

# Jesus Christ Reviled and Revered

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[ 0 : 00 ] John chapter 9, verse 13 through 34.

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see.

Some of the Pharisees said, This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath. But others said, How can a man who is a sinner do such things?

And there was a division among them. So they said again to the blind man, What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes? He said, He is a prophet.

[ 1 : 13 ] The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, Is this your son, who you say was born blind?

How then does he now see? His parents answered, We know that this is our son and that he was born blind, but how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes.

Ask him. He is of age. He will speak for himself. His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be the Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.

Therefore his parents said, He is of age. Ask him. So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner.

He answered, Whether he is a sinner, I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see. They said to him, What did he do to you?

[ 2 : 14 ] How did he open your eyes? He answered them, I have told you already and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?

And they reviled him, saying, You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.

The man answered, Why, this is an amazing thing. You do not know where he comes from, and yet he has opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners.

But if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.

They answered him, You were born in utter sin, and you would teach us? And they cast him out. May God add a blessing to the reading of his word. Would you please be seated?

[ 3 : 22 ] I love the NCAA basketball tournament, March Madness. Unfortunately, as a KU fan, and for many of you Oklahoma and Oklahoma State fans, it wasn't quite the kind of tournament that we were hoping to experience.

But still, there's reason to watch. And one of the reasons to watch is the Cinderella stories, they call them, of the low-seeded team advancing in the playoffs, beating higher-rated, higher-ranked teams.

They survive, and they advance. This year, one of those Cinderella stories was Oral Roberts University. Few had thought that they were even going to make the NCAA tournament.

But they got hot at the right time. And though they were a 15 seed, they advanced to the Sweet 16, which is remarkable, defeating powerhouse schools like Ohio State and the University of Florida.

Unfortunately, they lost yesterday, but man, they were close. But I bring them to your attention this morning because this past Tuesday, two days after ORU advanced to the Sweet 16, an article was published in the USA Today, a national newspaper.

[ 4 : 47 ] And the article was entitled, Oral Roberts University Isn't the Feel Good March Madness Story We Need. In the article, written by an editor of the USA Today, she accuses ORU of having archaic standards that are discriminatory, hateful, morally regressive, and transphobic.

And in the article, she calls for the NCAA to ban ORU in any other institution from the tournament with an anti-LGBTQ plus language of any kind in their school's policies.

Now, Oral Roberts, the man, and I have very, very different theological backgrounds, as does our church, but the standards of morality that this article attacks and accuses as being archaic and out of line with human decency, prejudiced, morally regressive, discriminatory, dangerous, and hateful, are standards of morality established by Scripture.

They are the standards of morality that describe most of our Christian institutions, especially our Southern Baptist institutions. Christians. And so, this article reveals, I think, to us how society is beginning to organize itself against Christianity.

And it's coming first for our Christian institutions. Schools, Christian universities, charitable organizations done in the name of Jesus Christ.

[ 6 : 45 ] They are on the front lines of this. And they are being attacked. And I'll tell you, this isn't going to go away.

This is not going to go away. This is the beginning. We will soon see how willing Christian schools are to stand for Christian values.

we will soon see whether they serve the cause of sports or they will serve the cause of Jesus Christ. While these things are being said about ORU today, I believe that before long these same kinds of things will be said about our Christian schools, our Christian churches, churches, and you a Christian tomorrow.

Are you ready for that? Are you ready for that? You should be. Jesus told you that you should be. John 15, 18-19. If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own, but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

[ 8 : 15 ] I've been studying in 2 Timothy and listened there to Paul's similar instruction to Timothy, a young pastor in 2 Timothy 3, 12-14.

Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will, not might, not maybe, will be persecuted.

While evil people and imposters will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived, but as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it.

Persecution follows those who follow Christ. persecution follows those who follow Christ. The answer when persecution comes isn't to run or hide, but to stand firm in what we know and what we've learned in Jesus Christ.

No, and the Bible gives us a lot of instruction about that, doesn't it? in John 9, we are provided with an example of a man whom Jesus transformed and who as a result of that faced persecution from his community.

[ 9 : 43 ] Jesus, if you remember, has healed the man who was born blind. This healing served as a visible demonstration of his ability to transform us spiritually, transforming the way that we think, transforming the way that we see.

