Coming to Jesus

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[0:00] If you have your Bibles with you today, let's go and open up to Mark chapter 2.

! Mark chapter 2. The Gospel of Mark is the shortest and most concise account of Jesus' life and ministry.
If you notice, there's no mention of Jesus' birth or any lengthy genealogies, or even after Jesus' resurrection, there really isn't much that Mark says about what happened afterwards.
This isn't typically the Gospel that you go to for any of the high holidays, whenever you're preaching on Easter or Christmas. It's, in the Gospel of Mark, really what you get is just this item by item list of the works, the sermons, the messages of Jesus and his ministry on earth.
Mark is also believed to be, you know, one of the earliest accounts of the Gospel of Jesus. Even though Mark was not technically an eyewitness of Jesus' ministry that we know of, Mark, or John Mark, as you might hear him seen, called an axe, he was seen as a close companion of Peter, of Paul.
[1:31] He was the cousin of Barnabas. This is also the same John Mark that was kind of the cause of the schism between Paul and Barnabas. And we know from that point that John Mark continued his ministry on with his cousin Barnabas all the way to Cyprus.

So, while Mark may not have been an eyewitness of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, we do know that he was a major player in the early churches. He got to assist with Paul and his ministry, Barnabas and Peter, and has compiled the first written account of Jesus' ministry.
Now, the Gospels all together serve a simple but profound purpose, and that is to tell the world who Jesus is and what he has done for us.
Understanding who Jesus is is foundational to everything that we believe as Christians, from the beginning in Genesis all the way to Revelations, is all centers around Jesus.
And I hope that we were able to drive that point home in our sermon series on the typology of Christ. If you have missed Jesus, you've missed all of it. So, this first account of Jesus' life and ministry, it was no doubt a treasured asset in the early church.
[2:51] Some believe that this was the catalyst for the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. John's Gospel account, which is one of the lengthiest, it came much later. But the Gospels all serve a similar purpose, to tell who Jesus is and what he accomplished for us on the cross as we sang about and as we remembered in the Lord's Supper.

So, Mark chapter 1, verse 1, it just starts right off on the nose. It's the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. And then Mark even opens up his account with Jesus' baptism that was really kind of the starting point of his ministry.
It's this amazing Trinitarian interaction that deserves more attention than we're going to give to it today. But you have the Son aligning himself with the Father's will in baptism.
You have the Spirit that is descending from heaven like a dove, anointing the Son for his ministry on earth. And then you have the Father who audibly proclaims his pleasure over the Son.
So immediately, anyone who's reading this Gospel account for the first time is going to know there is something special about this person, this Jesus. I want to know more about who he is and what he has done.
[4:12] And I believe that we see kind of a summation of that in the story that we're going to read today. So if you would, let's stand together as we read the Word of the Lord this morning.

Mark chapter 2, verses 1 through 12. And when he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home.
And many were gathered together so that there was no room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the word to them. And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men.

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And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him. And when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay.
And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, Son, your sins are forgiven. Now some of the scribes were sitting there questioning in their hearts, Why does this man speak like that?
[5:11] He is blaspheming. Who can forgive sins but God alone? And immediately, Jesus, perceiving in his spirits that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, Why do you question these things in your hearts?

Which is easier to say to the paralytic, Your sins are forgiven? Or to say, Rise up, take up your bed and walk. But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.
He said to the paralytic, I say to you, Rise, pick up your bed and go home. And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all so that they were all amazed and glorified God saying, We never saw anything like this.
This is the word of the Lord, church. You all may have a seat. So what a beautiful scene. Just in this story, we see God's compassion for the broken.
We see his mercy on sin. The complete authority of Christ's word. The sovereignty that he has over everything that plagues us in creation because of sin's hold on this world.
[6:30] We also see the care and compassion of loving friends who will stop at nothing to make sure that their friend gets to Jesus, who they believed was the answer to their friend's problem.

