

The Glory of the Incarnation

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Preacher: Jon Hueni

[0:00] So we're going to read Luke chapter 2, the first 20 verses. In those days, Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world.

! This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria. And everyone went to his own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem, the town of David, because he belonged to the house in the line of David.

He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born.

And she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

[1:13] But the angel said to them, Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you.

He is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you. You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger. And suddenly, a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests. When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.

So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph and the baby who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child.

And all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

[2:41] Brothers and sisters, it is wonderful to be with you again. I bring you greetings from Grace Fellowship Church in Toronto. We often pray for you and delight in God's grace to you and all the things that he is doing here.

And I hope it is appropriate for me to bring you greetings from Pastor Bob as well. It was a delight to fellowship with him over the last couple of days and to hear of his love for you and his continued prayers for you.

And I hope that's not inappropriate for me to pass on. I think it's important for you to know of his great love for all of you. In case some of you don't know, I married the youngest daughter of Pastor Bob.

And so if we haven't met before, that's who I am. And I am privileged to call him a father and father-in-law and delighted that God has brought me into this family and delighted for all the years of fellowship we have had together in God's word.

So let's look there together now to Luke chapter 2. When I was first studying this passage was on a Friday, finishing up my sermon.

[3:59] And one of those internet news alerts flashed across my screen that there had been a shooting in Connecticut. And as we clicked on the news and gathered together in the office and started to read the reports of maybe teachers and then horribly students and then the numbers of students, I don't know how you were affected, but I put down my pen and I just wept at my desk at the thought of something so terrible and so profoundly evil.

Our church rents space in a Christian school, so I was in a school when that news came. And I knew it was silly, but there was a part of my protective father's side that felt the need to walk the

halls of the school.

Partly because my niece and nephew are in that school. And so I walked through those halls and I thought about those children and how awful sin is.

I came back to my desk and I had intended to preach on Luke chapter 2. We decided early on in the year that we wanted to look at the first responders to the news of Christ's birth.

How did those people who first heard react? And it was assigned to me to preach from this passage of the shepherds and the angels. And I had been greatly anticipating the opportunity to dive into this wonderful, I think, song that the angels sang.

[5:40] Even though we're told they said these things, it's quite possible it was said, but it's also possible they sang it. Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased.

But I started to wonder if this text had anything at all to do with our world. Little innocent children having just been murdered.

Which shows you that tragedy can cloud the mind. For as I settled back in to this passage and read it with fresh eyes, I quickly saw that this announcement of the angels has everything to do with not only the events in Connecticut, but the events in your lives, in the events in my life, in our standing before God.

Now right away in this passage, Luke chapter 2, you'll see there in verses 1 through 7, this account of the parents of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, heading to Bethlehem, which shows us right away that, as we often say, God's ways are not our ways.

But the good and wise God is absolutely sovereign overall, isn't he? And here we see his sovereignty worked out. Part of what this passage is teaching us, I believe, is that God is in control of things.

[7:09] And it was obvious that Mary and Joseph had to go to Bethlehem, but if you were them, you would probably be saying, this is rotten timing. She is, yo, great, or low, not yo, great, with child.

It doesn't seem like a good time to travel. And in fact, it appeared to be very bad timing. For the time came for her to give birth. How often does God's sovereign timing look like bad timing to you? How often does God's sovereign timing look like an obstacle to you? Or look like a profound mistake? And if only God would have consulted with you, you might have set him straight on a better course of action.

We are foolish people sometimes, aren't we? And yet here, God is working out all of his purposes. He is ensuring that the prophecies, which stated the Christ child would be born in Bethlehem, are going to be fulfilled.

Not only that, it was the intention of God that these shepherds would be the very first people to hear the gospel. The angel comes to them and he says, Behold, I bring you gospel.

[8:29] I bring you good news. Euangelion. I bring you gospel. And so, part of God's purpose was that these lowly, despised shepherds would be the first ones to hear the good news of the birth of Christ.

