

Amazing Love (Part 3)

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Preacher: Mike Scrivani

[0:00] John 3.16. We've been in this verse for, this is the third week now, and so this week we will cover the last portion of John 3.16.

Would you please stand with me as we honor the reading of God's Word together? For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

May God add a blessing to the reading of His Word. Would you please be seated? Amen. Many years ago, there was a couple that I was doing premarital counseling with in preparation for their marriage.

The groom-to-be had had a very successful career. He had managed his money very well, and he was totally debt-free and had been for a long time.

She was a different story, however. She was surviving paycheck to paycheck. She had accumulated quite a bit of debt, and she was not nearly as strict with her spending habits as he was.

[1:29] And this was a major concern for the groom. This was a topic that seemed to be brought up over and over again during those counseling sessions that we had together.

And I'll remember in one of our last meetings, once again, this issue was brought up, and she looked at me, and she said, He wants me to sign a prenuptial agreement, and I would like to know what you have to say about that.

And kind of put me on a spot. So I turned to him, and I asked him, Why do you think that's necessary? And he tried his best to answer that question, try to spin it in such a way where he made it seem like what he was really doing was protecting her by having that agreement.

And then finally, I cut him off, and I said, You know, the only reason for a prenuptial agreement is because there is an expectation that the marriage will end in divorce.

Why else would you get one? He came up with more excuses to justify his desire for the pre-nup.

[2:49] She started crying. Ultimately, I told them that, you know, it was their decision, but that they should really spend some time in prayer, in conversation, and in reflection over what marriage symbolizes.

Marriage is a symbol of Christ and His church, and Christ's love for His church is not a contractual love, but a covenantal love.

Contracts are written in ink. Covenants are sealed with blood. Most agreements we make, whether it's the purchase of a house or agreements to work a certain job, are sealed with contracts that are written in ink.

Contracts last for a limited time, and they focus either on an object or an obligation. If either party fails to provide the resources or the commitment that they said that they would, the contract can then be renegotiated or it can be reneged completely.

But God doesn't work primarily in contracts. God has chosen to structure His work with humanity around a series of covenants.

[4:13] In covenants, the parties involved do not merely agree regarding a set of abstract obligations. They give themselves to one another in relationship that involves lifelong commitment, devotion, and loyalty.

Covenants persist far past the capacity for reciprocity. In other words, a covenant is meant to last. They are binding both in flesh and in spirit.

Sealed with blood and often sprinkled with tears. Love. True love. Love. Is not contractual.

As God, the source of love, defines it. But it's seen by so many people in our society as being the other way around.

It's contractual. It's temporary. There's limitations to it. Many of you guys may have remembered LeBron James some time ago.

[5:25] Left the Cleveland Cavaliers the first time. They had signed him as a rookie. They had drafted him number one overall. This team was terrible. They'd been at the bottom for years and years.

LeBron James was from Ohio. He was a native son. They looked to him as being the one who was finally going to rescue the franchise. And he did.

Or at least he came close that first time around. They were better than they'd ever been. They made it to finals. They never had won it that first time around. But they had come close. But then guess what happened? His contract came to an end.

And then guess what happened? He left to go to the Miami Heat. He went to find greener pastures. And do you remember, I don't know if you recall, but I certainly do, how people in Cleveland responded to that?

They would take their LeBron James jerseys. They would go out to the streets and they would burn them in the streets. Their love for him in an instant was changed to intense hatred.

[6:30] And all of that just over a basketball player. However, these days, players seek to have an opt-out clause put into their contract.

They'll sign a contract for maybe five years or more, but they'll ask for an option to be placed within it. So after two years, maybe three years, they can opt out of that contract and pursue greener pastures.

Maybe a team that can pay them more money or a team that gives them a better opportunity to win. Thankfully for Christians, however, God's love is not like that.

It's not contractual. It's covenantal. However, because we're so accustomed to thinking that love is contractual, we're tempted to believe that God's love for us works in the same way.

Because God's love is amazing, it may seem too good to be true to you. And you might be tempted to think, I must have to do something. I must have to do something to keep him interested in me.

[7:34] I must have to do something in order to keep this relationship from dissolving. I must have to perform well and not incur too much sin debt or God might dump me.

First girlfriend I ever had was in pre-K. Preschool. Yeah.

