



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

The Sermons of Dan Duncan

1 John 4:7-12

2011

"Amazing Love"

TRANSCRIPT

Thank you Mike. We're in 1 John chapter 4, and we're going to look at verses 7 through 12,

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸ The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹ By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.

1 John 4: 7-12

May the LORD bless this reading of His Word and bless our time in studying it together.

(Message) The world of 1 John, the Greek and Roman world of New Testament times, was a religious world, a world filled with temples and stories about gods and goddesses. But they weren't pleasant stories. When men thought of the gods, they often

thought of erotic tales of Zeus lusting after women or Mars making war on men: Stories of passion and violence and cruelty. Even when men's thoughts rose above the myths of the age, they didn't rise much farther than the thoughts of Aristotle, who called god, "The unmoved mover, an impersonal, abstract idea of philosophy."

So when John wrote the simple statement, "God is love", (vs8b), it was a revelation—something the men of that age had hardly dreamed of.

God is personal. God cares. He loves, not with eros, but *agape*. It's one of the most magnificent statements in the Bible which John makes twice in chapter 4—almost as if to give some kind of legal confirmation, some legal support for the truth of it.

But as magnificent a statement as it is, and one full of theology, (and it's a very weighty statement), still it's not just floating in space out there like some mantra that we are to meditate on. It's connected to other words and sentences. It's part of a larger passage on love and it's given by John for a reason. And that reason is that, 'we might love one another.'

Love is God's nature; that's the meaning of "God is love." And so, as God's children, it is necessary that we manifest His character; in fact, it is inevitable that the child of God will do that. There are other virtues that must characterize God's people and John has emphasized those: He's emphasized faith and obedience; he has stressed the need of sound doctrine and ethical purity. But without love, orthodoxy is cold and morality formal; both lack warmth and life.

So John now gives us instruction on love. And the importance he gives to it is clear from the fact that this is the third time he has taught on this subject. He has said that 'love is the new commandment' in chapter 2. He said that love is the proof that we are 'in the light' in chapter 3. But now he explains why love is essential for the child of God,—and it is because God is love. That is His nature, and if we are His children, we too, will love. We will manifest His nature in our own nature by loving one another.

Well that's the subject of our study. It is a magnificent, majestic subject, this subject of love. In fact, someone has said that in this passage, John's letter "Rises to its sublimest height." But sublime and glorious as it is, it's also practical and urgent. John begins, "Beloved, let us love one another..." (vs7). Three times in five verses, John repeats the words, "love one another." That too, gives some sense of the value that John put on love and of his desire that his friends show that love; that God's people down through the ages, that you and I, show that love. And from what he said earlier about love, what he means is, 'Show kindness to one another.'

Of course it's really stronger than that. What John encourages is really the same love that Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 13. It's not possessive or the passion of so many songs and romances that influence our thinking on love and what it is. What love is, (the love of 1 Corinthians 13, the love of 1 John), is *active* and *selfless*.

The Greek word for love is a word that we're all familiar with. Whether you've had any exposure to Greek or not, if you've been in church for very long, in Bible teaching churches, you've heard of *agape* love. C. S. Lewis, in his book *The Four Loves*, defines *agape* as "gift love". Now that's a good definition but actually the word can't be strictly defined in that sense. It can't be strictly defined as uniquely Christian love; as a *supernatural* love. (There are cases in which it's used in a different way. In fact, in 2 Timothy chapter 4, in verse 10, Paul describes Demas, who had left him, as one who had done so because he "loved this present world." Well, that's not a healthy kind of love, but the word that he uses there is the verbal form of *agape*, *agapao*. And so we can't say that this is strictly, a Christian love, a selfless love.) But we don't understand the meanings of words from the lexicon, from the dictionary, but from the context in which they're found. And in this context, that is a good definition, "gift love".

That's what John is speaking of here: It gives, it doesn't take. That should be characteristic of Christians in their relationship with one another,(really in their relationship with everyone). But certainly as the world looks upon us, they should see us

in our relationship with one another in that way, in a loving relationship, a love of 'gift love.'

And again, the basic reason Christians should, (in fact the reason Christians *must* love other Christians), is due to the nature of God—which John states in two ways. "God is love", as he'll say in a moment. But before that he tells us, "love is from God". And that first statement, 'love is from God', shows that God is the *source* of all human love. The care of parents for their children, or just human kindness, is a gift of God's common grace and it is part of 'being in the image of God'.