The healing demonstrates God's ability to do what we could never do, to save us from our sins and spare us from his righteous wrath. In this passage, though, again, we see the depths of man's depravity to shut up and shut down the truth of Jesus Christ.

And those who testify to the transformative power that they have experienced through faith in him. And so, in this text, we learn two things.

And it's the main idea for this morning's sermon. Those who reject Christ, revile him. Those who receive Christ, revere him.

This is a fact. Those who reject Christ end up reviling him. Those who receive Christ will revere him. And it's interesting that this text is our text this morning considering that it's Palm Sunday.

[ 11 : 07 ] And in Scripture, don't we see in the life of Christ that's exactly what happened? They brought him in through Jerusalem, into the temple, laying down their cloaks, laying down the palm branches, crying out, Hosanna, Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

And these very same people, just days later, were shouting something totally different. Crucify him. Crucify him. Crucify him.

People are fickle. But the Lord is faithful. And we need to be faithful as well. Especially as persecution mounts upon Christianity.

will you reject Christ? Or will you revere him? Will you reject him when people revile you?

And persecute you? And utter all kinds of evil things about you, against you, falsely, on account of your allegiance to Christ?

[12:10] Will you rejoice? And will you be glad when persecution comes? Willing to stand firm? To stand for truth? To stand up with Christ and be glad to do so knowing that he has said that your reward is great in heaven?

Do you believe that? You know, right now, we're kind of, we're in the midst, we're getting ready for tornado season, aren't we?

When tornado season comes, what we do is we start getting prepared, make sure that we've got flashlights in the right rooms, make sure that we've got a plan in place, this is where we're going to hide, this is where we're going to survive the storm.

We make all of those plans. So I know in Oklahoma, a lot of you guys, when tornadoes come, like to go outside and look at the tornado instead of seek shelter. It's dangerous.

But you know we do this, even still, even though you know I'm going to go, I'm going to look at it, as long as it's not coming my way, I still want to be prepared just in case it does. We get ready for storms like that.

[13:23] Are you getting ready? Are you ready for the storm of persecutions that are coming? When they come, when they come, will you revere Christ?

Are you right now fortifying your mind and your heart and your soul and your life and your family and your church with the Word of God?

Are you building your life upon the truth revealed in Jesus Christ? Knowing that when the storms of persecution hits and beats against you, that you will not fall and you will not be destroyed because you have founded your life upon the rock.

Upon the rock who is Jesus Christ the Lord. Our world is getting darker. The storm clouds are multiplying.

It's coming. Don't make light of this. Don't hear this message and think that it's probably not going to happen. Will you reject Christ when the world needs you to bear witness to Him the most?

[14:37] will you run and hide? Or will you let your light shine that men might see and hear and know the hope that is found in Jesus Christ for the salvation of our eternal souls?

Your family, your church, your community, your world needs you to be like Christ.

will you revere Him with your life? Your world needs you to be like Him.

Though they may revile you for doing so, are you ready for that? Will you stand firm for the truth? Will you preach the gospel?

Will you give the earthly life that He has given you as your Creator and the eternal life that He has given you as your Savior to serve Him?

[15:40] Will you act courageously? Are you ready? this text occurs in three scenes. Each scene reveals how those who reject Christ become willfully and increasingly blind to the truth.

They also reveal how those who receive Christ become increasingly aware of Him, increasing in their knowledge of Him and the truth that they have received from Him.

as the world's reviling of Christ intensifies, let's be found right now this very day matching their intensity with our reverence for our Savior who lives, who reigns forevermore.

As the blind man who now sees because of Christ in this text revered Him. Let's choose this day to revere Him more and more.

Jesus Christ our Lord. So the first scene that we encounter here in this text, scene one, the Pharisees rejection of what the seeing man has believed.

[17:01] The Pharisees rejection of what the seeing man has received. Verses 13 through 17. Look again at verse 13 through 14 in your Bible.

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was the Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened His eyes.

The seeing man is brought by his neighbors to the Pharisees for at least two reasons, I believe. First, they couldn't come to grips with His miraculous transformation.

They thought that this could possibly be the case of mistaken identity. Though we know the man repeatedly told them, it's me, I am the man. They still sought confirmation from their leaders regarding that.