So this girl comes up to me at the beginning of the day and she says, I want you to be my boyfriend. And I didn't even really know what that meant.

Right? So I asked her, what is that and why? And so she told me and she said, because I love you. And that feels good to have somebody tell you that they love you, doesn't it? So I agreed.

It sounded like the right thing to do. But then I was concerned. Because I felt like this love that she had given to me must be something that I have to work for or else I was going to lose it.

[8:34] So all day long, anytime I had a chance, I would ask her, am I still your boyfriend? And she would get increasingly irritated with each time I asked.

And I'm not joking. I probably asked her about 50 times that day. And then finally at the end of the day, I went to her and I said, and she knew what I was going to ask, am I still your boyfriend?

And her face was red and she looked at me and she said, no. No, you're not my boyfriend anymore because you're bugging me and you won't stop asking me that question. And so I was more, I think, relieved than I was heartbroken because it took a lot of work asking that question every day, you know, all day long.

And worried that I may lose her love. But in the end, it was my efforts that drove her away. And many people have been taught and led to believe that salvation begins with God's grace, but then it's up to us to stay saved.

And as a result, Sunday morning seems like a performance review with you trying to determine each time you're here whether or not you are saved or still saved.

[9:54] Unsure how much sin you can commit before God dumps you or changes your relationship status. This is a lot of work. And it takes an emotional and physical and spiritual toll on a person.

And in the end, all the efforts ends up driving you further away from God because you're pursuing Him through religion, not through relationship. There's a big problem with this attitude towards God because the fact is that it's not biblical.

If you are primarily focused on your salvation status, then you will have limited time and have limited concern for the salvation status of others. If you become preoccupied with making sure that

you are saved and doing your part to stay saved, then even if you take the time to share the gospel with someone, you will probably be doing it out of a sense of obligation, not gratitude.

You'll be telling people about Jesus because you feel like you have to in order to appease Him so that He will continue to keep you saved or want to save you instead of wanting to share the gospel with people as a result of your having understood the amazing love of God in Christ that has changed your life.

That amazing love that as we've seen is undeserved, it's unmerited, it's unrestricted, it's not based upon performance, it's based purely and totally upon God's grace.

[11:28] The Bible says that God doesn't only start our salvation, but He plans it and He guarantees it from beginning to end, from everlasting to everlasting.

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are working together at all times to sustain your salvation to the very end of time. Let me read you some scriptures that support that.

The Father plans your salvation to the end. Philippians 1.6 says, He who began a good work in you will carry it out to completion until the day of Jesus Christ.

The Son promises to carry out our salvation to the end. Jesus is both, according to Hebrews 12.2, the pioneer and the perfecter of our faith.

In other words, Jesus doesn't start our faith as the pioneer but then leave us to finish the project. No, Jesus is the one who brings it to completion as the perfecter of our faith.

[12:30] The Spirit guarantees our salvation to the end. 2 Corinthians 1.22 says this, But He put His Spirit in our hearts as a deposit guaranteeing what is to come.

That's good news for believers. Because it means that you don't have to keep up the payments on your salvation. Your salvation isn't based on a contract with terms and limitations, but a covenant that has been written in blood.

Planned by the Father. Carried out by the Son. And sealed by the Holy Spirit. So here's the main idea for this morning's message.

We add another dimension to God's amazing love. God's love for Christians is imperishable. It is a love that preserves and causes them to persevere.

Christians should live fearlessly and joyfully, knowing that they will not perish because they are the recipients of eternal life.

[13:38] The verse that my whole philosophy of ministry gets its understanding from is Matthew 25 verses 14 through 30.

That's the parable of the talents. Remember, there's three servants. The master leaves and he entrusts his talents to those three servants. Only two of them invest his money.

They take a risk that they believe will result in reward. Not for themselves, but for their master.

They risked it all and in the end they received those wonderful words from their master when he returned. Well done, good and faithful servant.

And I believe that when I look at that passage, what God is telling us to do is to risk it all for him. Live your life completely and totally for him.

[14:41] Fearlessly for him. Because our salvation is so certain and so secure. But how does that make you feel?

Thinking about that. Maybe it scares you. Maybe you don't want to live that way. But if you know that your salvation is secure, that you've been sealed by the covenant of God's love, that you will never perish, but have eternal life, that nothing can separate you from the love of God, then I believe that you will live this way.

