

# Call to Repent

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[ 0 : 00 ] Well, this week I want to begin transitioning our focus from that part that we play in other people's lives, from bringing the truth to them, speaking God's truth, God's commands into the lives of people, and start looking at how an individual responds to that which they have heard from others, from others who love them.

We all know, we've all been there at times where we've been caught, entangled in sin, and need to be rescued, need to be delivered out of that sin, and by God's grace he brings people into our lives, whether it was at salvation, we needed to hear the good news of the gospel, redemption in Jesus Christ, the futility and vanity of our own thoughts and ways in pursuing those.

But we also need those same voices speaking God's grace and truth to us as Christians, as we continue our walk, our growth in godliness because of the deceptive nature of sin, in and of myself I can't always see what's happening in my life, so I need the intervention of other people.

And so when people speak God's truth into my life, I'm brought to a place of decision, what am I going to do with that truth? How am I going to respond to it?

And we trust that as people speak truth into my life, I respond in a positive way, and I'm delivered out of that sin, that entanglement of sin, but not just delivered out of that, but also delivered unto something.

[ 1 : 48 ] That's what sanctification is all apart, set apart from sin, but not just that side of it, set apart unto God and righteousness. And that's why that point of reference that we've talked about is so important when we're reaching into the lives of one another.

What is it that we're looking to accomplish? And ultimately it's that that person would be a true worshiper of God. God is worthy of that kind of worship, and that's really the best thing that could happen to each one of us.

We would be learning what true worship of God is, and willingly doing that on a daily basis, and living out what we were created to be.

So that point of reference, being a true worshiper of God, in union with Jesus Christ to live a new life for God's glory. Well, as that truth is spoken to us, again, we're going to hear it, trust, we're going to believe it, and then act on it in order to be rescued out of those enslaving addictions that have been so destructive in our lives, and really live with new purpose in our lives.

Once someone has lovingly confronted us with the truth about, say, ourselves, about God, about redemption through Jesus Christ, through the transformation that will take place in our lives, again, we're going to need to respond.

[ 3 : 19 ] And what will that response look like? Well, that's what we want to focus on this morning, and that sometimes that response is going to be one of rejection. Individuals who will share the different aspects of God's grace with them, they're just going to reject what they've heard and continue on in the direction that they're going in.

Frustrating to us, certainly, who have been witnessing to them, sharing with them God's way of deliverance, discouraging, saddening, but it's that decision that they've made, and that's the way they're choosing to continue to go in.

And so we'll draw back, wait for additional opportunities to share God's truth, and that's many times what it takes, that ongoing manifestation of the love of God toward them through displays of acts toward them, but also bringing God's truth to bear on their hearts and their minds, trusting that God's Spirit would use that in their lives for a different response to the truth.

But that rejection is going to take place. Another form of rejection might be that they'll find a recovery program that will help them escape the present addiction, but without turning in faith and obedience to Jesus Christ.

Are there those that do change what they're addicted to? Well, yes, certainly there are people that go to other programs that aren't based in Jesus Christ and the Gospel, that are delivered out of their addiction to alcohol, drugs, or whatever, but again, the reference point is just not their present recovery for their benefit in this life.

[ 5 : 12 ] It's all focused and centered on the person of Jesus Christ and God who's worthy to be worshipped by them. And so, nice that they're not destroying themselves in one way, but sad that they're choosing it in another way.

We don't want that choice to just be to another idol of some form, but to be a true worshipper of Jesus Christ.

Well, this rejection, we see that in the Scriptures over and over again. Jesus explained this to Nicodemus, and Jesus experienced it in his ministry.

In John 3.19, Jesus said, This is the verdict. Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.

And so we can understand some of why that rejection is taking place. There's a greater love and affection for that which they should give up and turn from, but that's the direction of their heart at that time.

[ 6 : 20 ] They love the darkness more than the light. They don't want the evil that's within and without to be exposed. And admission and turning to Christ would be that exposure, that my ways have been wrong and I've been following the wrong way, etc.

In John 12.37, John writes that even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him.

Many people say, Well, if I just saw Jesus and saw the miraculous things that he was doing back then, well, I would believe and I would turn to him. Well, it's a good possibility you would not because there were many back then that also saw but did not believe.

