LIFE BIBLE MINISTRY

Matthew 4 (Part 3) :23-25

The Ministry and popularity of Jesus

Pastor Paul LeBoutillier · April 18, 2026

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

These final just three verses of Matthew chapter 4 give us some interesting insights into the public ministry of Jesus Christ and we're going to see this repeated. You'll notice that there are three things that it says here really in verse 23 that Jesus did. Let's look at it again. It says Jesus went throughout Galilee teaching in the synagogues. There's the first one teaching.

Next it says he was also preaching the good news of the kingdom. There's the second thing. And then thirdly it goes on to say that he healed all of the people. So these are the three things that we're going to be looking at here in this passage. Really simple.

Teaching, preaching, and healing. Let's take the first one which is teaching. He went through Galilee teaching in the synagogues. Have you ever thought about what's the difference between teaching and preaching? People basically use those terms kind of interchangeably but there actually is a difference and you can see that when you look at the words that originate these in the Greek.

I'm going to show you first of all the word teaching on the screen and it is the Greek word didasko which is where we get our word didactic and that means intended for instruction. Now I don't know if you ever use the word didactic in your regular vocabulary. I kind of doubt it. Very few people do but didactic simply means instruction. It's the same sort of a thing if a father realizes his son's getting to that age where he's about ready to start driving a car.

He wants to teach him. He wants to instruct him on how to drive that car and how to take care of that car. You know a dad goes and pops open the hood and says all right son here we are. Now of course you do this with your daughters too of course but anyway you start looking around you start showing people well that's instruction. That's called didactic learning.

It's the systematic going through and teaching what is there. Now the reason that Jesus came teaching in the synagogues is because obviously we need instruction and he wants to he has concern I should say

for our understanding. God doesn't want us to stay in ignorance. He wants us to move on and learn and grow and understand and you know eventually we need to start learning God's Word in such a way that we know what it says and you know there's a time and a place for somebody to ask questions like doesn't it say somewhere in the Bible that and I expect those questions out of people who are kind of in the early stages of learning but we need to get to a place Christians where we're not asking those kinds of questions anymore and we and if we don't know the answer to a question or we don't know what the Bible may say on a particular subject we know how to find out. We've learned.

We've been instructed in the things of the Word of God. That's why teaching is so important in the body of Christ. There are some absolutely wonderful promises in the Bible regarding teaching and this is perhaps one of my favorite verses in the whole Bible I want to show it to you on the screen it's from the Psalms Psalm 32 verse 8 and it says I will instruct you this is a promise from God. God says also I will teach you and in the way that you should go I will counsel you and watch over you. Probably the most often asked question of me as a pastor is people wanting to know about the will of God and they'll often come and ask how can I know God's will for my life?

How can I differentiate between my will and God's will? How do I know if it's just something I want or if it's something God wants? That's a common question among among Christians but I want you to see here the promise that God gives us in his Word. God says I will instruct you. I will instruct you.

God says I will teach you the way that you should go. I will counsel you. I will be your counselor. Okay and he says that I'm gonna watch over you too to make sure that you stay on that path. God has promised that he's gonna do that and as we learn about his Word and as we grow in the understanding and knowledge of the Word of God the Holy Spirit takes that Word and applies it to our hearts and lives and begins to show us the way that we are to go and there needs to be a point people where we grow up in our faith but that happens through instruction okay if I'm gonna sit down with my son and show him how an engine is laid out and where the dipstick is for checking the oil and where the you know the the stick is for checking the transmission fluid and how he can fill the brake fluid and and and how he can check the air filter and all these other things I expect him to learn after a certain point that's how that's done and not to keep coming back over and over again isn't there a place in the motor where you can check the oil yes and I showed you that already we've gone through that see there needs to as Christians we need to grow up in our understanding of God's Word so we're no longer asking isn't there a place in the Bible that says but we know and God has promised that he will teach us his his his Word and teach us his will for our lives I love this other passage from Proverbs another wonderful word of wisdom nine nine it says instruct a wise man and he will be wiser still teach a righteous man and he will add to his learning don't you love that passage