I believe that you'll want to live this way. I believe that you wouldn't want to live any other way.

Having understood how amazing God's love is for you and how imperishable your salvation is.

So first we see that God's love for his people means that they will not perish. Jesus tells Nicodemus, God so loved the world that whoever believes in him shall not perish.

Jesus says that in the days leading up to his second coming, people will be totally unaware of what is about to happen to them. They will be eating and drinking and marrying and being given in marriage just as people were in the days leading up to the flood in the time of Noah.

[16:06] In the same way, they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away. So also many will be equally unaware when Christ returns and the day of the flood of God's judgment comes upon the earth and sweeps them away as well.

Matthew 24, 36 through 39. Jesus speaks of this. He says, But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven nor the Son, but the Father only.

For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage until the day when Noah entered the ark.

And they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away. So will be the coming of the Son of Man. Among the things that John 3, 16 assures us is that God will be merciful to all who put their hope and trust in Jesus Christ.

Believers can live fearlessly and joyfully because they know that the coming flood of God's judgment will not result in their perishing. Although it is true that the word perish is used frequently in the Gospels to refer to physical death or destruction, approximately 36 out of the 66 times it's used, it means more, far more, than that here in this passage in John 3, 16.

[17 : 44] We know that's the case because the word perish is placed by Jesus in antithesis to eternal life in verse 16. Likewise, saved in verse 17 is placed in antithesis to not condemned in verse 18.

The destruction from which believers are spared in John 3, 16 refers to the eternal destruction that results from being condemned because of sin and rebellion.

Jesus says in John 3, 36 that all who reject Him, persisting in their unbelief, will not receive eternal life, but eternal destruction.

He says there that the wrath of God remains on them forever. That's a sobering thought. Hell is not a popular topic.

It's not something that I enjoy thinking over at all. Yet Jesus preached more about hell than He ever did about heaven.

[18 : 52] Do you know that? And our not liking it doesn't change its reality. When Jesus speaks of perishing here, hell is the place that He has on His mind.

This understanding of the word perish is in keeping with Jesus' teachings about hell and other passages of Scripture. In Matthew 25, 31 through 46, for example, Jesus sets the eternal life that is reserved for the righteous over against the eternal fire in verse 41 and the eternal punishment in verse 46 that is reserved for everyone else.

Those who do not receive eternal life do not simply die or cease to exist. Jesus says that they experience an eternity of destruction or punishment that manifests itself in unquenchable fire.

Unquenchable fire. Matthew 18, 8. Mark 9, 43 and 48. Luke 3, 17. Or in the finery furnace in which there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Matthew 13, 42 and 50.

That is what it means to perish. It's an eternity of getting what our sins and our rejection of Jesus Christ deserve. And this is precisely why John 3, 16 is so encouraging for Christians.

[20 : 21] It holds out to us the promise from Jesus Himself that whoever believes in Him will never perish. Although our sins and our rebellion clearly deserve an eternity of destruction, this is not what we will receive from God.

He will be merciful. He will spare us of that. He will not give us what we deserve. But John 3, 16 also stands out as a warning that there are two types of people in this world.

Only two categories for which they can fit in. Those who are perishing and those who have believed in Jesus and have eternal life.

Each person's response to Jesus determines which of the two categories he or she is in. Those who respond to Him in faith and obedience, which is the fruit and thus the proof of our genuine faith, will not perish, the Bible says, but will have eternal life.

Those who do not respond in faith and obedience face the wrath of God forever. Sin against an infinite being results in an infinite punishment.

[21 : 47] The good news of John 3, 16 is that though we were all at one time numbered among the perishing, now through faith in Christ alone, that is no longer the case for us.

We have been shown mercy as a result of God's amazing love. And for that reason, we understand that we will not perish. Not because of who we are, not because of what we've done, but because of Jesus Christ.

And so there is great joy and there is fearlessness in life when you understand that you have been the recipient of this amazing grace. I know I've shared this story with you before, but I'm going to do it again and again and again because this is a story about a man who became one of my very good

friends.

And I've shared the story of Melvin with you before, that Melvin was a man who came to faith in Christ late in his life, in his 70s. His wife attended our church in Kansas for decades without him ever coming one time.