So there's a general sense in which everyone who experiences love (and I think that probably includes almost everyone in some sense has experienced love), that's the gift of God. Whether people realize it or not, it's the work of common grace; and there is no greater gift in the world than that. A person can gain all kinds of honors in this life; they can earn a large salary or come into great wealth; and they can enjoy all that. And those may be desirable things—but without love, it's kind of empty—life is empty.

The greatest blessing in life, certainly one of the greatest blessings, is the experience of love—being loved. Having parents that love; a person or friends and having the blessing of loving others. —Now that's a gift from God; He's the source of all of that. Now it's a very natural thing in one sense because, as I say, it is part of 'being in the image of God.' People love by nature. There's a sense in which it's just part of us. But never forget, it all ultimately comes from Him. —It's part of common grace.

Having said that though, what John is describing here, what he's speaking of is beyond that. It's something different from that, for Christian love is from God directly—He supplies it. And that is a great encouragement to us, (should be), because while love is a lovely idea, it's also a demanding virtue as well. It requires something of us.

The love we're speaking of here is a 'giving' love, a 'sacrificial' love. John's instruction to "love one another" means, *go on loving* one another in spite of everything; in spite of the difficulties; in spite of the disappointments. There will be disappointments in relationships with others; there always will be. John says *go on*

loving; continually be showing 'gift' love. That's not easy. In fact it's fair to say, that is impossible, humanly speaking.

But then the Christian life is not lived humanly. It's not lived in our own strength, but in the strength of God. That is apostolic teaching. Paul told the Philippians, (4:13), "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me." I can't do things outside of the power of God; but in the power of God, through Him who strengthens me, I can do what I'm required to do, what I'm called to do.

John is saying, really, the same thing. He's saying, 'This is what God wants of us. He wants us to love one another.' And He will supply that love. He is an endless reserve of love, so we can do it. We are without excuse not to do it, not to love. But we must seek it from Him. It's important to see our own inabilities in order that we go to Him and look to Him for what we know we must do and must have.

And James tells us that He "gives to all generously." (Jas 1:5). Now in James, (chapter 1 in verse 5), he's speaking of wisdom in particular: but it applies to love as well. It applies to all of the virtues that God would have us display; the fruit of the Spirit, all of that comes from Him. And we're to look to Him for everything, because James also says, 'Every good and perfect gift comes down from the Father of lights.' (Jas 1:17). He'll supply that to us. That's the assurance we have.

We can love—We must love. This is not an optional thing for us. We're not reading this and coming up with the conclusion, 'Well, these are good suggestions. This would be an admirable way to live.' This is the only way to live for the Christian. We can, we must love because, John says in verse 8, "God is love." And the children of God must reproduce their Father's nature. That's natural.

It's natural in the natural world, it's natural in the spiritual realm as well. In fact John says, if that characteristic of God is absent in a person then that person does not know God. Does not know God personally; does not have an individual relationship with God.

Knowing God personally is life changing. How can it not be? Consider who God is; consider the One with whom we have a relationship. He is the source of all love, the

source of all life. Paul told those Athenian intellectuals in Acts 17, (vs28), that it is "...in Him that we live and move and exist." Every breath of life is a gift from Him; every beat of your heart is a gift from Him. He is the God who speaks and things become. He made the universe out of nothing. That is power and order: He is the Almighty, He is the life giver. We cannot be joined to Him in a personal relationship, a saving relationship, without being transformed. And Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 5,(vs17), that we are transformed to such a degree that we're a *new creation*. Peter says, (2Pe 1:4), 'We have the nature of God within us', the new nature. So those who are joined to God will manifest Him in their thoughts and in their deeds. What He is, will be seen in what we are: And "God is love."

What a simple statement that is; what a profound statement that is; what a sublime statement that is! But it's also one of the most misunderstood statements in the Bible. As great as this statement is, it is not the complete revelation of God. Some might like to think that it is and reduce God to some sentimental ideas of a God who is indulgent and soft, without severity or justice.

But God is also Spirit; Jesus told the Samaritan woman that. That's how He defined His Father: He "is Spirit", (Jn 4:24), —and that has all kinds of implications. He's everywhere present; He's not limited by time and space; He's not affected by circumstances; He's always the same.