And his intention, God's intention, is that you are here today. And his intention, is that you would hear the gospel today. Perhaps you are here every week.

Perhaps you are only here this week. But I am convinced that God has brought you here this day so that you might hear the gospel and not only hear the good news of Jesus Christ and his birth, but might respond to the good news of Jesus Christ and his birth.

The life and the death of Jesus is like a signpost on everyone's path of life. And you will reach that signpost and you must either go to the left or to the right.

And I trust that you will go in the way of the gospel today. Now, there are four Christmas carols in Luke's gospel. We read of Mary's song, which she sings when the angel announces to her that she will bear the Messiah.

[9:44] She seems to concentrate on how God remembers the lowly and the humble. And then we read of Zechariah's song, John the Baptist's father, who once his tongue is loosed at the birth of his son, he will say there in chapter 1, verse 74, that we might serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

And so here's Zechariah saying, finally, there's been a way made for you and I to serve God without fear in holiness all of our days. But now we come to the angels song.

And the angels seem to concentrate everything toward God our Father. And if you want to summarize verse 14, the song of the angels, you might summarize it this way, God deserves all praise.

You say, well, of course, God deserves all praise. But friends, part of that means that you don't deserve praise. God deserves all praise.

Has he had all of your attention today? Has he had all of the affection of your heart today? Or have you been worried today about how you're going to look?

[11:06] Or what so-and-so might think about you? Or what you've said and perhaps how that was interpreted? We are feeble creatures and we are prone to think far more of ourselves than we ought to think.

And those sinless beings, these angels, who stand in the presence of God day after day after day, are consumed with giving glory to God, not themselves.

And I think we can learn from the angels. When I suggest that God deserves all praise, what I'm suggesting is that God deserves to be delighted in. It is his aim and his purpose that we would be happy in him, that we would find our joy in him, that he would be our greatest comfort and our greatest delight.

And so let's use the angels' song to fuel something of our own delight in God today. First of all, I want you to notice this. This sermon will have two points. Number one, the messengers will prove that God deserves all praise.

And number two, the message will prove that God deserves all praise. Pretty simple, but I think it's a simple and very profound text. So first of all, the messengers prove to us that God deserves all praise.

[12:20] It is no surprise, really, that the angels break through here. And I say break through because this is, to my knowledge, and I think I'm right, the only recorded instance of the host of heaven entering into our world.

Oh, there are prophets who are given glimpses of God's army. The word host really could be translated army. It's the army of God. So banish forever the idea of these pudgy little white babies with non-aerodynamic wings floating, bringing messages.

These are warriors. I picture them with drawn sword. And no wonder then that the shepherds are quaking and shaking when they see this one angel. And then, not only do they see the angel, but Luke tells us that the glory of God appeared also.

Perhaps something like that transfiguration expression of God's glory, the descending cloud, the Shekinah glory. So that maybe something like what happened when Solomon dedicated the temple and God's presence manifested itself in an almost tangible way, a visible way.

Well, here we are looking at these angels and the army shows up to shout peace. And we join them, don't we?

[13:42] I mean, as Christians, that's exactly what we are to be doing. We shout peace to the world. And we're part of God's army in that sense. And we don't come condemning the world.

We don't come trying to destroy the world. Rather, we go into the world shouting peace. There's a way for you to be right with God. God has made a path.

God has made a way for you to be right with Him. And these angels show up and these angels break through. It's like the curtains of heaven are drawn back and suddenly these shepherds behold the angelic host.

Why? This is because history is His story, isn't it? And this is the epic moment of that story.

Emmanuel, God with us. God entering into humanity. God becoming part of His creation. and the angels, the angels can't help themselves.

[14:48] They are bursting out with praise. The great act of God's righteous judgment that was symbolized in events like the flood and like Sodom and Gomorrah being destroyed.