I want to look at all of these aspects of this story today as we just talk about three major points from this story. And the first is this, that true friends take hurting friends to Jesus.
You know, if you think about the time that this took place, this was before modern health care. There were no nursing homes. There were no assisted living centers.
There was no welfare system for this person to be able to take advantage of. He was completely dependent on the charity and the goodwill of friends like we see in this story or family.
Now, we have no idea what caused this man to be paralyzed or how long he had been like that. Maybe it was from a recent injury. Maybe it was from an illness that had overtaken him.
[7:41] Or maybe he was born like this. We really just don't know. The point is that this man had no hope. There was no medical hope of this man getting better.

There was no hope of this man ever being a productive member of society. This person was doomed to an existence of complete dependence on those that were around him.
So what do these friends do? They load their friend up on the mat and they walk him to where they last heard that Jesus was.
Now, Jesus had already been making a name for himself. This was pretty early in his ministry, but he had been preaching in the synagogues. He had been healing the sick already. He had been casting demons out left and right.
People knew who Jesus was. They had heard of him. No doubt these friends had heard of him or maybe they had even witnessed one of these events happening. So they load up their friend and they make the trek to Jesus.
[8:44] Not caring about the crowds. Not caring about the burden of hauling a full-sized person across town or wherever it is that they were coming from.

All they knew is this. Their friend had a problem and that Jesus was the answer. What a testimony of faith.
They don't know a lot about Jesus personally. But they know enough about him to carry their friend to wherever Jesus was. To tear apart a stranger's roof simply to make sure that Jesus sees this person.
And if only we took that approach with all the burdens that are brought to us with our friends. We may not be doctors.
We may not be licensed counselors. But as children of the king, we have direct access to the sovereign God.
[9:47] And you have the authority and the responsibility to speak the truth on his behalf according to 2 Corinthians. And proclaim his message of reconciliation to those on his behalf.

Now will you be able to heal their physical sicknesses? Probably not. If you come across a fellow believer that is struggling in sin. Are you going to be able to relieve them of those physical consequences of their sin?

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Maybe not. But what you do have the ability to do. Is to speak truth to them. To introduce a hope that transcends their temporal circumstances.
That gives them hope for eternity. Which is infinitely better. That is why Paul said in Romans 8.18. For I consider the sufferings of this present time.
Are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed for us. Church, as an agent of faith and hope. You can bring your friends to the one who can heal their greatest wounds.
[10:54] To the ones who can provide hope in the darkest of circumstances. Church, that is exactly what these men did for this paralytic friend of theirs. If they had thought that they could heal them.

They would not have made the effort to go all the way across town with this guy. But they knew that they were hopeless. They knew that their friend was hopeless. But they knew who the source of hope was.
And they did everything that they could to get their friend to Jesus. And as I read about this story. Every time I've read this. It's hard for me not to think about all the times.
That I've had the opportunity to bring a friend to Jesus. That was hurting. And all the times that I neglected to do that. When I was growing up.
I had a friend that basically grew up in our family. He would go to church with us. Every Sunday morning. Every Wednesday night. During the summers.
[11:55] He spent most of his nights at our house. I mean for all intents and purposes. He was family. Now. Because of just life decisions.

And things that were going on. We just naturally drifted apart. We didn't have a falling out. There was no argument or anything like that. But. At that point.
We were starting to lead. Two different lives. And we just lost contact. A couple of years later. I get a call from this friend. Haven't talked to him in a long time.
And. I could tell just by the sound of his voice. That something was going on in his life. That was horrible. He could have called anyone. But he called me.
And just said. I need to talk to you. So as soon as I can. I get to his house. And he just starts unloading on me. Everything that's happened. The life choices that he's made.
[12:52] The consequences. That he's wrought from that. Just the brokenness. That has befallen him. And. At the front of my mind.

Everything was screaming in me. It is time. To take your friend to Jesus. It is time. To share the gospel with him. But I made another decision that day.
Saying to myself. He doesn't need a preacher. Right now. What he needs is a friend. He just needs a shoulder to cry on. The gospel can come. Later.
The next time the gospel. Was presented to him. Was at his funeral. Where I got to read scripture. Over his casket. The gospel.
Never got another chance in his life. Because I passed up that opportunity. Jesus is not. Someone's hope eventually.
[13:51] Jesus is. The hope now. The time to share the gospel. With your friends. That are hurting. With those in your life. That are burdened. The time to share Jesus with them.