Is that truly Him? Second, they were confused by the fact that this miracle, this transformation took place on the Sabbath day. Jesus had worked to bring transformation to this man on a day that the Pharisees had said no work should take place.

[18:13] This was a blatant violation of their restrictions, of their man-made code regarding what it meant to properly observe the Sabbath. So, they brought the man to the Pharisees, to their religious leaders, for an evaluation, for an explanation, interrogation.

So, here's this man who's spent his life begging for the bare necessities of life so that he could live, now appearing before men who held great power and great influence in his community.

In the eyes of the world, the blind man now seeing was nothing and had nothing. But we know something.

We know that he has met with Jesus. And like so many others before him and after him, when you meet Jesus, when he opens your eyes to the truth, you're never the same.

And I love the courage that this man who in the eyes of the world was nobody and had nothing, the great courage he has throughout this process as these men of influence interrogate him.

[19:44] And we have some things to learn from him. So the Pharisees begin their interrogation with a simple question, just repeating the question that the seeing man's neighbors had already repeatedly asked him.

Verse 15, so the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And the man replies very simply, truthfully, straightforward, giving an explanation as to how this had happened just as he had done before.

The rest of verse 15, he said to them, he put mud on my eyes and I washed and I see. There's a lesson that we need to learn here from the seeing man.

When the world questions and wants to reject what we know to be true of Christ and what he's done in our lives, state the facts.

State the facts. I once was blind by sin, a sinner saved by God's grace. The blood of Christ shed on the cross, has washed away my sins.

[20:57] Now I see he is the way, he is the truth, he is the life. People can deny your testimony.

They will deny your testimony. But no amount of rejection on their part can take away the transformational salvation that you have received in and through Jesus Christ.

Let them say what they will say, but know that no matter what they say, nothing can take you out of his firm, loving grip. I love here that the seeing man didn't hem and haw around.

The Pharisees asked him, how do you see him? Well, you know, I don't want to get in trouble. But look, he spin in some dirt, he made some mud, he rubbed it on my face.

I didn't ask him to do that, and after all, look, he told me to wash. My face was disgusting, it was covered in mud. What did you expect me to do? So I did that, and I see now. What do you want me to say?

[22:13] He stated the facts, he stated the truth, and so should we. But as we see, his answer didn't satisfy the Pharisees. Their interrogation had truly just begun.

In verse 16, some of the Pharisees said, this man is not from God, speaking of Jesus, for he does not keep the Sabbath. But other said, how can a man who is a sinner do such things?

And there was a division amongst them. You see, Jesus presented them with a major problem. The Pharisees had turned the Sabbath day into something that was designed by God for our good, for a day of worship and rest, and they had turned it into a means of legalistic self-glorification, which gave them power and control over others.

The problem Jesus created for them in this instance regarded the Sabbath and they were divided. Some of the Pharisees believed that all people who are from God keep the Sabbath as they had determined it.

But Jesus didn't keep the Sabbath according to their ways, he kept it according to God's ways.

Therefore, they determined since he isn't obeying what we say, he can't be from God.

[23:35] However, others were saying that only God can open the eyes of the blind, and Jesus has done just that. Therefore, how can he not be of God or from God?

And so there was a division at this point amongst these men. So they asked another question. Verse 17, So they again said to the blind man, what do you say about him since he opened your eyes?

The blind man, now seeing, replied, he is a prophet. As the narrative of the seeing man's interrogation progresses from this point forward, what we'll see happening is the Pharisees from this point forward becoming increasingly blinded to the truth.

While the seeing man becomes increasingly perceptive of the truth. At this point, the seeing man understands that Jesus is very special, says he's a prophet, and we see he's on his way.

He's on his way. The truth of Christ, the identity of Christ is coming sharper into his now seeing eyes, being able to understand who Jesus is.

[ 25 : 03 ] Jesus presents a problem though for the Pharisees, and we know that they will ultimately reject him. Well, why? Why? It seems so clear to us, doesn't it?

Well, to acknowledge that Jesus is from God for them would be to acknowledge that their understanding of God and salvation was wrong. What Jesus did, healing on the Sabbath did not sound like something God would do or should do in their minds.

