out. How do we know those that the Father has given to the Son?

Who are they? They're all the ones that come to Jesus Christ claiming no righteousness of their own but saying, have mercy on me, the sinner.

[41:06] Those are the ones the Father in eternity past had given to his Son. And he came and he died in their place. And the Holy Spirit came and gave them a new heart that they might trust in him and be saved.

And Jesus says, not one of them will be missing in the final roll call of heaven. Those he saves, he keeps. Well, this is the good news behind all the bad news.

This is the most important thing happening today. Most important thing is not the spread of Islam. I hear podcasts spreading all kinds of fear.

And I'm not saying there's no reality to it, but that's not the big thing. It's the spread of the kingdom of God that is the big thing. He's calling Muslim sinners to himself.

He's calling out a bride for himself from the ends of the earth, a new humanity to live in that new heavens and earth, the home of righteousness with our Savior.

[42:11] So the most important matter for you is then what? Is to get into Christ. Are you in Christ? That's the most important reality that you have to face.

Are you facing it? Are you thinking of it? Are you ready ready to meet the judge? Have you been born again by the Holy Spirit?

Are you resting on Christ alone for salvation? Right here, right now in the preaching of his gospel, the Lord Jesus is present. He's inviting sinners to come to him.

He's the only ark of safety from the coming wrath of God, the storm of God's wrath. And he's the door and the door is open. But as you know, with the ark, there came a day when the door closed.

And so it will be in that last day that when the trumpet sounds and the dead in Christ are raised and Christ returns from heaven with his saints, it will be too late.

[43:14] The door of mercy will be shut. It's open today. Right now, he is here by his spirit offering you salvation. Come to me, he says.

You, weary and burdened, burdened with your sin, burdened with your guilt, burdened with fears, burdened with cares of life, come to me and I will give you rest.

Soul rest. Oh, that's more than physical rest. That's rest in our hearts. That's tranquility and peace here to know that I'm right with God and if he came today or if I went in death today, I'd be ready to meet him as my Savior and my Lord.

Soul rest. Come to me. Cast yourself upon me. If you're still lost in your sins, you need to know this, that God's not the only invisible one in the world today.

We talked about Satan hating God. He doesn't want you abandoning his kingdom. He wants you serving him, not God. That's how he gets back at God.

[44:29] You see, she's serving me, not you. Well, he hates to see any of his go from serving him to serving the Lord Jesus.

And he'll do anything to keep you. And on earth it's not his equal. You're not up for him. Satan hates God and doesn't want you serving God.

Satan hates you. You've been created in God's image and he wants you in hell with him. So what does he do? He blinds you. 2 Corinthians 4, 3. The God of this age, Satan, has blinded the minds of unbelievers so that they cannot see.

What can they not see? They cannot see the gospel of the glory of Jesus Christ who is the image of God. You may have heard the gospel a thousand times but you're still as lost as can be.

Why? Because you see no glory in Christ. You see no beauty, nothing amazing and awesome that you should want him more than your sin, that you would want him as your Savior and Lord.

[45 : 38] Why is that? The God of this age has blinded unbelievers. The whole world is blind to the glory of God in the gospel in Jesus Christ, his son.

And Satan is trying to keep you blindfolded from Christ's glory. His glory that's seen so brilliant in the gospel. Who's ever heard of a love like this?

A shepherd dying for sheep that love to wander. A master dying for rebel servants who've gone over and served the other side.

Who's ever heard of that kind of love? And if you ever see that love, Satan knows that you'll be lost to his kingdom. You'll want to know that Savior.

You'll want to know that you're right with that Savior. You'll want to love him and serve him. And that's why the God of this age blinds the minds of unbelievers to the gospel of Christ.

[46 : 42] You know, in the parable of the sower, Jesus says, the sower goes out and sows. And that first, he sows the seed everywhere. And some of it fell along the path. And you remember what happened to that seed?

The birds of the air came and as soon as the seed hit the ground, they were all over it and snatched it away. The disciple says, tell us what this parable means.

And he says, well, that seed is the gospel seed. And when it's sown in the preaching of the gospel, Satan comes and snatches that word away so it doesn't take effect in the heart.

Now, that's the parable. That's just an earthly story. But there is a spiritual reality behind that story. And according to Jesus, right here, right now, there are demonic forces waiting to pick up the seed of the gospel to distract you from doing anything with it, taking it seriously, saying, this is for me. No, no, it's not for you. It's not, you're okay. You've got other things to do. Think about tomorrow. Think about last week. You see, that's the battle that's raging as Christ is gathering a people to himself.

[47 : 56] Oh, be aware. Be aware. You have enemies. You have enemies that don't want you coming to Jesus. Oh, you ought to know how sweet Jesus is if they work overtime to keep you from him.

So stop listening to the devil and start listening to Jesus as he welcomes you to come to him. You think our world is ready for the return of Christ?

I don't think they are. I think that it's going to be like a thief in the night that will take them by surprise. Isn't that what Peter said? There'll be scoffers in that day saying, where is the coming that he promised?

Everything's going on in the world as it has from the beginning. There's never been an interruption of God interrupting human history. Oh, they intentionally forget that that did happen once when God flooded the earth with water and only eight people survived.

And he says, I'm going to do it again, only this time with fire and only those in Christ will survive. People say, but it hasn't happened yet so it'll never happen.

[49 : 08] The reason it hasn't happened yet is not because God is slack in keeping his promises. It's not because God doesn't keep his promises. The reason it hasn't happened yet is that God is being patient.

Isn't that beautiful? He's being patient. He's giving sinners time to repent, to turn from their way to Christ. What a glorious Savior.

He would even let people misinterpret his long delay and charge him as being, oh, he doesn't keep his promises. You can't trust him. He would put up with that just to keep waiting.

You know, if Christ had come a year ago, some of you would be in hell. hell. If Christ had come 25 years ago, more of you would be in hell.

But he was patient. He didn't come. Wanting you to come to repentance. Come today if you hear his voice.

[50:08] Harden not your heart. Today's the day of salvation. Tomorrow may be the day of judgment. Well, let's sing of this coming of our Savior.

So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless, and at peace with him, bearing in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.