Is always at hand. It's not in the future. Jesus is our hope. Now. And when we recognize that. It does not go unnoticed.
By our savior. He sees our dependence on him. He sees. When we finally recognize. That he is our greatest. And only need.
And only hope. That brings us to our next point. That we need to come. To him. We need to come to God. With genuine. Faith.
As I read this whole scene unfolding. I'm humbled by Jesus response. You know. He didn't take notice. And mention anything. About the wonderful mess. That had been made. Of the host home's house.
[14:47] They have a new skylight. In their roofs. He wasn't worried. About what the person. Was potentially sick with. Not thinking. Oh what if I touch this person. And I'm ritually unclean now.

He saw their faith. It was faith. That led these people. To Jesus. Hebrews 11. 6. It says.
And without faith. It is impossible. To please him. For whoever would draw near to God. Must believe that he exists. And that he rewards those. Who seek him.

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Without faith. It is impossible. To please God. Even in the gospel accounts. Jesus had been quoted saying. Your faith. Has made you well. Or on the other side of things.
There were times. When it said that Jesus. Was unable to perform miracles. And signs. Because of the hardness. Of people's hearts. In certain towns. And I never want this. To be construed.
[15:43] As a message. Where he said. If we just believe enough. That we will receive. The physical healing. That we desire. That's not what this verse. Is saying.

Faith is not. The right amount of change. That we put into the. Spiritual vending machine. To get what we want. Faith is the foundation. And the substance. Of our relationship. With the Lord.
And it is approaching. God in faith. Believing that he is. Who he says he is. Believing that. Despite our physical circumstances. That he is. The answer.
To our satisfaction. And our eternal need. That is what's pleasing. To the Lord. Now as believers. We need to get past. This idea. That God's purpose of being.
Is strictly to tend. To our physical needs. Now he is who we turn to. For all these issues. The Bible tells us. To cast all of our cares. To cast all of our anxieties.
[16:40] On the Lord. I mean that's scriptural. To do that. Because God does indeed. Care for us. And he's going to work. All these things out.

For our good. But we need to remember. What our greatest. Good is. Our greatest. Good. Is to bring. God glory. And that is what.
He is working out. Sometimes. Like Paul though. And his thorn in the flesh. Sometimes we just need. To remember that. In our afflictions. It's God's grace. That is going to be sufficient. For us. And in the moment. We may not. See how our present. Suffering. Brings about God's glory. But we can. Trust. In a sovereign God. Who does.
See. And even orchestrates. The bigger picture. So what does it mean. To come to God. In genuine faith. I want to lay out. Four principles here. Of what it means.
[17:37] To come to God. With genuine faith. In times like this. The first. Is that we come to God. Knowing that our greatest. Problem. Has already been solved. He isn't the lamb of God.

Who takes away. The financial problems. Of the world. Nor the physical. Problems of the world. Although that one day. When sin is defeated. We will see those things. Placed under the feet. Of Christ.
He goes right. To the source of the issue. He is the lamb of God. Who takes away. The sin. Of the world. And that is our source. Of joy and fulfillment. Knowing. That every need.
We have for eternity. Has been met in Christ. And when we come to God. Knowing that our ultimate victory. Has been won. It really puts our temporal needs. Into the proper perspective.
Yes. We bring our burdens. To the Lord. Like I said. He commands us. To do that in scripture. But come in faith. Knowing that God. Has already met. Your greatest need.
[18:33] And that he will work out. All things for your good. And his glory. The next principle. Is that we need. To come through Jesus. John 14.