basically that says you come up to somebody who already has a bent toward learning and he understands the purpose and the need for instruction and you come up and you instruct him and he's gonna walk away a wiser man now we all know that the converse to this is the fool right and the fool won't be instructed he won't receive any kind of learning and he continues to be a fool because he rejects wisdom but the wise man or the smart person kind of in our more common vernacular is someone who accepts teaching and instruction and the importance of it and you know when we talk about teaching and and so forth and teachers you know that this is this is an important element of leadership that Jesus said should be in the church do you remember the passage in Ephesians chapter 4 where Paul kind of outlines the ministry leadership gifts of the church once again up on the screen for you it says this it says it was Jesus this is Paul writing who gave some to be Apostles some to be prophets some to be evangelists and some to be pastors and teachers and then they all have a similar goal to prepare God's people for works of service so the body of Christ may be built up now I want you to see the importance that is listed there with teaching and by the way in the Greek in if you could see the Greek there's a lot more words in the Greek than there are actually in the English because in front of every one of these ministry gifts in the Greek there's the word the we take it out because it doesn't work in you know when we translate in English but it literally says it was Jesus or he who gave some to be the Apostles some to be the prophets some to be the evangelists and some to be the pastors and teachers it doesn't include the word the in front of teacher you know why because pastor and teacher go together it's part of the same ministry gifting in fact people like to call this the fivefold ministry ever heard that referred to as that they in fact there's a lot of people they talk about do you believe in the fivefold ministry well you know what it's really for because pastor and teacher according to the Greek language is really one because remember what a pastor is a pastor is a shepherd and what happens when he teaches what's he doing to the flock he's feeding can you imagine a shepherd that doesn't know how to feed the flock he's gonna have a dead flock right he has to be able to feed him I mean right I mean it's only if he protects them that's a good thing but that's only part of what he needs to do right so we see here that the pastor teacher is this important thing but you know what's interesting about this look at you got these you got these these things here that we talked about pastor teacher why don't we hear more about teaching in the body of Christ why do we why do we emphasize preaching now there's nothing wrong with preaching we're gonna look at that in just a moment but we have so overemphasized preaching that we actually use that description to describe the person we call them a preacher hey you're the preacher you know we're gonna go find us a preacher I have these weird Western movies going through my head sorry they're just playing back and I can't help it but you know have you ever heard somebody say we're gonna go and listen to our teacher we don't usually say that we

say preacher don't we and really that isn't functionally correct you know because we see here It's pastor-teacher.

Why has there been this de-emphasis in the body of Christ with teaching? Why is it so rare? Why is it you go to so many churches and you don't see teaching going on? You see, there's a lot of preaching. Now, I still haven't really kind of described the difference between the two.

You might say, well, aren't you kind of dancing on the head of a pin here, Pastor Paul? Because I mean, preaching, teaching, who cares? We're getting the Word of God. Yeah, but you're getting it in different ways. Because the teacher is one who instructs, right?

And the preacher is one who exhorts. In fact, I'll go through this a little bit more, but there's a great verse that describes teaching in the Old Testament in the book of Nehemiah. Let me show you this. Nehemiah 8, verse 8. Look at what it says.

It says, they read from the book of the law, making it clear and giving the meaning so that people could understand what was being read. That, people, is the description of what a teacher does. They take the Word of God, they lay it out, they dissect it, make it a little bit, you know, make it smaller chunks, and they explain what's going on, they explain the meaning of the words, maybe give some historical background to the passage, help understand the original intent of the author and so forth, so that people can understand what is being said in the Word of God. Now, preaching, on the other hand, is really kind of a different sort of a thing. You're still declaring the Word of God, but preaching is different.

Let me show you a definition of preaching. In the Greek, it is the word keruso, and it means to proclaim or declare. In fact, that's one of the reasons why, in your Bible, when I might read the word preach or preaching or preached, your Bible may actually say proclaim, proclaiming, proclaimeded, because that is the literal meaning of the word. It is a declarative sort of a thing. I declare, I exhort, okay?

But it's not necessarily instruction. Let me bring it down to the idea of teaching my son about the car and how to take care of it. I can say to my son, hey, listen, be sure that you check your oil and check your tires, check your brake fluid, and make sure you got all those things ready before you take your road trip. That's exhortation. I just exhorted him to be diligent about it, right?

But what if I never instructed him on how to do those things? What if I never popped the hood? What if I never showed him how to check the air in his tires or to check the tire depth on the tread? What if I never, ever instructed him in those things, but I just exhorted him all the time? Well, he wouldn't have the application.