The great act of God's righteous judgment is about to fall on one who is now laid in a manger. and the great act of God's work of redemption symbolized in Noah and the seven being rescued out of the flood and Lot and his daughters being rescued out of Sodom and Israel being rescued out of Egypt.

The great act of God's redemption symbolized in these events is about to be accomplished by one born of a virgin. The thousands and thousands of gallons of animal blood spilled on an altar will finally make sense.

Not all the blood of beasts on Jewish altars slain could give the guilty conscience peace or drive or wash away the stain.

You see, the angels understand. Peace is coming, world! all that has been symbolized, all that has been pointing to this moment has now arrived.

[16:10] God is making a way for people like you and people like me to be made right with himself. All the prophecies of a king who would reign forever.

All the prophecies of a suffering servant. All the prophecies of one who would be wounded for our transgressions. These things, Peter tells us, into which angels long to look.

They've been pondering. Isaiah writing his prophecies. Angels pouring over it. Do you get it?

They've been pondering. They've been wondering.

They've been studying. And now the epic moment arrives. Aha! He is going to take human flesh upon himself. He is going to make himself one with them.

these things that the angels long to look at. They now see.

[17:09] And they experience angelic delight. Sinless pleasure. Sinless joy. The word. The sun.

The God whom they have been worshipping in heaven. the Lord of hosts. The captain of the army. The one sitting on the throne. Isaiah 6. Before whom the angels of the highest rank cover their eyes and cover their feet and shout, holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.

The whole earth is full of his glory. That one has become man. veiled in flesh the Godhead see.

Hail the incarnate deity. Pleased with us as man to dwell. Jesus our Emmanuel.

Though he was in the form of God, he did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped. clutched, white knuckle gripped, but emptied himself.

[18:22] By taking the form of a servant being born in the likeness of men and being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Mild he lays his glory by, born that man no more may die. Joy to the world, the Lord has come.

I have no idea what was going through the shepherds minds other than being absolutely terrified. I don't get to walk out in the country very often.

I live in the city. Maybe you do. Some of you live on farms and you are farmers. Some of you live in the country. Imagine yourself walking out a nice summer's night, admiring the stars, when suddenly an angel appears.

You weren't expecting it. It doesn't look like a hallmark card. The glory of the Lord shines all around you.

[19:34] The angel says, do not be afraid. You go, yeah, right. And to make matters a little more intense, the entire angelic host appears with them, perhaps filling the sky.

If angels rejoice, as Jesus said, over one sinner who repents, how can they not celebrate when the means to the salvation of every sinner appears.

The one who will end mass shootings, the one who will judge evil murderers has come. And all the sin that the angels have been seeing, all the sin that has embroiled them in this spiritual battle in which they are involved, all of that sin and all of its effects are going to be done away with by this one who is laid in a manger and the angelic army erupts in praise.

You know this host of God will appear again, not when Jesus hangs on the cross. Even though he said, Peter, do you not know I could speak a word?

A myriad of angels would rush to my defense. They will not appear then, but they will appear in the last day, sent out to the four corners of the earth to gather up all of God's people.

[21:14] What a comfort for every Christian. None will be left, none will be abandoned, none will be forsaken. But for now, these angels are a little bit like, and I don't mean this to be demeaning, but I picture them as something like first graders at a school play, and you know mom's out there, and you just have to peek.

And it's something like that. There is so much joy in the angelic host, they've just got to pull the curtains back a little bit. And I don't know, the scriptures don't tell us what angelic relationships are like or anything like that, but you can, I don't think there's envy because they're sinless, but one angel gets to go, and you can just see something of all the angels saying, we want to help announce that too, and under the direction of God they all appear and they say to these lowly shepherds, these despised shepherds, one who were looked down upon, who were treated as second class citizens, isn't it like God to send the angelic host to them, the lowly and the humble?