6. Says I am the way. The truth. And the life. No one comes to the father. But through me. Communion. With God. Approaching his throne.
Of grace. Is only possible. Through a right standing. In Jesus Christ. If you are not clothed. In the righteousness. Of Christ. You have no audience.
With God. You can't come to God. By calling on any other name. So many people. Are going to try to say. That as long as. You have some sort of. Anchor to cling to. Call on whatever name.
You want. It's all about. Reaching the same goal. Now I am not. Well versed in Greek. I do speak geek. Though pretty well. And the word for that.
[19:27] Line of philosophy. Is hokum. Or hogwash. Whatever you want to say. If it is not. Jesus. That you are calling on. Church. You do not have an anchor.

What you have. Is sinking sand. Now because. We come through Christ. This is the next principle. Because we come through him. We can come. Knowing that God.
Understands. Numerous times. In the gospel. Jesus is said. To have been moved. With compassion. For the multitudes. Of the sick. And the hungry. Now no doubt.
Jesus being. Fully man. Had experienced. Many of these. Physical afflictions. That these people. Were going through. Hunger. Sickness. This is all. Part of the human experience. Many people forget.

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About that sometimes. That Jesus. Was fully. Human. And took on. All of our frailties. He experienced. Sickness. Hunger. Exhaustion. He doesn't just.
[20:21] See our pain. He knows it. And as he looks at this. Broken man. That's lying on the mat. In front of him. It's not heartless pity. That he feels.

It's not. Indignation. That he feels. Or inconveniencing. It's compassion. It's love. For this soul. That he has created. That has been broken. By a sin ridden world. Hebrews 4.15.
Says this. For we do not. Have a high priest. Who is unable. To sympathize. With our weaknesses. But one. Who in every respect. Has been tempted.
As we are. Yet without sin. Church. We come to God. In faith. We come. Not only knowing. That he has all the power. But that he understands.
[21:16] He empathizes. With our weaknesses. The next principle is this. Is that we can come trusting. In his sovereignty. I believe that every Christian.

Is going to. Wrestle with the sovereignty. Of God. At some point. In their lives. I can. Hear unbelievers. Struggle with this concept.
When they're trying. To understand God. You know. When people come. To God. With their problems. With their pains. They undoubtedly. They want solutions. Or at the very least. They want answers.
Like why am I going. Through this. They want to know why. Thankfully though. We have a sovereign God. That does not see himself. As too big. For our questions. James 1.5.
Says. If any of you. Lacks wisdom. Let him ask. God. Who gives generously. To all. Without reproach. And it will be given to him. Or you can read.
[22:12] Through the minor prophet. Of Habakkuk. That whole book. Is Habakkuk. Questioning God. And then God answering. Never. Scolding him. Or putting him down. For his questions.

We serve a God. That wants to give us. Wisdom. In our times of trials. Now. If you've ever. Been through a time. Of loss. With someone. I've walked through that. With many families.
Maybe they feel like. They lost someone. Too soon. Or goodness. Forbid. They've lost a child. The dilemma. Is this. And I've struggled.
With this dilemma. In my life too. That if God. Is completely sovereign. How do you not. Hold him responsible. For what's going on.
But on the other side. Of that. If God is completely sovereign. How can you do anything. But trust him. In those times. Of need. And trauma. So what if God.
[23:07] Doesn't answer your prayers. The way that you wanted. What if you have spent. Time. Praying with desperate tears. Pleading. Only to find out.

That God has another plan. In mind. What if. These men. After all their effort. Of bringing their friend. To Jesus. Of lowering him. Through a roof. What if after all that effort.
They still had to carry. Their friend. Out of that house. Our faith. In God's sovereignty. Should never be determined. By our circumstances.
Or necessarily. The outcome. Of our prayers. Our circumstances. Should lead us. To lean on God. All the more. Knowing that.
Something. That may be beyond. Our understanding. That we have a God. Who has all the understanding. And we can trust. That he will always act. In a way. That promotes his glory.
[24:03] And promotes our good. We may not see it. At the time. But we can rejoice. In that truth. That God. Will never act. In a way. That contradicts. His goodness.