They thought this isn't how God acts. That's very similar to how many people today talk about God. When they hear something about God in Scripture that they don't like, they'll either say out loud, or they'll say it in their minds or into their hearts.

That doesn't sound like God to me. That doesn't sound like God to me. I can't believe in a God who has wrath. I can't believe in a place of eternal judgment and torment like hell.

[ 26 : 17 ] I can't believe that God would crush His Son on the cross for other sins. That sounds like divine child abuse to me. That doesn't sound like God to me.

Same as the Pharisees. It doesn't sound like something God would do violating our Sabbath like that. When people do that, when people make those kinds of statements, things, what they are doing is they're fashioning a God in their own minds, out of their own hearts.

They want a God who agrees with them. They want a God who more than that approves of their sin. And their version of the truth, and truthfully, they want a God who will worship them instead of them worshipping Him.

The Pharisees were faced with a problem. If they acknowledged that Jesus was from God, then they would have to admit that they had misinterpreted, twisted, and added to Scripture.

They would have to humbly confess and repent of their sin for doing that, but they were too self-righteous to do anything like that. Don't we live in a very self-righteous culture these days?

[ 27 : 58 ] Tolerance in our culture is truly intolerant. If you don't say what we think, if you don't agree with what we believe, then we are going to cast you out.

I heard, I've read this quote this week, posted it on Facebook, some of you may have saw it from Leonard Ravenhill, and I think it's so characteristic of many of our churches today, and even Christians, and the gospel that we claim that really is a different gospel, as we read from scripture today.

He said, if Jesus preached the same message many ministers preach today, he would never have been crucified. They'd revere him for being like them.

But Jesus was not like them. Jesus was God. And we cannot save ourselves. The Pharisees couldn't understand that. They thought they could save themselves by their self-righteous good works.

They wouldn't humbly confess their sins and repent and turn to Christ as their only hope of salvation. Our righteousness isn't going to get it done. We need Christ's righteousness.

[ 29 : 18 ] And so he came and he lived the perfect sinless life as the son of God that we could not live. And he was crucified on the cross, reviled, yet praying for those who did so.

So, Father, forgive them, they do not know what they do. And he died. But three days later, we celebrate this every day, but we're going to celebrate Easter next week. Three days later, he rose from the grave.

And he ascended into heaven. And he's there and he's going to come back. We don't know it could be soon, and I hope that it is. But we know for those of us who have trusted in Christ as our Lord and Savior, we have turned to him, we have asked for forgiveness from our been clothed in his righteousness.

And I'm saved, not because of who I am, or what I've done, but because Christ has come, Christ has lived, Christ has died, Christ has risen again.

My faith is in him, not in me. The Pharisees couldn't come to grips with that. But they don't just stop at rejection of Christ and of the truth.

[ 30 : 28 ] And the same will be true of our culture. In fact, I think it already is true of our culture. It has been so for a while. It's happening now. Those who reject Christ, as the Pharisees rejected him long ago, we see the second scene in the next truth.

The Pharisees attempt to repress the truth. Those who reject the truth won't stop there, they'll go on to repressing the truth.

Again, we saw that there was a division amongst them, and so the easy way to handle it, I think, they must have been thinking, was to hope that the blind man truly hadn't been blind after all.

We can solve this problem if we can determine that this guy really wasn't blind the whole time. So they collaborated together, I think, to try to do just that.

Hope that that would be the case. Hope that this man hadn't truly been healed. Then they could go on believing as they had that Jesus was a fraud, so was this man.

[ 31 : 45 ] And many today continue to do that as well. Denied that Christ has come, denied that Christ has died, thinking or wanting to believe, hoping to believe that he stayed dead, so that they don't have to think about the consequences of their sin when they stand before a just and righteous and holy God in judgment.

Rather not have to think through that, so let's just try to sweep it under the rug, just as these Pharisees were trying to do right here. So the Pharisees call in the parents of the blind man.

Again, hoping and thinking and believing that they will reveal that this whole thing has just been a major hoax.

And so the Pharisees call in the parents and they presented them with three related questions. Is this your son? Was he born blind? And if so, how does he now see?

And the parents answer cautiously. Verses 20 through 21. We know that this is our son and that he was born blind, but now he now sees.