And then Paul explained it in his letter to the Romans. He said, The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness.

So they heard the truth, but they suppressed it. That means they pushed against it. And through their unbelief, their actions, their ongoing wickedness, they sought to push it away and suppress it and hold back its progress that it would make in their lives.

[ 7 : 45 ] And they would set themselves up as God and be the determiners of what they would worship and exchange God's ways, God's truth, worship of God for worship of something else, something that which God created.

So rejection is there when we share the truth and love with those that we are concerned about and see the direction that they're going in their lives.

But we shouldn't give up. We should continue on even as God had been faithful to continue on and was in our lives as well. Many of us did not hear the gospel one time and then believed it.

Even after, as Christians, many times we may have become entangled in sin and didn't always turn away from it the first time someone lovingly came to us and tried to help us see what was happening.

So continue on in sharing God's word because at some point, which is what we pray for and hope for, the other response will take place, not one of rejection but one of repentance.

[ 8 : 50 ] This is the response that really brings the individual back to what true humanity is. This is what we were created for.

The normal human being is the one who is in relationship with God and is worshiping him every day in everything he does.

I wouldn't recommend you going up to an unsafe person and telling them that they are the abnormal ones. That would be pretty offensive. But in reality, that's what it is.

Anytime we're living in sin, we're not living the normal human life that God designed and created us to be living. The individual living submissively to God and displaying loving obedience to him, that is that person who has repented and turned to God in Christ Jesus.

He has his sins forgiven. He has the righteousness of Jesus Christ credited to his account and possesses all the resources that he needs now for living this new life as a new creation in Christ Jesus that does bring glory to God and is a fulfilling and an abundant life.

[10:06] Not one without its struggle, certainly, but one where we are on the right track in being what God wants us to be. It is the life of hope, which is what we're going to be seeing more and more in this lesson.

So biblical faith and repentance certainly involves God and the person. That means that there are changes that God affects upon the individual's nature and being that produces within the person a desire to turn from self-rule and sin to submission to and love for God and to live for his glory. I mean, we can give thanks that that is a work that God is faithful to do and that he will do that. For without his intervention and affecting that change within our nature and our being, we are still people without hope.

I think in Scripture we certainly see this combination of God affecting change and people called and commanded to willingly act in accord with that which he has affected in us.

2 Timothy 2.25, Paul writing to Timothy, helping him understand, well, how do you respond to those who are opposing you, your ministry, even the gospel?

[11:27] Those who oppose him, the minister, he must gently instruct. So that's what we'll be doing. We'll be taking the truth to people who need the truth, who hear the truth, and to turn to Christ.

We're going to offer that gentle instruction in the truth and God's Word, which is what they need, in the hope that God will grant them repentance.

That's our hope. That's our desire. That's what we pray for. You probably have people that you're praying for, that as you deliver the truth of God's Word gently at other times, that God would grant them repentance that they need that will lead them in that way of salvation, leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape the trap of the devil. I mean, it's very plain and very blunt there that any time we're living outside of the wisdom and counsel of God, we've lost our senses.

It makes no sense whatsoever to be living that way. And sometimes, in retrospect, we'll look back on decisions that we've made and the actions that we've taken and see it and understand it in a new way and say, why did I do that?

[12:46] It made absolutely no sense for me to do that. Well, when you're struggling with the sin and temptation, deceitful desires, it's difficult at times to see that, but it's something that we do need to bring to mind and remind ourselves of, is that does this actually make sense, according to God's wisdom, for me to be going in this direction?

Well, according to this passage, it certainly would not, any time we do that, go contrary to God's word. We've lost our senses and are entrapped by the devil who's taken them captive to do his will. And then in Acts 20, 21, the writer says, I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

So while we see that it is a work of God that he's doing, we also see that on our part, on the part of the individual, they need to turn to God. They need to repent in faith in Jesus Christ.

In Acts 3, 19, we hear something very similar. Repent then and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.

[14:03] Again, that's what's out there. That's what's being held out there as we come to our senses from hearing the truth and God works in our hearts and we actually respond in true faith in Jesus Christ and what God is doing in our hearts.