God is also Light. John tells us that at the beginning of this book in chapter 1, verse 5. He is truth; He is holiness; there's no darkness in Him at all. He is not morally stained or morally indifferent; He loves righteousness and hates sin. And so the author of Hebrews tells us, "God is a consuming fire." (Heb 12:19). He's a God of justice, not a God of rage, but a God of righteous justice. And the Bible is filled with reminders of that; and reminders of His wrath.

That's a word people don't like today, I think, *wrath*. And yet, we find it all through the Word of God. Paul begins the Book of Romans with that in chapter 1, verse 18; he says, "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness

and ungodliness." This book, that may be the pinnacle of the New Testament, begins with the great subject of *wrath*—through three chapters. And we go throughout the Bible we see the evidence of exactly what Paul is talking about. He judged the ancient world with a flood. He destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah with brimstone. He gave Jerusalem to the Babylonians to raze and burn with fire because of their idolatry and unbelief.

We can't limit God to one thing, or one attribute; and then turn that to be a God of our own making, our own liking. A God of our own definition that we feel will be more palatable to people; or to our own senses.

We have to be guided by the Word of God. And the Word of God makes it very clear that "God is love"—but He's more than that. So we need to submit to that. We need to do what Luther said, "Let God be God." He is. Whether we want Him to be or not.

He is who He is. God is just; God is holy. And as a holy, just God He must deal with sin. One way or the other, He must deal with sin. And He will deal with it—He promises that there will be a great day of judgment at the end of history.

Still, having said all that and put everything hopefully in some context, "God is love." And it is really in light of the LORD's other attributes that we see the magnificence of this statement because if He were not love, we would all be doomed. But He is—and we're not. That's the Good News. That's what the Gospel is. The Gospel is Good News. In fact, F. F. Bruce states that in this simple statement, " 'God is love' John gives as compressed a statement of the Gospel as is well imaginable." That's true: The Gospel is good news because the love of God is *giving* love—or as C. S. Lewis put it, "gift love."

And He has given the very best for our best. That's what John says next in verse 9b, "...God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him." Now that is the true and final measure of love.

What is love? Well, we can turn to 1 Corinthians 13 and see one of the best, maybe the best, descriptions of love given anywhere in literature. But if we want to see

the example of love; if we want to really see what love looks like; then we look at the cross because there God gave "His only begotten Son" so that we might live forever.

Who are we that we should be so blessed? Who are we that such a gift should be given to us? We're guilty sinners—undeserving people. Apart from God's love, we would be lost and waiting for that future day of judgment. It would be our inevitable future.

Now, that makes this a truly amazing thing. God didn't need to save us to gain something for Himself. God is a Trinity, one God in three Persons; He had perfect fellowship within Himself for all eternity. God is unique. He's self-existent and self-sufficient, He doesn't need us. He didn't save us because it would add to His happiness; His happiness was complete and infinite. We couldn't add anything to God. He needs nothing. Still, He sent His Son to save us so that we might live forever and enjoy His presence, His glory, and His fellowship. Why? Why did He do that?

Moses answered that very question in Deuteronomy 7, when he asked Israel. They have been taken out of Egypt, redeemed from slavery in Egypt, brought through the Red Sea. They've been through these years of wandering in the wilderness and they're on the verge of entering into Canaan when he gives his sermons in the Book of Deuteronomy. And at the very beginning, in chapter 7, he asks them this very significant question: 'Why did God choose them? Why did God choose Israel to be His people? Why the Jews?'

Then he answers his own question by saying, 'It wasn't because you were the greatest of all people'. In fact, just the opposite is true. They are the smallest, they are the most insignificant. He says it was because "the LORD loved you". (Deu 7:8). In other words, 'He loved you because He loves.' The reason was not found in them because of something lovable in them; something impressive in them; something about their brilliant intellect.— None of that. The reason is not in them; it's in Him—in His inscrutable love.

That's the love with which He loved us.; love that is completely unconditional. John indicates that clearly in verse 10, "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us..." Now that is a verse of Scripture that should shape your theology— "This is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us." He is the God who takes the initiative. We did not seek Him; and yet He responds to us and to our efforts or to our pleas for help because "There is none who seeks for God". That's what Paul writes in Romans chapter 3, verse 11, (and Paul is really quoting Psalm 14). So that is the testimony of the Old Testament and the New Testament alike: 'No one seeks after God.' So God sought us.