[ 33 : 01 ] We do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him. He is of age. He will speak for himself. The parenthetical statement that John provides in verses 22 through 23 summarizes the stress that the seeing man's parents were under.

The Pharisees were in position here to flex their political and societal muscles. If any Jew confessed that Jesus was the Christ, that meant that they would get banned.

That meant that you'd get canceled from culture by being canceled from the synagogue, which meant being treated as an outcast.

You're banned. That's how the world responds to those whom they reject, to repress, to ban. The world attempts to suppress the truth of Christ by repressing those who proclaim it in the same way.

The parents knew that their son had been healed. They knew their son had been healed. And yet they feared men more than God. That should be astounding to us.

[ 34 : 18 ] Their son who was blind from birth could see, and they knew that. But yet they feared men and not God who had made their son to see.

The time will come when unbelievers in position of influence will use that influence to suppress and repress those who follow Christ by trying to make us afraid of them.

By trying to make us be fearful of men instead of God. But what does Jesus say to us? Matthew 10, 26-28, said, so have no fear of them for nothing is covered that will not be revealed or hidden that will not be known.

What I tell you in the dark, say in the light, what you hear whispered proclaim on the housetops.

And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, fear Him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

They may repress the truth, but we should not fear men who fear God. And we enter here into the third scene.

[ 35 : 37 ] Scene three. The Pharisees revile the seeing man, but he relies upon the truth and increases in his reverence of Christ. The Pharisees revile the seeing man, but he relies upon the truth and increases in his reverence for Christ.

So they bring him back in. More interrogation. They ask the same questions, perhaps I think trying to trip him up in what he had answered before.

Trying to catch him. This time though, they mean business. I think they want to communicate to this man. I could see them meeting together before, hey, we took it easy on him last time.

This time we're going to bring him in here and we're really going to put the pressure on. We're going to make him break. So they bring him in and I think, look at that first question that they asked to him.

Give glory to God, we know that this man is a sinner. How's the man respond? Look in verse 25, one thing saying, I do know that though I was blind, now I see.

[ 36 : 48 ] They said to him, what did he do to you? How did he open your eyes? He answered them, I have told you already and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it? Do you want to become his disciples too?

to you? The seeing man had remember first declared Jesus to be a prophet and by way of his retort here I think in sarcasm he identifies as one of Jesus' disciples.

I'm a disciple. Do you want to be a disciple too? His understanding of Christ is sharpening into focus but not for the Pharisees.

They have lost sight of the truth. Verse 28 and 29 and tragically though they knew this man had been healed and they knew Jesus did it they reviled him saying you are his disciple but we are disciples of Moses.

We know that God has spoken to Moses but as for this man we do not know where he comes from. The seeing man becomes even more bold.

[ 38 : 05 ] I love what he says in verse 30 through 32. Why? This is an amazing thing. You do not know where he comes from and yet he opened my eyes?

We know that God does not listen to sinners but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will God listens to him. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind.

If this man were not from God he could do nothing. To the seeing man what Christ had done was crystal clear and he was astounded that his interrogators couldn't see that.

blind the once blind man saw the spiritual blindness of those who were interrogating him. What a turn of events.

He was blind. They could see physically. Now he could see physically. More importantly he could see spiritually and he could see their blindness. Verse 34.

[ 39 : 11 ] They answered him you were born in utter sin and would you teach us and they cast him out. And with that the Pharisees investigation and interrogation ends at least to the seeing man.

They knew that the man had in fact been born blind. Again they knew that Jesus had healed him but they refused to receive the truth and reviled the man instead.

Canceling him banishing him from the synagogue getting him out. I tell you cancel culture is coming for us.

What they did to the seeing man is what they did to Jesus is what they are going to do to us. How will you respond? How will you respond?

Will you shut your mouth? Will you shut your eyes? Or will you continue to share the good news of Jesus Christ? Will you be afraid? Trembling in fear?