What's ahead of us is our times of refreshing. We'll be entering a new sphere of living and walking in the Holy Spirit as people redeemed and being transformed in our humanity into something beautiful in this relationship with God and as worshipers of God.

So, both sides of this when we think of repentance, a quote from Brad Hamrick, the only way out of sin is through genuine repentance. All lasting change is built upon repentance.

Repentance is when we change our primary allegiance from self to God. Repentance is when we turn from trusting our ways to trusting God's ways.

Repentance is when our primary goal changes from self-satisfaction and self-protection to glorifying God and loving others according to God's design.

[15:17] Repentance is when you commit to quit trying to make your broken ways work. And I could add to that and begin hearing, believing, and acting upon God's good, great wisdom and enjoying the fruitfulness that comes from that.

Another quote from John Baker, Repentance is how you begin to enjoy the freedom of your loving relationship with God. Many times, that's not how people consider the commands of God. They would describe them more as binding, etc. But that doesn't make sense. What makes sense is being in relationship with God, our Maker, Creator, with the presence of His Holy Spirit within us who empowers us to live and be the people He has designed us to be and walk in that kind of freedom and liberty.

true repentance affects our whole person and changes our entire view of life. Repentance is to take God's point of view on our lives instead of our own.

So this week and then the remaining weeks that we have, I want to focus on those changes that take place, both the inner changes and the outer changes.

[16:46] The outer changes being the expression of what changes have taken place inside of me. Changes in what I love and what I think about God, myself, and His creation.

All of those differences within me, my inner being, certainly will affect who I am outwardly. It will affect the decisions, the conclusions I come to and as a result, what I begin to do with my mouth, my hands, my feet, and on and on and on.

So we want to take a look at some of those inner changes this week and then, as I said, in the remaining weeks take a look at how that affects us outwardly.

I might ask for some of your input this morning. We'll focus on the changes that take place in me, in my inner man in regard to what I love and what I think about God, myself, and creation, those things outside of me.

And as you sit there and as I read some of the examples I have, there's so many more we could add to the ones that I've got here. But think at times even in your own struggles, in your times of temptation, what actually is going on in your mind, in your heart, in your affections in regard to what you're being tempted with?

[18:16] What are you being tempted to replace God with? What are you finding your deceitful desires and thoughts telling you about God and whatever it else is that you're being tempted to go after that would be contrary to God's wisdom and instruction?

And those are the things you want to be recognizing as red flags in your growth and godliness. What you're trying to do is identify one that warfare is really taking place and some of those warning signals in your mind, in your emotions, etc., that will warn you, you better be careful here, you're going down this road that could lead you to these kind of decisions and actions.

I think that's part of really growth in godliness, recognizing that temptation early on, and that in a heart of real love for God, we stop it way back here.

As the great philosopher in the past said, you nip it in the butt. You know who that great philosopher is? Who knows who that person is? Tom? Farney Fife, of course.

You've got to nip it in the butt. And look it up on Netflix if that's new to you. You'll gain a lot from your experience there.

[19:47] So, first of all, with God, what must change in my inner being in regard to God? And what I've tried to list here are things that I tried to just think through about what is the person saying and thinking about God in those times of temptation that again, they may need to change and repent of.

Well, one is that he is God and there is no other God. We've identified addiction as a form of idolatry and false worship, God's substitute worship.

You believe that there is another God who can do something better than the God who is the one true God. And you might think, well, I would never say that.

Well, no, you wouldn't say that, but at times we function that way. And so many times the way we function can really tell us what we really are thinking and loving inwardly.

Isaiah 45, 22 says, Turn to me and be saved, all you and to the earth, for I am God, there is no other. Many times you see that in the scriptures, years I've been reading in Ezekiel, and many of the things that God brought on the lives of the people of Israel and the other nations, the ungodly nations, somewhere in the chapter it says that they would know that I, the Lord, am God.

[21:13] So much of what God is doing in the scriptures is to bring us to the realization that he alone is God. So if he's doing that with such emphasis, we have to understand that there's the other emphasis in the world trying to say he's not God, but something else can be God and in substitute of him.