Or his desire. For our lives. Which is to know him. And enjoy his glory. Forever. You know. I've mentioned this man. In my sermon before.
But my uncle Tim. Was a paraplegic. An awful accident. Where he had been ran over. As a child. Left him paralyzed. From the waist down. But Tim wasn't.
Even still. And to this day. After his death. He is still one of my. Greatest inspirations. In life. I never heard him. Complain about being. Bound to a wheelchair. He never.
Collected disability. He loved camping. He lived a full life. He held down a job. As a police officer. In the small town. Of Skyatuke. Of all things. And he loved the Lord.
[25:02] And God used him. In a great. Way. That I don't think. Would have happened. Otherwise. You know.

Earlier. I asked the question. What if the paralytic man. Stayed paralyzed. What if he had to be. Carried out on the same mat. That he was carried in on. You know. Praise God. That he didn't.

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But praise God. Even more. That Jesus. Solved his greatest problem. When he said. Your sins are forgiven. And if you are a believer. The same is true for you too.
This brings us to our final. Imperative. That we're going to look at today. And that is to come to Jesus. Knowing. That the final battle. Has been won. Our final victory.
Is already in hand in Christ. I want to read this last section. To you again. Starting in verse six. Jesus had just proclaimed.
[25:57] Forgiveness of. Of the paralytic sins. Now some of the scribes. Were sitting there. Questioning in their hearts. Why does this man. Speak like that. He is blaspheming.

Who can forgive. Sins. But God alone. And immediately. Jesus. Perceiving in his spirit. That they thus. Questioned within themselves. He said to them. Why do you question.
These things in your hearts. Which is easier. To say to the paralytic. Your sins are forgiven. Or to say. Rise. Take up your mat. And walk.
But that you may know. That the son of man. Has authority on earth. To forgive sins. He said to the paralytic. I say to you. Rise. Pick up your bed. And go home. And he rose. And immediately.
Picked up his bed. And went out before them all. So that they were all amazed. And glorified God. Saying. We never saw anything. Like this. So this man.
[26:52] In his most desperate state. That he could be in. Gets laid at the feet. Of Jesus. His physical problem. Is obvious. His situation. Is dire. And I'm sure.

It was interesting. To the people. That were there. Watching this whole scene. Unfold. Jesus doesn't. Just immediately. Say. Yeah. Get up and walk. I got this. He sees their faith.
And he forgives. His sin. What a radical. Proclamation to make. You know. Jesus. Not simply. Making a statement. About the sinful nature. Of the people. That are in his presence. He is making a statement. About himself. When he proclaims. Forgiveness of sins. Even the Pharisees.
And their doubts. Of who Jesus was. They still knew the truth. That only God. Can forgive sins. But the problem. They were having. Is that they didn't realize. That it was.
[27:49] The son of God. God incarnate himself. That they were seeing. Face to face. At this time. Sin. Is the greatest. Problem church. Yeah.

Our physical struggles. Are real. Our grief. And loss is real. Our sickness is real. They are temporal though. And even though. Jesus has the authority. Over all these problems. The bigger picture.
Is that Jesus. Has come to answer. Our greatest. Eternal problem. God. That is what he is going. To show them now. So the big question. In this passage. It was asked. Who can forgive sin.
But God alone. A little bit of context here. At this time. The idea of just speaking. Forgiveness over somebody's sin. It required authority.
It required power. It required perfection. Of the one. That was speaking it. Forgiveness of sins. At this time.
[28:47] It came at a great price. These were people. That were still. Under the law. It required sacrifice. But for this man. This paralytic.

That was. Supposedly being forgiven. Of his sins. No sacrifice. Had been made. There was no offering. Of blood. How could his sins.
Have been atoned for. In the eyes of these Pharisees. That were watching. This whole scene unfold. Because again. In order for sin. To be atoned. There had to be. A payment. To remove the wrath.
Of God on someone. So this paralytic. He's brought nothing. And they weren't. In the temple either. You can't forgive sins. In somebody's house. The altar is not there. So.
Who is this person. That's proclaiming. Forgiveness of sins. They're right. Only God. Can forgive sins. And besides. As they're looking.
[29:39] At this whole scene. Unfold. When he proclaimed. Forgiveness. This guy was. Still lying. On his mat. He was still paralyzed. The perceived.