He was sick. He had had colon cancer and they had to remove a large part of his colon and he was in the hospital.

[23:01] He was far away from Leavenworth where the hospital was and so his wife needed somebody to be able to take her to see him. Her daughter who went to church couldn't do it on this one particular day because she was working and so I volunteered to go.

And so we went. All I knew about this man is what I heard from him, about him from his grandkids. He's a Navy guy. He used to box. He was a mechanic and he's tough, right?

And so we would go up to his hospital room and I see him there and I can tell he's in a lot of pain and I volunteer to pray for him. I ask if I can pray for him. He's receptive to that. And then I leave and I get home and Danny says, how did it go?

And I was like, well, I don't know. Either he really liked me or he didn't at all. I can't tell. About a week after he got out of the hospital, he called me up at the church and asked if I would come to their house.

And there he explained to me, this tough man, very tough man, a man that no other man would really want to mess with, told me about how in that hospital bed all he could think about was dying and what might happen to him after he died.

[24:09] And he was scared. He was terrified. And I remember sitting across from him at his dinner table and him telling me, with fear, with concern.

I'm afraid that I don't know Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. And I'm afraid of death. And so we went through the Romans Road and at the end of that, you know, tears, one tear, because he's tough, only one tear, came down the side of his face and you could tell that God had done a work in his life right then and there.

Bringing him from spiritual death to spiritual life. Putting flesh and blood on old dry bones. And he became one of my very good friends. A very good friend. And he lived fine for a number of years afterwards.

We would go fishing. And then cancer came back. And they did treatments, but nothing was working. It went to stage four. They had to call in hospice. They knew that he wasn't going to make it.

And I remember he was tough. He'd come to church as often as he could. He was there just about every Sunday. And then it just got to him. He couldn't make it anymore. So I went to their house to visit them. Now I'd seen him in the hospital before.

[25:24] I'd seen him out of the hospital. I'd seen how afraid of death he was. I remember going into their bedroom. He was scorching hot. Couldn't stay cool. So the covers were off.

He had his shirt off and he was just laying there. And I could tell. Sorry. That he was in a lot of pain. But when I walked in, big, huge smile.

Pastor Mike, how are you doing? And so I talked to him. But you know, what was amazing is my friend who was once terrified of dying was facing death.

And man, he was not afraid at all. Not afraid at all. Concerned maybe for his life that he would leave behind and the rest of his family, but looking forward to his eternal life.

And that was his one request of me. When you preach my funeral, you preach the gospel. D.L. Moody once famously said, a great pastor and theologian, he said, someday you will read in the papers, D.L. Moody of East Northfield is dead.

[26:35] But don't you believe a word of it. At that moment, I shall be more alive than I am now. I shall have gone up higher, that is all, out of this old clay tenement into a house that is immortal.

A body that death cannot touch, that sin cannot taint. A body fashioned like unto his glorious body. I was born of the flesh in 1837. I was born of the Spirit in 1856.

That which is born of the flesh may die, but that which is born of the Spirit will live forever. So many people in our society seek to avoid death, but Christians anticipate it.

Not that we have a death wish. Not that we don't express sorrow over leaving the ones that we love behind, at least for a while.

Nor that we look forward to the suffering that is involved in dying. We know, though, that this earth is not our true home.

[27 : 41] And that we are going to the place where the Lord has prepared for us. The Apostle Paul put it so well. Philippians 1, 19-23. He's in prison, right?

Seems like things are going really bad for him, yet he has so much joy and so little fear. For I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus, this will turn out for my deliverance.

As it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage, now as always, Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death.

For me to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means faithful labor for me, yet which I shall choose, I cannot tell. I am hard-pressed between the two.

My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. Christians who know that they will not perish live fearlessly because they are certain of their eternal destiny.

[28 : 44] And this is a great testimony to the rest of the world who seeks to avoid death at all costs. Secondly, God's love for people means that they live eternally.

They will not perish, Jesus says, but they will have eternal life. I grew up in the Nazarene church, and while I'm thankful for that church and for my parents who still attend there 40 years after they started attending there, their doctrine taught that salvation can be lost, and that was concerning for me.

I wondered how much sin I could commit before my salvation was revoked. They also had a belief that a person could become sinless in this life, fully sanctified, that they could progress in sanctification to the point that they would not sin anymore in this life.