[ 40 : 24 ] Or will you speak certain of the truth that you know and you have in Jesus? Last week we're starting baseball for Jack and his team and they're nine years old and we scrimmaged against a team that was ten years old let me tell you there's a big difference between nine and ten in baseball and some of these kids that were ten so I was umpiring and I was standing behind the pitcher watching and calling the balls and strikes and some of these kids were big kids and they were throwing!

the ball pretty hard and I was concerned for our boys but they got into the box some of them got hit they took their base maybe a little tear streaming down quick to wipe it you know before anybody sees and after the game they played pretty well and after the game you know the coaches go around we talk about what we did well what we could improve and my comment to them is you know because you guys because you were going up against some really big kids who were throwing the ball really hard but all of you were brave when you stood up there you stood up there and you didn't show that you were afraid and you did good I'm proud of you for being courageous we break up the huddle and go into the dugout picking things up and I think I was in the dugout by myself and one of our boys came from outside the fence and looking at me through the chain link in

a little hushed whisper little voice coach

Mike I was afraid but I saw him play he's one of our better baseball players I told him buddy I saw you up there I said yeah you may have felt fearful but I saw you being courageous I told him you know being courageous doesn't mean that you don't feel fear being courageous means even though I feel fear I'm still going to act I'm still going to act and though that little boy was afraid at that moment he was courageous because he acted!

these things frighten you? Do you feel afraid? I'll tell you I've been feeling afraid at times thinking not just about me and my family but my children what is their generation going to experience but the Lord hasn't given us a spirit of fear but of power and love and self control Luke 12:11 through 12 and we have this promise from our Lord and when they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities do not be anxious about what you should defend yourself or how you should defend yourself or what you should say and here's this promise for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say whenever the world casts you out know that Christ sees!

know that Christ will come through 38 we'll be there in a couple weeks but we need to see this here's this man he's been cast out he's been reviled maybe he feels like he's all alone I've met this Jesus guy and he's wonderful he opened my eyes and I can see and you know what I think he's rejoicing I don't care to be a part of a!

[44:12] group of people who don't want to rejoice in what I have experienced Jesus knows what's going on Jesus heard that they had cast him out and he found him Jesus hears and he finds him he goes and looks for him just like he looked for him when he healed him the first time and he asked him a question do you believe in the son of man and he answered who is he sir that I may believe in him Jesus said to him you have seen him and it is he who is speaking to you look he said prophet before the seeing man of Jesus I'm a disciple of his now look what he says Lord Lord Master Savior I believe and then what did he do he worshipped him he revered him he who had received

Christ revered Christ you know I remember in one of our Sunday night meetings it was either maybe Nick or Ben who had mentioned as we were moving towards community groups on Sunday night that we want to have our children and teens involved with them and it's a good thing you know why because that might be how they have church in the future that might be the future of the United States of America of Christians meeting together in small groups as families in small rooms worshipping the Lord people our hearts should break for our persecutors and we should pray for them not reviling when being reviled but revering

Christ all the more though they may revile us in hopes that they will know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and if you're here today and you realize that you've been reviling him and rejecting!

Listen there's a man named Paul and he did that for most of his life before Jesus met him and saved him you are not too far gone and today the Lord wants to meet with you and transform your life I'll be up here and I would love to pray for you if that is the case we want to know so that we can disciple you three questions of application they're a little bit more generic but it'll be good it'll lead to lead to good conversation tonight and I want you to think about this again we'll talk about this tonight think about it today think about it this week what challenges does this passage present to Christians what challenges does this passage present to Christians second what hope does this passage provide for Christians what hope is here for us to apply to our lives and then thirdly what action is God calling Christians you Christian through this passage today to take what challenge what hope what action let's pray heavenly father we thank you that you cause blind men and women to see

Lord we're thankful that you are a gracious and merciful and loving heavenly father who has revealed the truth of God to us Lord we know that in this world there is persecution great persecution there are believers meeting right now as we meet in fear that being found out they can be arrested they can be hauled away separated from their family forever even killed God forgive us that we have feared something that Christians throughout the centuries have experienced and are experiencing right now and we've looked at it and we've been afraid Lord help us to be people who are courageous who are bold who declare the truth of Jesus Christ no matter what the consequence knowing that this world is not our home we're just passing through until we go to be with you in our eternal and heavenly home our true home in the time that we have Lord may we be faithful to you and all that you called us to be and all that you called us to do to make much of the name of Jesus

[ 49 : 05 ] Christ in his name we pray Amen moment moment