Curse. That his sin. Had brought on him. Was still. Shackling him. You heard the disciples. Even struggle. With this dilemma. As well. In John chapter 9.
Verses 1 through 5. Jesus was about. To heal a blind man. And they said. Who has sinned. This man. Or his parents. That he was born blind. We all suffer. From the brokenness.
Of living in a sinful world. Some. More than others. We see it. In the. In the physical problems. That they have. But we all suffer. From sickness. Disease. We all have.

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An impending death. That is looking. Right at us. Eventually. One day. But suffering. Isn't a game. Of karma. Where God says. Well you lied. On your taxes.
[30:34] So the consequences. Is blindness. That's not the way. That it works. There is not. A corner of creation. That remains. Unaffected. By sin.

But what we are. Going to see. Is that Jesus. Has all the authority. His sovereignty. Reign supreme. Over everything. That holds us. And the lamb of God. Who takes away. The sins of the world.
Is about to show himself. Powerful. Authoritative. Completely sovereign. Over everything. That plagues us. You see the miracle. That.
Of this healing. Jesus was showing them. Something deeper. He is not just the answer. To their physical. Problems.
He is the answer. To their deepest problem. That has been brought on mankind. And to show. A physical. Manifestation. Of that. Jesus. Is undoing. The curse of sin.
[31:29] In this man's life. He is removing. This burden. From him. Jesus worked. A complete healing. In this man's body. He had just claimed. Authority. Over our problems.

In a way. That these people. Had never seen. So who. Could deny. The authority. Of Jesus now. But. As a great. As this. You know. Act of deliverance.
Was. This was really. Just a preamble. To Jesus. Ultimate showdown. With the curse of sin. While Jesus. Was able to heal. And undo.
The physical. Consequences. Of sin. In this man's life. And in other people's lives. We see him doing miracles. All the time. Jesus. Was going to take on. The full. Curse of sin.
On the cross. He was going to take on. The full. Payment. Of our sins. By embracing. Death. Which is the wages. Of our sin. And he didn't.
[32:22] Stay dead. Either. He didn't. Just pay the price. Of sin. And embrace. The curse of it. He conquered it. By coming back. To life. By raising again.

After three days. With victory. In hand. That we. Get to take part in. All of our hope. And victory. Is found in him. And this is what. Jesus was pointing towards. He was showing.
These people. A glimpse. Of what the kingdom of God. Was going to look like. One day. Where sin. No longer. Had a hold of things. Where the lamb. Reigned supreme. Over everything. That's what Jesus.
Was trying to show. These people. You know. As we look back. In the stories. We're just concluding. Things here. There's an obvious. Interaction. Between Jesus.
And the curse of sin. We see the people. Who are. Are well acquainted. With suffering. And sorrow. And Jesus. Clearly presents himself. As the answer. Unfortunately.
[33:17] Many people. Struggle. With this issue. If God is sovereign. And eternally good. Then why do we suffer? Why is there suffering. In the world? Many. Unbelievers.

Cling to this. Perceived dilemma. Many Christians. Will just kind of. Chalk it up. To a divine mystery. That they're never. Going to know about. Or maybe. Maybe you're a believer.
Or one. That's an unbeliever. That's dealing with this. In your own life. Right now. Personal suffering. Can be a defining moment. In our walk with the Lord.
You know. We sing about. Trust in God. We hear sermons. And read scriptures on it. But trials. Have a way. Of exposing. The impurities. Within us. Within our faith.
Much like. Gold. That's being refined. In the fire. God has already fixed. Our greatest problem. Church. He has fixed it.
[34:13] In the death. And the resurrection. Of Christ. And because sin. Has been defeated. One day. All of our enemies. Will be defeated. Our paralytic. That we read about today.

Got to see a glimpse. Of how the kingdom. Would be. What a world. Where sin. Has no hold on us. Would be like. And Jesus. Gives all of us. That promise.
To look forward to. One day. We can see the sufferings. In our life. And we can. First of all. Know that. That's not the way. That God created it to be. He created paradise.
He created perfection. A creation. That was. Meant to perfectly. Portray his glory. But because of our sin. It is set in motion. A decay.
And just. A cancer. In our society. In our world. But we can also. Look forward to the promise. That God said. It's not always going to stay this way.
[35:07] Patience. In the meantime. It can be trying. But it's worth it. When one day. We will be able to see Jesus. Place all of these things. Under his feet. In victory.