I heard testimony once of a pastor who said that he hadn't sinned for seven years. And I heard that, and I was like, seven years? Seven years?

Yeah, it's amazing. It's like I couldn't, seven minutes would be long for me. Goodness gracious, that seems impossible. And so, I spent a lot of time, especially in my teenage years, up at night, worrying about my salvation.

[30 : 10] Because I knew that there were sins that I had committed that I didn't even realize that I had committed. You know what I'm saying? And trying to think of everything. Is it one sin, Lord? Is it one sin that I could lose my salvation every day?

I've got to think of every single one. What if I forgot one? And I die tonight for some strange reason, and I appear before the Lord, and He says, well, there was that one thing.

Remember, you told that little lie over there, and man, I'm sorry, but you're not totally sanctified.

You're not getting in. And so, I mean, seriously, I joke a little bit, but this really bothered me.

How much sin could I commit before I lost my salvation? Again, or is it just one? And how could I share the gospel with people when it seemed like my salvation was always in flux?

How could I share Jesus Christ with people when I didn't know if I was really saved or not myself?

Also, there was a misunderstanding of the Southern Baptist belief, the biblical Christian belief, I would say, that once a person is saved, that they're always saved.

[31 : 21] You know, to us, to me, that seemed good because it was like a license to sin. Oh, okay, we'll take care of that thing, right? Then I can do whatever I want, but that's not at all what this means.

Unfortunately, some people have taken it to me in that way. They've walked down an aisle, they've raised a hand when every head was bowed and every eye was closed. They repeated a prayer and they thought that they'd taken care of that sin and salvation issue.

Not to say that God hasn't brought people to faith in Him through those things, but to say that many people are deceived in thinking just because they've gone through those actions that God is obligated to save them.

However, through a strange series of God-ordained events, I was called to the ministry and then to attend a Southern Baptist seminary with a Nazarene background while being employed as a youth pastor in a United Methodist church.

Yeah. But it was there at that school, in that seminary, that God's Word came alive to me like it never had before.

[32 : 30] And it was in the study of the book of Ephesians in one of my New Testament classes that really gripped me. And man, I wrestled hard with it.

Real hard. I remember shouting matches with God in my car on the drive home from school. It was a tough thing for me to see, but in the end, I knew that it was true because this is God's Word and my thoughts and opinions do not trump the Word of God.

And then, once I submitted to that truth, I enjoyed it and I became so exhilarated by it and so at peace by it like I'd never had before.

Ephesians 1, 3-4. Notice just the words of assurance here. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and blameless before Him.

In love, He predestined us for adoption to Himself as sons through Jesus Christ according to the purpose of His will to the praise of His glorious grace with which He has blessed us in the Beloved.

[33 : 59] In Him, we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses according to the riches of His grace which He lavished upon us in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of His will according to His purpose which He set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time to unite all things in Him, things in heaven and things on earth.

In Him, we have obtained an inheritance having been predestined according to the purpose of Him who works things according to the counsel of His will so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of His glory.

In Him, you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation and believed in Him were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it to the praise of His glory.

So, according to the Apostle Paul here, God is the chooser, the adopter, the forgiver, the uniter, the giver, and the preserver of our salvation who seals us, who seals those who respond to the gospel in belief with His Holy Spirit.

Understanding this and what it means to be sealed by God with the Holy Spirit was a turning point for me. In the ancient world, written correspondence, even cattle and other objects that were precious and important, they were imprinted with a specially designed seal that identified the owner through a symbol.

[35 : 47] The Holy Spirit has sealed us in this same sense, burning into us the image of Jesus Christ the Son.

A seal in the ancient world implied two important things for us to understand. First of all, possession. Being loved eternally means that you are God's possession.

And let me tell you that no one steals God's stuff. A seal indicates possession. When God saved you, He sealed you with the indwelling of His Spirit.

You are His stuff now. Never to be lost, never to be stolen from Him. John 6, 39, Jesus says, and this is the will of Him who sent me, that I shall lose nothing of all that He has given me, but raise it up on the last day.

Again, John 10, 27 through 29, my sheep, Jesus says, hear my voice, I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life and they will never perish.

[36 : 56] No one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father who has given them to me is greater than all. No one is able to snatch them out of my Father's hand. One of the most frustrating things about being a football fan and having a favorite team is that eventually even your best player, your best running back is going to fumble the ball.