They can't wait. It's something like a field flash mob. Have you seen these flash mobs? People in a mall or something, somebody starts singing, you think that's weird, and then the guy beside you starts singing, and it's a field angelic flash mob.

They just appear and they start singing, and you're a shepherd, and probably you're somewhere like on the ground, on your face, peeking, like we are when we see things that are terrible and wonderful at the same time.

I have to look, I can't look, I have to look, and they're just there in the angelic army singing and shouting this praise. As the angels break out in their seraphic loud voices, they say two things, and their message proves that God deserves all praise.

[23:06] So the messengers prove it. This is the angelic host. That proves God deserves all praise, but the message they bring, secondly, shows that God deserves all praise.

what is their message? It's very simple. Glory to God, peace to men. Glory to God. Glory is an attribute of God.

We say God is a God of glory. It is often used as kind of this visible expression of his holiness, of his majesty.

I think that's what's going on back in chapter 2 verse 9 where it says the names of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone around them and they were filled with fear. And so we speak of God's glory in that way.

But you notice here that the angels are saying glory to God. Now in one sense that doesn't make any sense. You cannot add to God's glory. God is altogether glorious.

[24:07] He is the source of all glory and the glory that he possesses that is manifested to us is the expression of who he is in his nature and his character. So there's no way to add to his glory.

And so to say glory to God is essentially to say God you are great. You are great. I have some friends particularly older women from the islands and I have noticed through the years that as you speak about the Lord they'll just begin to say glory, glory.

glory. And I think it's because they understand how that word is used. Glory. Glory to God. I'm not adding to his glory. I'm expressing my agreement with his glory and who he is in his essential nature and character.

Glory to God. May he receive the praise. He is the one who is great. He's the one who's glorious. He's good. So as the Son of God takes on the lowest, the angels praise the Father in the highest. Why? Infant holy, infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall, oxen lowing, little knowing, Christ the babe is Lord of all.

[25:29] But why do the angels give their praise to the Father? Have you thought about that? Why aren't they praising the Son?

Why don't they gather over the stable, the cave, wherever it is where Mary and Joseph are staying? Why do they come to shepherds and give praise to God? I think the answer is quite plain.

If you turn to Ephesians 1 for a moment, Paul writes to Christian people and he says, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Ephesians 1, 3, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.

Now look at that. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. Even as he chose us, who?

the Father chose us in him, in Christ, before the foundation of the world. That we should be holy and blameless before him. In love, he, the Father, predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace with which he has blessed us in the beloved.

[26:49] And so Paul is identifying here that salvation began in the love of the Father. in the choosing, preordaining work of God the Father. Go over to Ephesians chapter 2 and verse 4.

But God being rich in mercy because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ by grace you have been saved.

So it is but God, verse 4, God the Father being rich in mercy because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ.

By grace you have been saved. Banished forever, this idea, this image of an angry father getting outsmarted by a well-meaning son who sort of surreptitiously brokers compromise between humanity and the angry God.

salvation is initiated by a loving father. Christian, I think you ought to rejoice in that. It is out of his love that he saved you.

[28:01] It is hard to believe sometimes, isn't it? Hard to believe that God would love us when we think about what we have done, what we have said, what we have left undone and unsaid.

hard to believe that God would love us with all of our failings of him. You know, if the gospel doesn't seem unbelievable, I don't think we're understanding it.

God loved me before the foundation of the world and sent his son to die for me. Not because of what I would contribute to him, not because of what I might bring him, but because of his great love and because of his great mercy, by grace I have been saved.

There's enough grace for me? Yeah. Is there enough grace for you? Yes, there is. Children, is there enough grace for you? Oh, yes, there is.

This God is so full of love and so full of mercy. mercy. And he's not a God who expects you to clean yourself up. You can go to grandma's house, clean up, look nice for grandma.

[29:24] God's not like that. In fact, in many ways, God says, come to me when you're at your worst. worst. And when you're at your worst, you find him running out to meet you, to greet you, to receive you, and to invite you in.

God is so kind and he's so trustworthy. Christian, you ought to rejoice. John wrote and said, in this, the love of God was made manifest, was shown, was displayed among us, that God sent his only son into the world, so that we might live through Santa Claus parades.

Now, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Sent his son to be the wrath absorbing sacrifice for our sins. Christian, his love for you is so great that he satisfies his own wrath for you by substituting his son in your place.

Now, I don't know how you can hear that good news and not be moved again to wonder and to glory in your God.

[31:01] No wonder the angels sing. Glory, they say. Hosanna. When we looked at this text at Grace Fellowship Church in Toronto, I encouraged people. I said, what have you been like Christmas shopping?

What were you like Christmas shopping? Are you a grump? Are you an elboweer in the line? Are you just, you know, push people out of the way? I got my agenda. I got to get my things done. And it doesn't happen very often in our part of the world.

You're not supposed to say Merry Christmas, but once in a while somebody does. So I encouraged our church. I said, when somebody tells you Merry Christmas, say what the angels said. Glory to God in the highest.

It was pretty neat. The next week, people were coming up to me and saying, you know what? I did that. And the Lord opened all these gospel opportunities for me. Merry Christmas. Glory to God in the highest.

What? Oh, that's what the angels said. The angels never heard about the angels. One after another, people having opportunities to speak of Christ.

[32:00] And I thought to myself as I was coming here, well, why do we have to wait for Christmas? Why don't we take every mention of Jesus in our culture, in our world, as an opportunity to be like angels and say glory to God in the highest.

You might use my Lord's name in vain, but I'll say glory to God in the highest for sending Christ into the world for a sinner like you and a sinner like me. Oh, praise God for Jesus.

of him and our adoration for him never wane and never weaken. You realize what Christ has done for you. Glory to God.

The birth of Jesus was ignored by the world. Herod tried to stop it. Caesar in his senses tried to interfere with it, but in the end, the angels knew the birth of Christ was the proof that God was going to save people, the very people who rejected him.

And so they sang glory to God. But not only glory to God, but peace to men. Peace to men on whom his favor rests, or if I'm reading from the ESV, on earth, peace among those with whom he is pleased.

[33:13] Those are good translations of the phrase. We were, I think, unhelpt by some of the earlier translations where it said, on earth, peace, goodwill to men. If you like Charlie Brown, you know that's what Linus says.

It's very moving. I'm a sucker for Charlie Brown Christmas. I cry through the whole thing. It's pathetic. They're cartoons.

But what Linus said, and what the greeting cards most often say, goodwill to men, is not really right. The angels are not saying, peace, goodwill, to everybody on the earth.

That would be like saying, you're all getting saved. universalism. Peace to everybody on the earth. Nor are the angels saying, as some more modern translations rendered it, peace to men of goodwill.

In other words, peace to the good people. So, this is not a hallmark greeting, nor is it a moralist greeting. Rather, as Daryl Bach writes in his excellent commentary on Luke, the phrase, those with whom he is pleased is almost a technical phrase in first century Judaism for God's elect.

[34 : 41] The angels are speaking to those upon whom he's poured his favor and his grace. So, as you see the text there, glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace among those.

He's drawing distinction among those with whom he is pleased. With whom is God pleased? You, if your faith is in Christ. So, this angelic message is a message of peace to Christians.

The angels are singling out the saved here. And they give the trifecta of peace, really. First of all, peace with God. Paul wrote to the Colossians in Colossians 1.20 that Jesus was making peace by the blood of his cross.

That's what he was accomplishing. He was making peace. He was restoring fellowship between God and people. He was removing enmity between us and God.

That's what Jesus was doing on his cross. We needed peace with God. So, Paul can write to the Romans chapter 5 and verse 1. Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

[35 : 58] A glorious mouthful, a freight train of theological wonderment, this verse. Since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God.

That's what you need. You need peace with God. If you are not embracing Jesus Christ as your only hope for salvation, you do not have peace with God.

God is sending one Savior into the world. There are not multiple saviors, but there is one Savior. And the only Savior the world is ever going to know has already come, and he has announced peace.

He will bring peace by his own blood for you. But it's not just peace with God we need.

We need internal peace too, don't we? One commentator, Geldenheiss, writes this, the birth of the Christ bears the richest significance to the world.

[36 : 53] It brings peace, real peace on earth. When Christ was born, some form of external peace, the Pax Romana, you familiar with this? Roman peace? Roman peace goes like this. Hi, hi, Bremen, we're Roman here to bring you peace.

If you resist us, we'll kill you. All in favor of peace? Say, okay, we got peace. So, when Christ was born, some form of external peace, the Pax Romana, did prevail, but as was declared by Epictetus, the pagan thinker of the first century, he wrote this, while the emperor may give peace from war on land and sea, he is unable to give peace from passion, grief, and envy.

He cannot give peace of heart for which man yearns even more for than outward peace. peace. Do you have peace of heart?

Or is your life ruled by your passions, by your envy, by your lust? Jesus comes and he brings peace, peace with God, internal peace, and of course, he brings peace with others.

The fruit of God's Holy Spirit is peace, isn't it? Love, joy, peace, peace with others, a peace that surpasses human analysis. It is an inexplicable, unflappable peace.

[38 : 21] Do you know this peace in your life? I sat with a man the last few days who has peace. peace. If you don't know that peace, I venture to say you do not know Christ.

But I want you to see something. The angels come and make their announcement of good news to somebody.

The angel comes and appeared to them. I bring you good news. Unto you is born a Savior. This sign is for you.

It is specific, their message. It is given to however many shepherds were there in that field. This message was for them. And they did the right thing when they heard the message.

Look at verse 15. When the angels went away from them into heaven. I always wonder, was there a really big gap here?

[39 : 32] Were you just... As the angels had departed, the shepherds said to one another, let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.

And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them.

But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart, and the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen as it had been told them. You see, the shepherds did the very best thing when they heard of a Savior.

They made haste to that Savior. They ran to that Savior. friend, you may have heard the gospel a thousand times.

You may know the gospel upside down. You might be able to recite it to your parents. You can maybe say it to your friends, but do you know the gospel in this heart?

[40 : 36] Have you come all the way to Jesus? Have you embraced the Savior whom God has sent into the world? Have you been a foolish shepherd who has heard the news that a Savior has been born and you went back to tending your sheep?

Or do you leave the sheep? Or like the blind Bartimaeus, leave your cloak? Do you leave it all behind like fishermen on a seashore in order to follow him?

Let me ask you, friend, if you've not come to Christ, what has the world ever done for you? What promise has the world ever kept for you?

How has the world made your life better? How has sin improved you? There is not a single way in which the world has benefited you.

But here is God rushing into your world this very morning and calling upon you to turn away from this world and to believe on the only Savior, the one true Savior, the one who was not just born and laid in a manger, but was laid on a cross.

[41 : 49] wounded and killed for our transgressions. Won't you turn to Christ? What would keep you from fleeing to Jesus?

What more does he need to do for you? Oh, he's already done it all, so look to the Savior and live. Look to the Savior and live. Let us pray.

we want to be the first to acknowledge our Lord that without Jesus we would be nothing and we would have no hope in the world.

We would just live our lives trying to be happy with people or things or what others think about us and we would find one failure after another until we just lie to ourselves so much.

Lord, I pray you would rescue all of us from the deceitfulness of sin. I pray that every child here might come to know if not this day then soon the true Savior.

[43 : 05] And I pray that every adult here would know what it is to know Christ. Oh, Lord, you must do this work. Hear the prayers of your saints.

Honor the preaching of this gospel. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.