But we need to understand that he alone is God. Exodus 23, you shall have no other gods before me. Another quote from Brad Hamrick's lessons, there is one true God who stepped into time in the form of Jesus Christ.

He lived the life we were supposed to live, died the death our sin deserves and is scandalously willing to offer his righteousness for our surrender. Talking to any other God is a form of talking to ourselves and has the power of talking to a doorknob or a chair.

That is the reality. There is truly only one true personal almighty God. And to talk to any other as God would be talking to a non entity, a non personal being who has no power to do what the only one true God can do.

Second, he is the sovereign God, Ezekiel 14 6, therefore say to the house of Israel, this is what the sovereign Lord says, repent, turn from your idols and renounce all your detestable practices.

[ 22 : 47 ] When I first learned this verse and memorized this verse, I saw it was interesting that as God was using Ezekiel to reach into the lives of his people, people who had been walking in sin, who had given him up for some other gods, he was coming to Ezekiel and wanting him to take the message to the people and say, this is what you tell them, this is what the sovereign Lord says, they made other things sovereign in their lives and God is using Ezekiel, no, he needs to bring them back to this realization that there is no other God but me.

I am the sovereign Lord. And so as he tells Ezekiel, you address the people in this way, reminding them of who I am, and then he says, repent.

So that repentance, turning from your idols and renouncing all your detestable practices, the outward expression of their wrong worship that they need to repent of, it all starts with an understanding of who is sovereign, who is the sovereign Lord, and it is the one true God who is sovereign Lord.

Something we need to recognize, you need to know that that's what's really going on in your life at the time of temptation. There's this wrestle, this warfare, who's going to be sovereign in my life? Is it going to be me? And am I going to be calling the shots and determining over the sovereign God what is really the best way, what is good for me, what is more fulfilling for me rather than Him?

[ 24 : 29 ] Or am I going to recognize the sovereign God for who He is and all that He says is true and right and good and put my total trust and dependence on Him and what He has said? That's something we need to understand for me to make this shift in what I'm doing outwardly.

I'm going to have to recognize I'm not God, He is. And that's what we're praying that God would affect in our lives in an ongoing way but in the lives of those who are still outside of Christ.

Three, He's the personal all-powerful God. 2 Corinthians 6, 18, I will be a father to you and you will be my sons and daughters says the Lord Almighty.

So again, as sovereign God but not just sovereign God, one who is transcendent but one who is very close, very personal that we can enter a relationship as father and sons and daughters.

So even though a person may have been estranged from an earthly father, there is still one who can be father, your father, even far greater than any earthly father you could have.

[ 25 : 45 ] And He is one who is almighty. Well, He is a God who forgives sins, Mark 2, 10, but that you may know the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.

Many times people struggling with this whole matter of addictions, they've gone down this path, this journey, and begin to see their lives as hopeless, you know, it's, I've made a mess of my life, there's no way back, I may as well not even try, etc., etc.

They don't know the reality of forgiveness of sins, that God, through Jesus Christ, has the power to forgive sins of us on earth here. There is a way back.

There is forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ, no matter what has transpired in the person's life. So, we're sharing these different truths, gently instructing people in regard to who God is, what God offers to these individuals whose lives have been destroyed by this other idolatrous worship, and who have said and done things that are so contrary to the holy God that is there, but can be forgiven by that same God.

He's worthy to be loved above all. The most important one answer, Jesus, is this, hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.

[ 27 : 13 ] And so, we again, understand that any time we are faced with that temptation, it's a temptation, a battle of love. Who am I going to love most here?

Am I going to love God or myself, or what I want more than God? I mean, that's the bottom line when we think of, even as Christians, what we're being tempted with, and that temptation is leading us to go in a direction that's contrary to God and His Word.

It's a battle for love. Who am I going to love? Am I going to love this one who is worthy to be loved above all else, the one who sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross for my sin, took the punishment that was due me, or am I going to love myself and some other God?

Repentance means, I'm going to love the one true God above all. And then lastly, God has power to save and to sanctify, to deliver from the penalty, power, and eventually the presence of sin.