Why would He seek us? Because He loved us. Why did He love us? Because He did. That's His nature. He is love, and His love is unconditional, and it is uncaused, at least it's uncaused from us. The cause of it is within Himself.

So if you love God, it is only because He first loved you. And that's the measure of His love. The depth of His love is measured in its object. In fact, the depth of anyone's love is measured in the object of the person that we love. Love for the worthy is love—and it's understandable love; it's deserved. And it's the way we love.

But it's not as great as love for the unworthy—that is inscrutable love. And that's the way God loves. It's the reason He chose us from all eternity and sent His Son, in the fullness of time, into this world to save us. That is the nature of His love—and that is the measure of His love.

And yet, it really can't be measured. It is a love that has no floor and no ceiling. It is a love that has no beginning or end. It is unbounded, uncaused, unconditional, and unfathomable—that is God's love. It is measureless love—and it is costly. That too, is the measure of His love. It cost Him the greatest gift that He could give, His 'only *begotten* Son'; which means 'His *unique* Son.'

There's no son like His Son, His eternal Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He gave Him to die for us. He was, John says, "the propitiation for our sins." (vs10b). If you have the New International Version, it translates that, "an atoning sacrifice." Do you know what that

means? We saw this word *propitiation* back in chapter 2 and we discussed the translations of the two versions. Both words are good words, and both words are important words. They're words that every Christian ought to know and understand because they explain how we have been saved—and why it is that you and I, as believers in Jesus Christ, have a relationship with God. And very simply, it's because of the *atonement*. It's because of the *propitiation*.

Atonement can be defined as, 'making amends', 'putting things right', 'blotting out the offense and giving satisfaction for the wrong done'. That's an actual definition that has been given of it. A very simple way to define it, (it may not be altogether adequate but it's a helpful explanation of atonement), is to put a hyphen between the 't' and the 'o': at-onement. Because the cross brings us into a relationship; makes us one with the Father.

Now I prefer the translation *propitiation*, which is very simply, 'a sacrifice that satisfies the justice of God completely and in so doing turns away His wrath'. And that's what Christ was: and that's what Christ did by taking our place at the cross in judgment. That's the cross; that's what happened. It was the place of judgment where He represented us took our sins on Himself—all of our sins—and was punished for all of them. They are all dealt with; all the debts have been paid. And every believer in Jesus Christ attaches himself or herself to Him and to His sacrifice at the moment of faith—and receives at that moment all the blessings that God has obtained for us through the cross. And at that moment we're forgiven of all our sins.

Many things happen at that moment: We're adopted into His family and have all of the rights and privileges of the children of God. We can have full and open access to God. We're completely and forever acceptable to Him. Now God did that. God the Father sent His Son to do that for us. Atonement/propitiation don't picture an angry God who is pacified by a pleading Savior, by Christ trying to bend God's will to our favor. That's a false view of propitiation, or the work of atonement.

This is all the work of the Father. This is His love. He sent His Son to die for us. He offered Him up for us out of love for us. It was the Father's plan, which the Son willingly, gladly, carried out. This is the work, not simply of the Father, it's the work of the Trinity. They 'covenanted together in eternity past' is one way of putting it. We really can't really get our minds around eternity and what God did. This is an eternal plan that's always been with the mind of God. The Godhead agreed to save a people that were lost; a people for God's own possession.

That's what happened at the cross. The cross really is the greatest example of God's love, the greatest act of love. It is a love that is sacrificial—the very best for the worst; for sinners; for the undeserving. Look, you will never understand the love of God until you understand your sin. It's not a happy subject; it's not one that people like to talk about—sin. Whether it's in polite company or in the pulpit, people don't like to talk about that. But you will never understand the love of God until you understand yourself, until you understand your sin.

You were born in it. We all were. David makes that statement about himself. He's not considering himself a unique example. It's true of all of us. But in Psalm 51 he said, 'I was sinful at birth, from my mother's womb.' 'From the time I was conceived', he says 'I was sinful.' That's true of all of us. We come into this world guilty. We come into this world infected by sin like a virulent virus attacking every part of our being; body, soul, and spirit, so that we were born into this world with a nature that made us rebels and haters of God.