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Faith and suffering. Isn't. About understanding why. It's about. In the. In the one that we find rest in. Suffering may have a hold of today.
But we can trust in the one. Who holds all of our tomorrows. And it's already ordained. The end. We talked about bringing our friends to Jesus. Hurting people are always going to need a healing savior church.
I've had the opportunity to walk with many people through trials in their lives. And Christians need to be reminded sometimes of how to cling to Jesus. I've been there.
In the midst of struggle. There are many emotions. There are many lies that the enemy is going to try to tell you to lead you away from Christ. And let me tell you. Christians are just as susceptible to these lies.
[36:09] The friend in today's story. He could have just as easily. They could have easily said to the paralytic. God's obviously abandoned. You look at how miserable you are right now. But they didn't.

And their reward was great for it. So when you see your fellow brother or sister struggling. Lovingly point them to Christ. Don't scold them for their doubt or their questions.
But comfort them with the truth. And you. If you are somebody that is going through this difficult circumstance. Through a trial in your life. Be humble enough to let somebody point you back to Jesus.
Yeah. It may hurt. It may wound you in the time. But always be willing to accept wise counsel from those that care about you.
That are pointing you back to Jesus. That is part of what it means to bear each other's burdens.
And lastly. All of this. It requires. Genuine faith.
[37:12] So for you that are here. That are not believers. You're in the right place. We're glad that you're here. You are welcome here. But if you've never had a true relationship with the Lord.

Today can be your day of salvation. In our story today. Jesus has shown himself victorious over our greatest problems. Over our smallest problems.
Even the temporal issues that we face. He has sovereignty over those too. He has also shown us that his love reaches to the lowliest of people. Jesus sees you. He sees your problems.
And he has already won the victory for you. Through his death and resurrection on the cross. But my question to you is this. When Jesus sees you.
Much like the friends that brought the paralytic and the paralytic man himself. When Jesus sees you. Is he going to see your faith? Or will he see your rejection?
[38:14] Because of the curse of sin. It has temporal consequences. Yes.

But sin is going to lead you to an everlasting separation with God. Those are the eternal consequences that we all face without crisis or hope. And God does not desire that for you.
He has sent his son to pay the price for your sins. So I just want to invite you today. If you feel that the spirit is calling you to repentance.
Respond in obedience today. Don't delay. And like the paralytic. You can walk out of this place today. In newness.
Being made new in Christ. In joy. Because of what Jesus has done in your life. Let's pray. Father we thank you.
[39:14] For what Jesus has done for us. Lord we thank you in our story today. Lord that we see that. Lord Jesus does take notice of our pains.

Of our weaknesses. Of our sorrows in this life. But Lord even more importantly than that. He has taken notice of our eternal need. And he has done something about it.
And Lord I pray that today. If there is somebody here that does not know Christ as their savior. That needs to be made new by him. Lord that they would come forward today.
Lord that they would follow you in obedience. Lord that you would call them out of darkness. And make them new. Lord I pray that if anyone here today has a friend.
That needs to be taken to Jesus. Lord I pray that you would give boldness. To the saints that are here. To speak Jesus into their lives. To share with them the only hope that we have for eternity.
[40:16] The only hope that we have for this life. Lord I pray that we would all be emboldened. To speak Jesus into the darkest corners of our lives. And Lord I pray that when we do struggle with trials.

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Lord maybe we're the ones that are going through these dark circumstances. Lord I pray that we would lean on Jesus. Lord that we would trust in his sovereignty.
Lord that we would come to you knowing. That you understand. That through your son Jesus. He has experienced these things that we go through. And he can empathize with our weaknesses. So Lord I pray that today as we close things. Lord that during this time of response. That Jesus would be glorified. I pray for all these things in his holy name. Amen. Amen.

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