And it's especially frustrating when it happens close to your goal line, isn't it? Somebody gets a hand in there and punches it out. They lose possession, ball's turned over, miss an opportunity to score. Well, guess what?

God never fumbles. God never fumbles. That's good news for Dallas Cowboys fans. Amen? God never fumbles.

I got to get them in when I can. Being sealed by God's Spirit means that we are His possession. It also means that He will protect us.

Being loved eternally means that you are under God's protection and I'll say forever. God's grace is based on who He is, not on who we are. His plan is fixed and His hand is steady.

[38 : 09] He does not change. He does not get nervous, nor does He hesitate. Though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, He is with us and we need not be afraid. Romans 28, 8, 28-30.

And we know that for those who love God, all things work together for good for those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son in order that we might be the firstborn among many brothers.

That He might. And those whom He predestined, He also called. And those whom He called, He also justified. And those whom He justified, He has also glorified. This is referred to as the golden chain of salvation.

Those predestined are called. Those who are called are justified. Those who are justified are glorified. God doesn't lose anyone along the way.

Every person in one category moves into the next and the next and the next. And so you know if I'm a believer today that I've been justified, guess what that means? I will be glorified.

[39:15] I will see Jesus. I will live with Him eternally. God does not write checks that He doesn't have the power to cash nor will His checks ever bounce.

If you know that you are saved, rest assured that you are God's possession and that you are always under His protection. The good work that He began in you, He will complete.

He will complete it. You are saved now and you are saved forever. But, there should be fruit of that in your life.

The way that you live should indicate that you have in fact been sealed by His Spirit and transformed by Him. But if you treat the idea of once saved, always saved, as good news that gives you license to sin, then you are not truly saved.

We want to obey and serve God because we have been the recipients of such tremendous love and grace. It is not that we feel like we have to, but we want to.

[40:30] We want to. If you have been sealed by the Spirit, then you should know and you should be able to see that since that day when you were saved, ever since then, you have become more like Christ.

Not any less. And people should be able to see that difference. It's good news to know that you are God's possession and that you are under His protection.

Timothy Paul Jones, a seminary professor at Southern Seminary, read a book that he wrote and he talked about his father.

His father was a country pastor. He said he would read one or two books a week. Very brilliant man. And he developed cancer that spread to his brain.

And so they saw this man who was very skilled with his hands, very intelligent, just wither away before their eyes. Unable to read, picking up a newspaper upside down.

[41:37] not able to speak. Eventually, not even able to remember his own family. And so, Timothy Paul Jones talks about one of their last trips that he took with his kids to see his father and they saw all these things and his nine-year-old son on the way home asked his dad, Timothy, said, Dad, what if Grandpa has forgotten Jesus?

And Timothy Paul Jones said, after a second, had a lump in his throat, he said, Son, even though Grandpa may have forgotten Jesus now, I want you to know that Jesus has never forgotten him and will never forget him.

No matter what, Jesus never forgets. That assurance is possible solely because we serve a God who operates not in terms of contracts, but on the basis of covenant fidelity.

Christ's commitment to his people does not depend on our capacity to remember, but on his capacity to sustain us and preserve us. It depends on a covenant that has been engraved in flesh and confirmed with his own blood.

So what do we do with this? One, live in faith and not in fear. Live in faith and not in fear.

[43:21] If you know that God is with you, that God has called you to faith, that you are his possession, know that you will always be under his protection.

And so like those two servants with their master's talents, they can risk without fear because they know that it's all worth it in the end.

don't live your life in fear. Nothing can separate you from the love of God. Live your life for him.

What is he calling you to do that is causing you to have hesitation today?

What is it? Do it. If God wants you to do it, then just do it. Why wouldn't you? He's with you now and forever.

And then secondly, rejoice in the God of your salvation. I heard Doyleen's testimony about Jan. I shared some with you as well.

[44 : 30] It's a powerful thing when we as Christians go through what other people go through in this life, but we show that we're not afraid, even of death, especially of death, because we know that this is not our home, that this is not our place.

And so we rejoice because we know that our eternal life has already begun. Amen? From that moment, the Lord saved us.

Don't live in fear. Rejoice always. God's love is amazing. And it's true. Thank you.