Now if that sounds harsh, I hope that doesn't sound harsh to anybody here, but if it sounds harsh, listen, it's only what the apostles teach. We were at war with God. Paul says that directly in Romans 8, verse 7. "We were dead in our transgressions and sins." He tells that to the Ephesians at the beginning of Ephesians, chapter 2. We were lost and needed a Savior, and we didn't even know it. We weren't looking for Him because we didn't care. We, in fact, were hiding from Him.

Now that's the love of God. It seeks and saves people like that. It seeks and saves sinners like you and me. It dies for sinners like you and me. It saves them from their sins, and delivers them from their sins, from sin's power and sin's penalty. That is the love of God—but you'll never understand the LORD's love until you understand that.

And you will never understand how you are to love until you understand His love. I don't want to sound like an authority on this because we will spend the rest of our lives learning that—all of us do; we'll never come to the end of this. And we're always, it would seem, beginners in this subject of studying the love of God and how we're to live.

But certainly that's true. We will never understand the LORD's love until we understand that we're sinners that have been loved by Him. —And we won't understand how we're to love until we understand that.

But that's what we must do, and what we will do; what we will do if we know Him. We will love sacrificially; not perfectly, but we will love. That's what John tells us to do in verse 11, "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also *ought* to love one another." That's what we *ought* to do because that is our nature. We have a new nature; we have God's nature. We're new creatures in Christ, a new creation, and it will inevitably show itself in our lives.

The child of God loves like God, sacrificially. But also, since the Lord loved us so greatly as to die for us, there is a moral obligation for us to do the same thing—to die for one another. That's what Jesus said in John chapter 13, verse 14. He washed His disciples feet, and then He instructed them to do the same, "If I then... washed your feet, you also *ought* to wash one another's feet."

Maybe that's where John got the '*ought*' in this verse, from that statement of our Lord, "You *ought* to wash one another's feet." That's what the Lord desires from us. That's what pleases Him: That we serve one another; that we sacrifice for one another. That was a big sacrifice for them, 'You mean, I need to bow down and wash the feet of this man next to me? I need to live like that?' Yes, that's what Jesus is saying.

I like what Luther wrote, "When God, in His sheer mercy and without any merit of mine, has given me such unspeakable riches, shall I not then freely, joyously, wholeheartedly, unprompted, do everything that I know will please Him? I will give myself as a sort of Christ to my neighbor, as Christ gave Himself to me."

That's it. That is what Paul spoke of in 2 Corinthians 5, verse 14, when he wrote, "The love of Christ controls us...". Meaning, 'the love that Christ has for me, the sacrificial agape love, the 'gift love', that died for me—that motivates me to love.' That's what Paul is saying. And really there is no greater motivation and incentive to godly self-sacrificing life than the love that God has for us.

We can exhort one another to, 'Love one another', and tell each other, 'It's our obligation, and we must do that'—and that will have some effect. But not nearly the effect of simply reflecting upon the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, reflecting on the Godhead, the Trinity, and what it has done for us; what God has done for us: who He is and who we are; all that He's done for us: all that He's given to us; the riches that we have: all at Christ's expense; all because of unconditional love. As you begin to reflect upon that, that does have the effect of giving us the desire to serve one another—to please the Father because of all that He's done for us.

Luther was right, we have "unspeakable riches." We can't even begin to fathom the riches that we have because of Christ and because of His love for us. And so, we should be a sort of 'Christ to our neighbor.'

That's what John says next in verse 12: We are to manifest God and Christ to the world around us, "No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us." In other words, the invisible God becomes visible through His people. God, who no one can see and live, was once revealed in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is now seen in us when we love one another.

I have a friend who likes to say, "The only Bible that some people will ever read is your life." That's true. And the only glimpse of God they will ever get is you and your life. What we do is important. People see it. People are watching. We may not be aware of

that, but they are. What they hear, what they see is a witness to them. In fact, F. F. Bruce wrote that "Our love for God, as seen in our love for one another, is the strongest apologetic that God has in the world."