When I, you know, he'd hear the exhortation, and he'd be even moved by the exhortation, but he lacks the instruction to be able to actually get out there and do it. He knows something's got to be done, but he really doesn't know how to go about doing it. That is the difference, Christians, between preaching and teaching. There's a lot of preaching going on in the body of Christ where we're exhorting people, you know, and saying things like trust in the Lord and put your hope in him and, you know, you can do all things through Christ and, and all these other, these are exhortational kind of declarative proclamations of the truths of God's word. But we have left out the instruction.

And so many times people are kind of like, yeah, and they, and the truth resonates in their heart, but they don't have the personal daily application of walking it out and understanding the greater dynamic of what the word of God has to say about those things. And that is where the difference comes in. And that's why we see that Jesus did both. He taught, he gave instruction. And by the way, why did he do that?

I already said he instructed, he taught because he didn't want people to stay in ignorance. He preached because he wanted people's commitment levels to stay strong. And that's what preaching largely does. You know, it's that, it's that, that, you know, man, just do it sort of a thing. There's a, there's a great passage from Romans chapter 12, verse one, where Paul says, never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, you know, your excitement, your desire, serving the Lord.

How do you do that? That's where preaching comes in. When somebody is preaching the word, when somebody is preaching the exhortations of God's word, you're built up and you're encouraged and, and, and you know, and you're like, yeah, you know, we're going to go do this sort of a thing, but there also has to be that time of instruction. Do you see the difference? Now, if you're the kind of person, by the way, you know, who, who feels that desire to encourage people, maybe, maybe you're just kind of a person that's drawn to people who are, I don't know, kind of struggling with life a little bit.

The issues, the circumstances of life are, are weighing on them and you're just, you just feel led to come alongside them and just go, Hey, Hey, you can do all things through Christ and stay strong and keep your eyes on the Lord. And you begin to just, I mean, just these truths come out of your mouth. When you're talking to people, you're a preacher and you didn't even know that I'm gonna start calling you preacher and see how you like it, you know, but, but you know, that that's your ministry. Maybe that's that encouragement of just of exhortation and proclamation and saying to two people, just, this is what the word of God says, boom, and you just lay out those truths with people. Maybe you're not much of a teacher and that's okay.

Maybe you're not the kind of instructional didactic step-by-step systematic sort of a, you know, thing with the word of God, but you're there and you're exhorting and we need both in the body of Christ. Jesus did both. Jesus taught in the synagogue and he preached and exhorted and proclaimed and said, there's good news. You guys, there's good news about the kingdom of God and so forth. So, you know, we need all of these.

We need these gifts, these things in the body of Christ. And finally, the third thing that characterized Jesus's ministry, as we've already mentioned, it's in the last part of verse 23 and it says in healing every disease and sickness among the people. So Jesus came not only teaching, not just preaching, but also healing. He touched the people at a very intimate place right where they lived, you know. And we're actually given some more information as we read the last couple of verses here of the chapter.

It tells us more about his healing ministry and it says the news about him spread all over Syria. And as you can well imagine, people got very excited and began to bring to him everybody in their home, friends, relatives, whatever, who was having some kind of a physical issue. It tells us here that they brought him people who had all kinds of diseases, suffering, severe pain, even the demon-possessed. This is, by the way, the very first New Testament reference to demonic possession, which, by the way, still happens today. He says those having seizures, your Bible may say epileptics, those who were paralyzed and unable to use one or more of their appendages because of paralysis, and it says he healed them.

And as a result, large crowds from all over, Galilee, the Decapolis, even up, you know, down from Jerusalem, Judea, they came up from the region across the Jordan even. People came because they realized this was exciting and people are getting healed. And the healing ministry of Jesus shows us his heart toward the people, his concern for the people to be whole, his concern for people to be whole. So you see, we've looked at these three areas and we've seen that what each one of us, or what each one of them, rather, shows us about God, about his heart, his love for us. The teaching ministry of Jesus shows his concern for bringing us out of our place of ignorance.

The preaching ministry shows us God's desire to see our commitment become strengthened and stabilized. And the healing ministry of Jesus shows us his heart and compassion for those who are suffering some kind of physical infirmity. In fact, when we skip ahead in Matthew, there's another passage that speaks about it and actually says it in Matthew chapter 14. It says when Jesus landed, meaning they landed at the shore and they saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and he healed their sick. Notice that Jesus looked upon the people and he just, he instantly had compassion for their situation.

These people were just distressed and he cares about these situations. But it's not just for compassion. That's not the only reason Jesus went around healing people during his public ministry. You see, the healing part of Jesus's public ministry also served the purpose of verifying his teaching and preaching ministry. You've got to understand, people, this whole thing about traveling deep.

Here's in preachers. This was common in that day people Did this all the time they walked around they were itinerant, you know, they they went from place to place. They preached they taught whatever Jesus was by no means a rarity from that perspective There was a need to communicate to the people that this ministry this word this Authority that they were hearing in the teaching and preaching of Jesus was Significant and significantly different from anything they had heard before and so there were miracles There were signs and wonders that went along with Jesus's Ministry and those miracles themselves were part of the preaching process actually Let me show you a couple of passages from the book of John first from John chapter 10 Look what it says here. It says the Jews gathered around him and they were saying things like how long are you gonna keep us in? Suspense like this if you're the Christ if you're the Messiah Tell us plainly and Jesus answered I did tell you but you did not believe the miracles I do in my father's name speak for me.

Isn't that interesting? Do you know why he said the miracles I do in my father's name speak for me? Because in the Old Testament it was prophesied that was what the Messiah would do That the the prophetic or excuse me the prophetic word Yeah from the Old Testament spoke of the coming of Messiah and said that he would do all those very things So when they said to him, come on, tell us are you the Messiah says I already did tell you about everything I've been doing this healing ministry that's going on here what you're seeing around you these miracles That is proof that I am who I say that I am Do you remember how John the Baptist even went through a period of doubt Yeah, you'd think Wow John the Baptist. How could that man ever doubt anything? I mean he was just he was a powerful man that just seemed like he was just always on top of it and when Jesus would walk by on a couple of occasions John would say behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world What a powerful thing and even John's Followers began to follow Jesus because of what John said So there was just a great authority and surety to things that he said about Jesus But you remember John was arrested by Herod Thrown into a dungeon.

Well, you know dungeons have their way of kind of Doing doing things playing tricks on our hearts and minds and the darkness and the difficulties of life can do that In prison we start doubting the things that we used to Confidently affirm and you'll remember what happened John actually sent one of his disciples to Jesus to ask him this question Master are you the one? Or shall we wait for another and Do

you remember? The message Jesus gave to that follower of John to take back to John in prison Jesus said go back and tell John what you see The lame are walking the blind have their sight The dumb can speak you know those who are crippled are jumping up and Rejoicing go back and tell John What Jesus was saying to John the Baptist through that messenger was Don't lose sight John of what the Word of God has to say about the coming of Messiah because the Word says this is exactly what the Messiah will do and I am fulfilling it my word my deeds rather Speak for me. There's another passage in in John. It's in chapter 14 Jesus said believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me or at least Believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves See what Jesus is doing here He says listen What I say is true, so believe me when I say it but if you if you're stuck if you're struggling with believing my words at least believe on the basis of the Evidence of the miracles do you see that the the healing ministry of Jesus was meant by God to be a body of evidence That people were to weigh as in a court of law and be able to say all right.

What's really going on here? We know what a court of law is all about you know you have these two Usually opposing views that come before either a judge or a jury and they receive the testimony They look at the evidence, and then they weigh it and they say mm-hmm Okay, either they were gonna make a decision based on the preponderance of evidence Or we're gonna make a decision based on this or that but they look at it They weigh it and they come up with a conclusion right They come to a verdict Well that is exactly what the the healing ministry of Jesus was meant to be for the people at that time evidence That they would enter into in order to reach a verdict about who this Jesus Actually is and and so forth What's Oddly sad I guess for lack of a better word about the healing ministry of Jesus and frankly about healing in general is that it has become a a Big bone of contention in the body of Christ, and it's it's really too bad But there are two nagging questions that Christians have debated till we're blue in the face over this issue of Miraculous healing and that sort of thing and the first one is do miracles In this in the way of healings still take place today And then the second question is can we expect God to heal our bodies whenever we ask? to be healed and and the first question Will will will just kind of take do miraculous healing still take place today now some of you if we pose that question to you You might come back right away and just say oh, yes absolutely Because I've seen it happen, but I want you to understand something about what you've seen and what you've experienced that takes A lesser role in our Decision-making about this than the authority of God's Word, okay in other words what I'm saying people is that? experience always takes a backseat to the authority of Revelation you with me God's Word always has the final say I Appreciate the fact that you've had all kinds of diverse experiences But we don't base doctrine on experience Okay, experience can corroborate Sometimes the truth of the revelation of God's Word But it does not dictate the revelation of God's Word if it did We would be adding to the pages of the Bible all the time We would

constantly we'd have to be filling in some new new pages new Hey, we need another chapter here because we've experienced some things that go along with this that we so we want to add But we're told not to add to the Word of God aren't we we're not to add nor take away So you see experience is great, but first comes the authority of God's Word all right, so let's answer the question do Miraculous healings still take place in this day and age well. I can tell you this That There is nothing in the Bible that would suggest to us that miraculous healings have somehow Passed from existence The fact of the matter is God's been healing people for a long time.

We see lots of healings in the Old Testament we see a ton of healings in the New Testament and There is nothing in the Word of God that says that this is going to pass from the scene or that It is part of some previous dispensation that is no longer Functionally active in the body of Christ today now there are many people who believe that and You are welcome to believe that if you want But you are going to have to do so without the authority and the backing of Scripture you're going to have to believe it simply because you want to and As far as I'm concerned that's a flimsy reason to believe anything But having said that we then come to the more difficult question of Whether or not We can expect God to heal our bodies whenever we ask Now there are some who would take that question and respond with a confident and exuberant Yes, and and they say that because they believe that Jesus is death on the cross actually guarantees us Physical healing in other words there are many Christians in the body of Christ who believe that Jesus not only died for our sins but he died for our sicknesses and what that means is they believe that healing is Part of the atonement process it is part of what Jesus earned for us in the atonement And so forth and you can usually tell that people have this particular belief And if you do then you know like I say you're welcome to have that but you can't see this sort of a belief by the quotation of certain verses, one of which is the passage which says, by his stripes or wounds we are healed. And you will hear that quoted from time to time. I've heard it many, many, many, many times over the years. When someone is dealing with some sort of a physical infirmity with either themselves or someone else, they'll say, well, we just need to claim the promise that by his wounds we are healed. And what they are doing there is they are assuming that the word healed in that passage is speaking of physical healing.

And what they're quoting actually is a passage out of Isaiah, and I'll show it for you on the screen from the chapter 53 verse 5. It's what it says. It says, but he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities, and the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. Now this passage, or at least a small portion of it, is actually quoted in the New Testament by the Apostle Peter, and that quotation goes like this. Jesus, or excuse me, Peter wrote, he himself bore our sins in his body on the tree so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness.

And then there's the quotation, by his wounds you have been healed. Alright? Once again, the assumption that is being made by people is that the presence of the word healed specifically makes reference to physical healing. But I want you to look at these passages, and I've put them on the same slide so that you could see both the originating passage and the one that is quoted from the New Testament, and I want you to look at the context of these passages. What are they talking about?

First of all, in Isaiah, but he was pierced for our what? Our transgressions. He was crushed for our what? Our iniquities, the wickedness of our hearts. The punishment that brought us peace, peace with God, was on him, and by his wounds you have been healed.

The clear context of that passage has nothing to do with physical healing and everything to do with salvation and having peace with God through Jesus Christ and his death on the cross. Once again, 1 Peter does the same thing. When he quotes that passage about by his wounds or by his stripes we have been healed, the clear context is he bore our sins in his body on the tree. Why? So that we might die to sins, that we might be saved, and that we might then live unto righteousness, and then by his wounds you have been healed.

Once again, the clear context is salvation. Salvation from sin. So does God guarantee healing to all of his children just for the asking? Man, as much as I would absolutely love to say yes, I can't. I can't say that with, you know, based on the things that people usually base that belief on.

Sometimes God heals miraculously. Sometimes he does. I have witnessed it all, although once again, the witness or the experience that I have seen of miraculous healing takes a backseat to the Word of God. But I have seen it, and I know some of you have too. Some of you have personally experienced physical healing.

Wonderful thing. And sometimes God does that. And sometimes he allows sickness to end in death. Sometimes. And why the difference of treatment between one person and the next?

I'm sorry, you can't always boil it down and say it was a matter of faith. That's what those who usually believe that God has guaranteed us. No sickness, no physical disease. That's usually how they describe someone who wasn't healed. They'll say, well, he didn't or she didn't have enough faith.

Or maybe they just had some unconfessed sin in their lives. And those are really the two only options they give people. They never give room for simply one thing, the sovereignty of God. And I'm sorry. You can, you know, you can believe if you want to, that if you just have enough faith, that that's really going to happen all the time, every time.

But that reduces God to a vending machine, where I put in just the right amount of quarters and out comes the candy bar of my choice. And I believe that God is way more than that. And I believe we can't put God in a box. We can't, we can't say he's always got to do this every single time in my life, just because I ask. And if I ask hard enough with enough faith and so forth, sometimes God allows born again believers to experience sickness unto death.

But the thing we always need to remember in that and when that happens, and this is the important part, is that Jesus has conquered death. One of the, I truly believe you guys, one of the reasons that the body of Christ has adopted kind of a God always wants you well mentality is because we haven't truly opened our hearts to what the Bible says about death. We think of death as the end. Jesus never talked about it as the end. He talked about it as a conquered foe, and he said, yet though you die, yet shall you live.

You know, even though you die, life is going to just burst forth. Paul says to be absent from the body, which is what death is all about, is to be present with the Lord. And in fact, Paul even said, it's better by far. See, we kind of, we get tweaked by that. We think of death and we think, well, you know, obviously staying here and living is better.

Well, not according to Paul. He said, it's better to go. He said, yeah, he said, I'd much rather depart and be with Christ. Much rather. He said, the only reason I'm going to stick around is because you guys need me a little bit longer.

And so I'm going to stick around, but I'd much rather go home and be with my Lord. You know? Now see, that is a biblical sort of a mindset or a biblical understanding of death. Oh, we don't want to even talk about that. Don't, Pastor Paul, don't even bring up the subject.

I don't even want to hear about it. No, no, no, no. We're going to anoint that person and we're going to believe and we're going to do this. And when we have all of our things and we pound and we shout and we froth at the mouth, and then when it doesn't go our way, we say, well, they didn't have enough faith. Well, I'm sorry.

That just doesn't answer the question. That does not speak to the issue of the sovereignty of God sufficiently enough. And I just, I can't, believe me, I'd love to embrace that belief. I mean, that would just tickle me to death. If there was some little verse in the Bible that I somehow overlooked that said, God always wants you healthy, and boy, you call out to him on every single occasion and every single issue and circumstances, boom, it's as good as done, and so forth.

I'd love to just buy in on that one. Let me tell you, where do I sign up for that reality? I want that in my life. I don't like physical infirmities any more than you, and I'm 54 years old and I'm feeling more all the time, and I don't like it. This getting older stuff's for the birds, you know?

I'd love to hang on to some sort of an element of truth that suggested that I didn't have to deal with all this, but I can't. And you know what? After everything is all said and done, I'm kind of glad I can't, because it keeps my eyes on heavenly things and not earthly things. And isn't that what God wants us to do? Didn't he say to us in the Word that we are not to focus our hearts and minds on things below, but on things above?

How can we do that if we're constantly looking down all the time and wanting God just to deal with all the stuff that's down here? We can't. And we end up violating the essence of that exhortation in the Word of God to have our minds set on things above. I am convinced that the only way you can really get through life and persecution and the difficulties and the struggles of this life is to have your heart and mind set on things above. I'm convinced that's the only way to really gracefully and powerfully deal with the issues of this life, because other than that, it's just a big fat drag.

Don't you agree? I mean, isn't life... I mean, when I was a kid, I was gloriously ignorant of the way life was. And I just played around like I had no care for tomorrow. And then we get older and we start seeing a little farther into the years.

And we look at people's lives and we wonder, how are they going to make it through? How am I going to make it through? How are any of us going to make it through? Well, I'll tell you how we're going to make it through. In the power of God keeping our eyes not on earthly things, but on things above.

That's how we're going to make it through, guys. You know? And I don't think there is one single born-again believer... who has ever passed from this life who has turned around and said I think I got a raw deal and responded to God by saying you know I'd really like to go back and do that again that was just so much fun I don't think anybody has that sort of an attitude who has passed out of the life of this body and into the into the never removed presence of the Lord and that's why Paul who got a taste of what that was like by being taken up into the third heaven was able to say oh I'd much rather go be with the Lord much much much much rather meanwhile we groan we groan in these physical bodies you know don't you that just in that what you do and you look in the mirror anyway all you guys are over 40 anyway Oh grown but there comes a time when you walk away from that mirror and you stop thinking about just what's you can see in it and you start looking this way you say Jesus but the hope of the future that I have in Christ which you call the hope of glory far surpasses it all and Paul says I am convinced that nothing in this life can

even begin to compare with that which is to come and that which is our birthright in Christ Jesus our Lord amen you