And I didn't even put a single verse down here, just Romans 6 through 8, 1 Corinthians 15, etc., etc. And the person thinks that there's no escape, I can't get out of this, it's been part of my life for so long, that's not true.

[ 28 : 36 ] God can deliver us from the power of sin now when we are in this world. That is the reality of who He is and what can happen in our lives.

So we can't use our experience to determine what we believe about God. We need to go to the truth of what God's word says, who He is, and then by His grace make it our prayer that God help me live in the reality of who you are, who you've revealed yourself to me to be, and then move in that direction.

Now that may not mean move in that direction on your own, that may move in the direction with somebody else who can help you fight that battle during the days that are ahead, that will love you enough to be there with you and help you through those times.

These are just a few things that we need to change in regard to our inner being when it comes to our love, our affections, and our thoughts of God.

Is there anything that you could add to that list that, not to make this just a matter of cognitive therapy that you go through in order to win over your addictions, but the reality of repentance is knowing truth, truth that comes to bear and affects what we love and the way we think when it comes to ourselves, God, and things outside of us.

[ 30 : 10 ] Anything else that you would add to that in regard to God and who He is? I know I didn't cover it all, but let's keep going then.

What about myself? What must change in my inner being in regard to how I think about myself?

Well, obviously the one is I am not God.

I'm not to act as though I am sovereign over my life. But again, as I've explained already with the temptations are there and we're giving in to those temptations that lead us away from God and contrary to God's counsel, that's really what is happening.

I'm pretty much saying I can be the ruler in my own life, I'm not accountable to God, and therefore I am sovereign over all my life.

Psalms 53, 1, the fool says in his heart there is no God, they are corrupt and they are vile and there is no one who does good. So that is the words of a foolish person, a person who doesn't understand reality for what it really is.

[ 31 : 28 ] They're acting without reason, they're not acting as a normal human being should be acting because no human being was ever designed to live apart and contrary to God and his counsel and to be sovereign in their lives.

And when you again look at it from God's perspective with God's wisdom, it truly is a foolish thing to live independent and contrary to God, without God and set yourself up as sovereign over all things.

That is something that needs to change within the heart of a person, the thinking of a person.

Another one, my purpose in life now is to glorify God above all.

So whether you eat or drink, whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. We are made as individuals, human beings, as those who are to bear the image of God, what is true of God.

And any time I act contrary to what is true in God's word, I'm seeking to put something else up in his place and to make, whether it's alcohol or another substance or some other God substitute, give that the place of God, I'm giving to this thing the glory that should go to God.

[ 32 : 57 ] I'm saying this is the thing that really makes me happy, this is what really brings me peace and satisfaction in life, all glory goes to this thing or this activity and not God.

I think I've said it before, you may as well set up a little altar and put whatever it is on the altar, put a couple candles on each side of it and fall down and worship it. Because you are saying this is the thing that gives me everything that God says only I should be getting from him.

And that is idolatry. And it is to give to that thing the glory that belongs to God. What we're trying to do and understand is see the emptiness and vanity of our thinking in those times of temptation. God is to be loved above myself. I've already mentioned the verse in Mark 12, 29-30. The greatest commandment, love the Lord God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. But again, if we set ourselves up as gods, then we are loving ourselves or something in his creation over him.

[ 34 : 10 ] Recognize it for what it really is. Another one, sin has affected my whole being so that apart from union with Christ, I'm not able to worship God and accomplish my God-designed purpose to glorify him.

That's what we're not recognizing. When we're making these kind of choices that take us in the direction of substituting something for God, we're acting like my thinking is perfect in the way it operates and is able to lead me down this path to right conclusions and decisions that will affect my peace, my happiness, my security, whatever it is.

But that in reality is not true. Sin has distorted every part of my humanity, even my thinking, so that I'm not able to think accurately apart from God's intervention and his counsel in my mind and in my life.

Romans 3, 10 through 23, of course, states that there's no one righteous, not even one. There's none, not one, who understands, no one who seeks God.

All have turned away. They've together become worthless. There's no one who does good, not even one, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. So, apart from God and his intervention through his wisdom and counsel, I do not, again, have the reasoning capabilities to make moral choices that will lead to God's glory and my eternal, my present welfare and eternal well-being as well.