Now it's not the only defense of the faith, it's not the only apologetic. We need to be able to explain the hope that's in us; in the words of Scripture and reasoning with Scripture; reasoning through Scripture. That's really what Peter tells us to do in 1 Peter chapter 3, in verse 15, to "always be ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence." So we are to be able to give an explanation of the Gospel to people and to tell people about the hope that's within us. But certainly a life lived consistently with the Word of God and a life that displays the love and the compassion of Christ that He has for us, is a great demonstration of the Gospel—and a great defense of it.

A person can be honest and pay his bills on time. That's a great witness. A person can be a hard worker and be skilled in a trade or in whatever his profession is—be a brilliant person of law or business or medicine. And that's a good witness; it says something about that individual. Paul told the Thessalonians, (1Thes 4:11), 'To make it their ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to their own business, working with their hands.' That's a necessary witness: To be diligent in the labors that you have, to be a good honest worker, and not pry into other people's business. That's a witness, a necessary one.

But, without love, all of that is cold.

The world does that, at least to some degree. Certainly we ought to be as honest and diligent as the world is. But John tells us to do something more than that. He says, "Beloved, let us love one another." (vs7). That is a strong defense of the faith. The world, with all its malice toward the Gospel, can't explain that away. And for many, it gives hope that leads to life. It is the demonstration that God is love.

That was a revelation to the pagan world of New Testament times. It was a superstitious age, when men thought that the world was filled with evil demons; the way that the modern man feels the world is full of dangerous bacteria and viruses. They thought that every evil, every sickness, all of that was caused by the demonic world—and so they lived in a constant fear. They lived with uncertainty; they lived in a kind of darkness with a fear of the unseen—a fear of unseen forces; of fate that was arbitrary; a world that was unfeeling; and a life that was hard and uncertain.

But then to hear this statement, to hear that, “God is love”; that there is a God who is sovereign, absolutely sovereign over the affairs of man—and cares: And a Savior who has harnessed the demons and brings men to God, gives life that is forever, and guards that life here and now—that was a word of hope. And it's equally a word of hope for our day—which is increasingly becoming like the age of the old Romans by drifting steadily away from biblical truth into materialism and a kind of ‘neopaganism’. In fact, I'd say we've already drifted there... we are there.

Remember this, as things get darker and evil seems only to increase, “ ‘There is no peace for the wicked’, says my God.” (Is 57:21). There is no lasting pleasure, no joy; but there is fear, and a lot of fear. The world is a loveless, hopeless place.

But the church has the message of hope, really the only message of hope; the message that “God is love.” He loves sinners and He receives all who come to Him. And we are to express that love; not in words only, but in deeds. Love is expressed in practical conduct; in doing kindness for others; in sacrificing for others.

We have the greatest example of that in God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who washed His disciples feet of dirt—and then went to the cross and washed their souls of sin. That is the love of God. It is sacrificial love; and that is to be the love that we have for one another. That is what the world is to see when it sees the church.

Now we confess, I confess, I think we all confess as Christians, that we don't always show that love. And when we show it, we don't show it perfectly. We never do. We're sinners. All men are, except Christ. He was sinless. He was the God-Man, the

perfect Man, the only one who did not deserve to die—but died in our place. And because His Father loved the world and He died to save all who believe in Him, we have that hope; the hope of eternal life.

So if you're here without Him—Believe in Him. And in so doing experience the love of God and the forgiveness of God, and the life that He gives, which is eternal. May God help you to do that: To come to Him through faith, and faith alone, to trust in Him and rest in Him.

And may all of us do that: Rest in the love of our Savior; which can never end and nothing can separate us from. Let's pray.

Father, we do thank You for such love, such amazing love. We thank You that You sent Your Son into the world to die for sinners. And we confess that's what we are. What an unpopular topic that is, sin, wrath, all of these things. And yet, Your Word teaches it plainly and clearly. And as we look out on the world, as we look into our own hearts, we can't help but see the sin that's there. We know it's true. Your Word is inerrant; and as one honestly looks at it, it matches reality.

We're sinners, but we're saved by grace, and we thank You for that grace. And we thank You that, that grace sent Your Son into the world to be our substitute in death. He took Your wrath in our place. And though faith alone, we are brought to a saving relationship with You for all eternity. We thank You for that. We thank You for all that we have in Christ. And it's in His name we pray. Amen.

(End of Audio)