[ 35 : 50 ] They can be deceptive, my thoughts can be deceptive and unreliable for arriving at those kind of conclusions that will, again, accomplish God's glory.

And, again, my present welfare and my eternal well-being. So, as I'm there in that place making those kind of choices that are contrary to God's law and counsel, that kind of change, the change that needs to take place within me is in regard to my thinking and my ability to come to right conclusions apart from God's word.

1 Timothy 2.11, Peter was writing to the people there and helping them understand what needs to happen in their lives in order for them to show forth the praises of him who called them out of darkness into his marvelous light, as it says in 1 Timothy 2.9.

In verse 11, it says, abstain from sinful desires which war against your soul. So in those times of temptation, what's taking place within us is those desires, or certain desires that are affected by sin within us that want to lead us in this direction that's contrary to God and his counsel and his wisdom, and if we don't see the true nature of those desires, those deceptive desires, then we will most likely just continue to go and follow them and go in the way that is contrary to where we should be going.

It's glorifying to God and it's good for us. In fact, Peter's letting them know the true nature of those deceptive desires. They're not seeking to bring good into your life, but what's happening is that they are warring against your soul.

[ 37 : 42 ] They're not looking out for your well-being, the growth and enhancement of your inner being. They're there to destroy your soul. And that's what we need to recognize what's going on.

What's happening here is something's out to destroy me and if I go this direction, I'm deceived into thinking that that's going to be for my welfare.

It actually will be for my very destruction in my life. And Peter was reminding the people of that. Matthew 15, 19, out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander, on and on it goes.

Again, trying to help the people understand what's your inner man really look like? What's the potential that exists within your inner man as an individual apart and separated from God and holiness?

This is the potential. And in the opposite, our culture says, man, you've got to believe in yourself. And you are able and capable of making right choices on your own and lead to decisions that, man, will be wonderful for your life.

[ 39 : 05 ] That's not the reality. And so Jesus is trying to bring this counsel to people that we would understand the reality of what exists within the depths of our very being and why we need

redemption from someone other than ourselves because we cannot affect the change that has to happen within our hearts for us to accomplish our purpose in life which is to glorify God and which is for our well-being.

We cannot affect that in and of ourselves, even before our salvation or after our salvation. We can't carry it on in our own strength either. So the reality and truth about myself, I can't follow that kind of thinking and reasoning and think that I will come to good conclusions in this life and in eternity. I have to believe what God tells me about myself in order for me to come to the place of really worshiping God and coming to the place within my very nature and being that will lead me to be a worshiper of God enjoying life as a human in right relationship with God, even while I'm in a sinful world.

And then the last thought I had was my existence consists of more than what is represented in this world. Many times we make life all about just what I see here.

and think that that's the best it's going to be. John 3.36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him.

[ 40 : 58 ] So there's something certainly beyond this life. So we've got to be living in this world with the understanding that there's more than what I'm just seeing here in this life.

So I can't be focusing all my attention on decisions, thinking that just relate to life or existence while I'm in this world.

Because this world and my existence here is just a mere speck compared to all eternity. So to base all of my decisions, conclusions, for life on just 70 or 80 years would be foolhardy.

And so that's what needs to change. I can't just be all taken up with this life here in this world. 1 Peter 1, 3-7 says, Praise be to the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, and His great mercy has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil, or fade, kept in heaven for you.

That's the reality of what is taking place in our lives. Well, my time is gone. I just have a few more things here, but I'll just finish it up next time in regard to how my change, thinking, affections need to change in regard to creation, things outside of myself, and go from there.

[ 42 : 34 ] Let's close in prayer. Father, this morning, again, we can give thanks for your great intervention. Father, what wisdom and grace and glory that you possess, Father.

Open our eyes, our understanding, even through what we hear from your word this morning and this evening, Father, that we would be people who have greater perception and understanding and love for you who are the one true God, and bring that to bear in our hearts, Father, so that it really affects how we think and how we speak and act throughout the week, as all that will be challenged in the world in which we live.

But help us not to be deceived, Father, and to know how to encourage one another daily because of that deceptive nature of sin. We'd ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen.