

2024-04-12 Topic - Attaining the character of God.

Published April 12th, 2024

Everybody, well, that week's gone really quickly, hasn't it? And welcome back to Church Without Walls, our episode number two in the first series. We thank you so much for joining us and for the wonderful feedback you've given us. We'll As we started this journey together just last week and it's been wonderful to hear your experiences and your comments as well.

We are opening up more on social media, more platforms will be taking it and slowly but surely we will grow our group in size and use this to bring about a better community for ourselves and for others and to establish a better character that we can be happy with, that we can look at ourselves in the mirror and not want to revile away from what we see.

Thank you. So thank you all for joining us. And before we do anything, let's open with a word of prayer. Dear father in heaven. May the words we discussed today, bring glory to you and, and strengthen our relationship with you. May I be the instrument of your words to those who are seeking that relationship and have me be faithful.

Father, I ask that you fill me with the Holy spirit and those who are listening. That every word that he said is said from you to the people who are hearing this, me included. I pray in your precious name, Father God, Amen. We should always, uh, before we open the Bible, um, ask for the Holy Spirit to guide and lead us through that process.

And the beauty of that is that there's a whole bunch of material in this beautiful book that is, um, very hard to understand when you first get into it. Don't be perturbed by that. That's why I suggest you start initially with, uh, the, the gospels, uh, in the New Testament, start reading the New Testament to begin with.

And as you strengthen in knowing who Jesus is, which is what I'm here to help you to do, you will grow in faith and you'll be able to delve more. Now, if you're reading something that you don't understand, pray about it, ask the Holy Spirit to, to help you delve into that and get an understanding. But if it still doesn't happen, That doesn't mean that the Holy Spirit's not guiding you.

The Holy Spirit is telling you that you're not ready for that part of the Bible yet. There are other phases that he wants to guide you through first. So go where he leads and then you like me will experience the joy of the Bible when it resonates from the book into our minds and then is digested into our hearts.

Because if it doesn't get from the mind to the heart, It's not serving its purpose because everything in this beautiful book is meant to live in our hearts. So, follow my, my lead in that regard if you will. Because while I don't know as much as I would like to know about this book, I have realised that it's not what you know but who you know.

It's all about your relationship with Jesus and you need to understand who Jesus is before you can delve into this book. So the Holy Spirit will guide and lead you. Now I know a great many lifelong Christians who've spent their whole life studying this, this book, this Word of God, and in a way they've lost their first love.

The passion that they were getting from reading it has somehow been, uh, transfigured into this desire to have knowledge for the sake of knowledge. And as a result, they get hung up on the knowledge. It doesn't help them to fulfill the great commission that's been brought to them by their relationship with Jesus.

And that is to spread the good news. They're too busy trying to learn because they're scared if they don't know enough, they won't make it to heaven. That's something we've all got to overcome. We've got to understand the

relationship and allow the Holy Spirit to lead us. And there'll be some questions that we have that we may not be able to answer straight up.

There's some things that I don't understand. Well, they're things that I get to ask God about in heaven directly through Jesus once we get there. So, um, I'm not worried about that. The answers to the questions that are unresolved at the moment will be answered in the fullness of time, which the Bible tells us will happen in so many ways.

So what is this all about? Well, we know that the governments of the world are getting to a position where they have lost our trust. We have no faith in them. We are in fact over governed and our freedoms and our sovereignties have been taken away from us. That's why we're doing this, right? We've come to a point where we know that there's a train coming.

We can hear the whistle blowing. We know that its arrival is imminent. There are big things about to happen in this world. We are living on the edge of history. We really are. And we are we are in the stream of time to such an extent where the last book of the Bible the book of Revelation. is starting to show its prophecies of being fulfilled as we live and breathe every day.

So it's important that we find out who we're going to trust. Now in the process of, of working out who and what to trust, if you're getting conflicting information, look at the methods employed by the people giving the information because that'll give you an indication of whether that, that, that information can be relied upon or not.

But ultimately, nothing you hear from me. or nothing you hear from any other speaker on this planet should in any way overrule what is in this book. Make sure that everything that you're, you're coming to understand is in accordance with the word of God, not my word, not anyone else's. It's really important.

All I'm doing in this journey is sharing my steps one at a time with you so that we can walk on this, on this road together. That's my whole purpose. My whole purpose is to prepare you for the lifeboat because I know that there are dark times coming and I'm not worried about that because my faith is strong and I know that God will look after me and he'll look after you too.

So as we go on this journey, trust the Holy Spirit, trust your initial instincts, go with what you know and develop it as we go through the book and as we go through the understanding of who God is and his character. And in that you will grow in a way that will make you feel more peaceful. You'll sleep better at night and you will be guaranteed of eternal life.

And that's what this faith journey is all about. So let's get into it. I want to say that I'm not a pastor or a preacher. I'm not a priest or a theologian. I haven't done any university studies to qualify me to be an authority on the Bible. I'm just sharing my perceptions with you. as I walk this journey with you.

So let's have that clear understanding before we start. We've opened with a prayer and last week we talked about who is God? How do we perceive God? And we understood from that last week that God is love. And we went to the book of first Corinthians, chapter 13, and we looked at the qualities of love and how love is identified in the Bible, because the Bible tell us, it tells us what love is in that particular chapter, the love chapter.

And we've understood it and then we've translated that chapter to the character of God and we now know what the character of God is. And we're told in, uh, in Genesis 1, 27, that we are created in God's image. What is God's image? Well, if we're created in God's image, then God must look like 8 billion people.

Well, it's not about our physical appearance or God's physical appearance. It's about his character. What does God look like in his character? We were created in his image. Initially, we were created in the image of God to live without sin. And so being created in his image was fine back in the Garden of Eden until the Tree of Knowledge came upon the earth, the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

And the servants spoke to Eve, and before we know it, we've now been living a painful life of sin. We can't escape it. Why doesn't God fix that? Why doesn't he just obliterate sin so we don't have this problem? Well, that obliterates the nature of God if you do that, because God is love. Can you mandate somebody to love you?

In order to experience love, to give love and to feel it, don't you have to have a freedom of choice? Don't you have to be able to choose whether you love somebody or not? And other people have the right to choose whether they love you or not. So if God is perfect love, how can there be mandates? How can there be a lack of choice?

So freedom to choose is the ultimate expression of who we are and how we were created. So how do we govern those choices? How do we make sure those choices are healthy? Well that's where the character of God comes in. And the best way to find out what that character is, and how to attain it as a recipe to be a good person created in God's image.

We need go no further than the book of Matthew in chapter 5 in the Beatitudes and we start at verse 3. And let's go there now as I put my glasses on. We'll open the Bible and we'll go to Matthew chapter 5 verse 3. If you haven't got a Bible in your possession, um, there around you can, you can get them.

Look, get whatever you can lay your hands on at the moment. We'll talk about Bibles a bit later on as we go through, but. Uh, you can also download apps and all sorts of things. So, but it's important that you have a copy or access to the words of the Bible as we go through this journey. So we're starting at Matthew chapter five in verse three.

And you've all heard these words. Now these words in my Bible, it's a red letter Bible, which means that all the words of Jesus as quoted in this book are written in, in red. So if you're seeing something written in red, this came out of the mouth of Jesus. And he starts in Matthew 5 verse 3, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

I'll go through them all and come back and we'll help to understand each one of them as we do. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Bless to the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Bless to the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God. Bless to those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. And bless to you when they revile and persecute you and say all kinds of evil against you, falsely, for my sake.

We'll come back to that. That's a big one. So let's go back first of all to verse three. What does it mean? Well, before we go into these verse by verse, we need to understand some basic tenets of what Jesus is saying here. Um, this is classified by every theologian that I've ever seen or read as the greatest sermon ever given.

It was given by Jesus himself. Apparently it took place over several days on a mountaintop. Now Jesus was with his disciples being followed by thousands of people and he walked up a mountain and he sat to take a rest and he started after resting and talking to his disciples to preach the greatest sermon ever given.

He was on a hill surrounded by thousands of people and everybody heard every word. Think about that for a minute. No PA system, no fancy digital electronics, no screens, no speakers scattered around the rocks on the mountains. Everybody heard every word. That can only happen by the, the transmission of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit making sure that people heard every word because it was that important.

So let's go to that word. But firstly, again, the other, the other factor about the Beatitudes, these verses is that you need to work through one to get to the other. So as you're doing your, your journey through the Beatitudes,

you need to realize one thing before you can move on to the next one. And that'll become patently clear as I go in.

So blessed to the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Once again, you get the reward after you do the deed, which is contrary to how we live in the world today. We want something, we go and get it. We pay for it later. Blessed to the poor in spirit. How can you be blessed if you're poor?

Well, if we look at it in the worldly sense, if we don't own goods or possess food or possess means of finance, uh, we're considered poor, but Jesus doesn't live in that world and he's not speaking to that world. Blessed are the poor in spirit, uh, blessed are those who know they are poor in spirit. Blessed are those who realize that they're poor in spirit, because when you realize you're poor in something, you seek to attain freedom from that poverty, a poverty of spirit.

So you're better off knowing that you're poor in spirit. Not knowing, because if you know you are, you can do things to make it, make it better, to make it different. Now let's go to the next one. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Well, blessed are those who realize they are poor in spirit and feel sad about it.

Because if you say to God, look, I feel poor and wretched in spirit, He will comfort you and the growth process starts then. So you need to do that. You need to admit that you're poor in spirit. and grieve the fact that you're poor in spirit before you can move on to the next step. So I've never been to a funeral where I actually wished I was the grieving widow or widower or grieving son or daughter.

I'm always glad that I'm not in that position and it comes to us all at some stage in our life and often in several, at several stages of our life. But what that means is not that you're mourning because your dog got run over or your father died, it's mourning your absence from God. Because God never moves.

He's always there. He's always omnipresent. He never shifts. He never changes. He's constant. He is the only constant in the universe. So when we realize that, and we step away from God, and we're stepping out of the light and the warmth of God, it feels cold and we grieve. We want to be home. And to illustrate that, I want to go to Uh, a situation where I, several years ago, felt I was slipping away from God.

And I rang one of my mentors, my spiritual mentors, my pastor Jeff, who baptized me. And he's in retirement now and I called him up and he said, what's going on? And I said, well, Jeff, I feel like I'm slipping away from God. I feel like I'm losing my faith. He said, how does that make you feel in yourself? I said, I feel wretched.

Oh, he said, thank God for that. I said, what do you mean thank God for that? He said, if you weren't worried about it, I'd be really concerned. So you're missing God. Is that what you're saying? And I realized I was. A lot of you can relate to that because a lot of you have come up to me and said, look, I used to go to church all the time, but in the last four years, I've lost my urge to go because of the way we've been treated.

Now that's just corporate religion. Don't let that interfere with your relationship with God. If that's who you are, don't do that. So. Then Jeff said to me, where was he when you last were with him? And I remembered a time when I felt like I was connected and I went back there and the relationship was restored immediately.

And I felt so much better. See, sometimes it pays to wear your heart on your sleeve. Sometimes it pays to be emotionally honest. And share with people what you're feeling because you can get support from the most unlikely places. And your strength lies in your vulnerability. Don't ever forget that. That's one thing that stood by me.

Um, the more vulnerable I am about who I am and the more open I am about myself to others, the less likely they are to drag something out of the woodwork and hurt me with it later on. Um, if I'm being honest and living as close to the character of Jesus that I can and developing my character every day, the And when you attack me for being honest, you're attacking my father in heaven and he's looking after me.

So what you think about me is none of my business. It's what God thinks about me that's important. So these are things that we need to understand as we go on to the next one. And I love this one. Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth. In Australia, if you're called meek, a lot of guys think you're weak.

You've got no character, you've got no strength, you've got no backbone, but what is meekness? Meekness is uncontrolling. Meekness is allowing people to be as God created them. Meekness is allowing people to work through their issues without trying to influence them to make them be more like you or more like the mould you would have set for them.

A lady once asked me before I baptised her, what is meekness? I said, well, the opposite to meekness is narcissism. She'd come from a domestic violence situation. I said, the opposite to meekness is narcissism. A narcissist seeks to control every aspect of everyone in their life, to control everything to the nth degree, to fulfill their desires for themselves, not for anyone else.

They are selfish people. And when I said that, the light came on. Because this out of Jesus own words, he says, blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth. Look at the world and the state we're in at the moment. Our freedoms have been stripped away by elites who want to control every aspect of our lives so that they can enjoy their life at our expense.

And when I read that verse to her, I got it. Jesus said in his own words, it won't be the narcissists who inherit the earth. It'll be the meek. It'll be the you and the me. We've already won my friends. We've already won. And those who seek to control and manipulate us have lost. Because they're not doing it for God's purpose.

They're only doing it for themselves and they're not doing it from a selfless point of view. I pray for them that they come to their senses in time. I pray that they return and repent for what they've done and and that they would be seen in heaven with those of us who are seeking a life that gets us there, too.

I think that's important because if I don't want to see them in heaven, then I may not be there to see whether they're there or not. Because it's all about loving our neighbours, we love ourselves. I love that verse. I absolutely love it. Uh, in verse number six it says, We always want to do the right thing.

There are some cases where chemical imbalance and life experience have people seek to do the wrong thing, to inflict pain on others. I get that, I understand that. But ultimately, innately in us is a desire to do what's right. And that's why the Ten Commandments are important and God's laws are important and I won't touch on those any further but other than to say we'll be talking about those in about two weeks time.

And they're very important and we're going to introduce the laws of God to you in a way that will refresh and invigorate you and not have you terrified. Because that's not what God is about. He's a God of love. So if you hunger and thirst for righteousness, you're hungering for ways to do the right thing, to be a good person, to have what is in your head transferred to what is in your heart, to be compassionate and loving to others.

And it demonstrates a willingness to grow. Iron sharpens iron. My friends have the freedom I've given them to tell me when they think I'm messing up. I want to know, they have my permission to sharpen my character and they have given me permission to do the same with them. That's a real friendship as opposed to an acquaintance.

And I want real friends in my life. I'm sick of shallow relationships. I want to talk about the stuff that matters that we all grow together. In 16, confess your sins to God, yourself and another human being and pray for one another. so that all may be healed. That's how this works. Talk it over, have your friends hold you accountable, hold them accountable, be their sponsor.

And we talk about that in recovery, which we're going to be introducing very shortly on this program. So it's vitally important that we understand that the thirst for righteousness is innate in us all, and we must not neglect it. We must continue to grow. And that's what we're doing in this program.

That's what we're doing with this beautiful book. The next one, verse seven says, blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy. Do you like it when someone forgives you? Do you feel relieved when the weight and burden of your guilt is lifted off you because someone forgave you? Have you ever been pulled over by a highway patrol officer who told you were doing 10 kilometers an hour over the speed limit?

And reached for your license only to be told that, don't worry about it, I'm letting you off with a warning this time. Thank you. How good did that feel? It doesn't happen very often these days sadly. But I know I've spoken to officers who haven't written a ticket when they pulled someone over and they talk about how good they feel and how they feel like they're paying it forward.

I've done you a favour, you do someone else a favour. It happened to me when I was driving through North America. I was in North Dakota and I did an illegal U turn on a freeway because I was hopelessly lost. And as I pulled off the overpass, into a thoroughfare, a sheriff's car came up behind me with lights flashing and pulled me over.

The sheriff got out, walked up to the window, I wound the window down and he said, can I see your driver's license? And I pulled my driver's license and I said to him, gee mate, in the strongest Aussie accent I could find, I'm really sorry. I'm so screwed up. I'm so lost. I don't know where I am. And he looked at me and he said, you're Australian.

And I said, yeah. He said, okay, well, you realize you made an illegal U-Turn back there. I said, no, I, I, I wasn't aware, but I am aware now, and I, I feel so stupid for doing it. He said, okay. He said, all right, so you're not used to driving on the wrong side of the road. I said, no, I've only been driving for a day.

He said, okay, look, don't worry about it. Just be very careful. Take care. I'm not gonna write you a ticket this time. I've done you a favor. I want you to do someone else a favor. Pay it forward. I love that notion. And we smiled. And as I took off, I went to make a, uh, a right turn and I was turning from the wrong lane and he sounded the siren and he pointed me in the right direction, smiled and waved.

And I went on. I eventually learned how to drive in the US. But it felt really good. And, um, I could see by the smile on his face, he was happy to do it as well. I wouldn't mind betting he was a Christian. Anyway. Um, So obtaining mercy and, and, and giving mercy are vital components of this sharpening of character, walking in, in faith with God, because when we can't forgive or give mercy to others, we're living in a prison of our own making.

How many people do you hate because they've hurt you, who are blissfully unaware that you hate them? Let's look at one of the most unloved figures at the moment in, in the, in the world that we're living in might be someone like Klaus Schwab. You hate him, maybe. I don't see any benefit. There's no profit in hating people.

But if you hate him, he would be blissfully unaware in Davos that you hate him. So who's affected by your hatred of him? Him or you? It's you. You're the one who's holding the keys to the cell of the hatred that you lock yourself in. We've got to learn that when we forgive, we set ourselves free. It doesn't mean that we forget.

It should never mean that we forget, if you were a victim of sexual abuse, and I pray that you're working through that, and my wife Michelle was a victim of sexual abuse, for years she couldn't forgive the perpetrator, and she realised that she was in a prison of her own making, and when she forgave him, to his face, she got control of her life back again.

And the difference was incredible. I got to see it. I got to see the, I was a ringside seat recipient to the greatest show on earth. When she forgave the man who molested her for six years as a child. There's so much power in

forgiveness because it sets you free. Now, just because she forgave that man, it doesn't mean that if we lived in the same town that you would ask him to babysit the grandkids.

Of course not. You wouldn't do that. But you can forgive and move on in your newfound freedom and you give them a glowing example of what grace is all about because that my friends is what's so amazing about grace and that's why this beatitude is such a good one. It's amazing grace lived out. Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy.

And who do you get the mercy from if you forgive someone else? Well you get it from God because that's what he wants you to do. I love it. I love this stuff. Believe me, you'll grow to love it too if you don't already. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. When you're pure in heart, your yes is your yes and your no is your no.

Integrity is vitally important to the pure in heart. Sincerity is the catchphrase of someone who is pure in heart. What you see is what you get. When you say yes it means yes, when you say no it means no. Integrity is everything to you. You want everything you do to be based in truth as you know it. And you, if you deliver that with compassion, then you are living into that beatitude beautifully.

There's so much to be said for sincerity and so much to be said for a lack of it. Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the sons of God. This is very, very important. Who are peacemakers? Peacemakers are people who seek to reduce conflict or eliminate conflict because conflict without resolution leads to war and that leads to pain and misery.

So many wars could have been averted if more people were peacemakers. So many horrible laws would not have been implemented if people were peacemakers. So many families would not have broken up if people were peacemakers. It's so important to understand that peacemakers are willing to give of self in order to achieve peace that others may grow and live a good life.

That's what a peacemaker is. Peacemakers aren't selfish, they're selfless. And what does it say about them? It says you'll be called the sons of God because you're demonstrating and exhibiting God's perfect peace. And then it says blessed to those who are persecuted for righteousness sake for theirs is a kingdom of heaven.

A lot of you are watching this now and me talking because you followed me through the situation we've been living through in the last four years. You saw a strength in me and I've seen strength in you. I've met thousands if not millions of you, thousands of you. And I've seen your strength of character.

And many of you stood for what you knew was right at the expense of everything else in your lives. Incredible are you. Incredible are you. You threw away careers, in some case family relationships, jobs, livelihoods, your homes, for standing in your integrity. It took great courage to do what you did. To stand for righteousness takes courage.

because the goats take the easy way out and you didn't do that. And I'm talking about people who made a decision one way or the other as well. It's not a matter of their medical situation. A lot of people decided to follow the narrative, not because they were following the narrative, but because they felt in their hearts it was the very right thing to do.

Others did it so they could have Friday night at the pub. Christmas holidays in Bali. But there are people on both sides who stood for what they believed was right for the right reasons. And it took courage for them to do that. People who followed a certain procedure in order that they selflessly thought they would be saving others.

It took courage to take that risk for them to do that. But it took courage also for people to say no. I'm not going to do that until you tell me what this is all about and how safe it is. And they value their bodily integrity. So we've got to look at this from both sides and apply the same rules to both sides.

And there were people on both sides who did things that they should have, they should be regretting now. This will come to pass as time goes on. So being, uh, being persecuted for righteousness sake and knowing that you're about to be takes courage. And then bless to, bless to you when they revile and persecute you and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for my sake.

Sometimes you've got to stand for the unpopular. It goes along with the one before it. I stand for Jesus. I make no apologies for that. If you think I'm crazy for doing that, then that's your prerogative. That's your freedom to choose and you're entitled to it. And I love you less. I love you not less because of it.

Let me say it's back to what you think about me as none of my business. But in the past four years, I've had to stand publicly, publicly, for people I trusted, trusted with a faith that was marrow deep. I knew them. I trusted them. And I stood up for them when they were being persecuted by others. And I am to this day, not one bit regretful for doing that.

Every time I did it. My faith in them was justified and I made the right decision. And I had the courage to make it public. And I do the same now when I talk about Jesus. He's what's important in my life, even more than my wife, Michelle. And that's how it's meant to be. Because if I put God and my relationship with him before my marriage, my marriage can do nothing else but flourish.

And she does the same thing. So there's so much to be unpacked in this and I'm so glad we're doing it. So let's go back now and let's look at the characteristics in simple terms because what are we doing today? We're doing practical faith. We're converting what the Bible is giving us in knowledge into a heartfelt understanding that helps us live a good life.

And that's why I'm so glad to be doing this and sharing this with you. I'm sorry it's not flash. I'm sorry we're not putting up slideshows and illustrations and all of that. I tried doing that and it just gets too confusing because I'm doing this on my own. I just want to talk with you. I want to walk with you.

I want to, I want to share with you. So that's why I'm doing it the way I'm doing it. Forgive me. So when it says blessed to the poor in spirit, it takes humility to admit to yourself that you're poor in spirit. It takes humility. When it says blessed to those who mourn, that's another expression of humility.

Blessed to the meek. Bless to the non controlling. Bless to those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. Bless for those who are willing to learn and willing to grow. Bless to the merciful. Bless to the forgivers. Bless to the pure in heart. Bless to the sincere. Bless to the peacemakers. Blessed are the selfless.

Bless to the righteous, righteous, or those who, sorry, bless to those who are persecuted for righteousness. Blessed to the courageous. And blessed to those who are persecuted for the sake of Jesus. Blessed to those who are committed. So at the end of the day, what the Beatitudes is telling us in the beautiful red letters of Jesus, are you are blessed if you are humble, non controlling, emotionally honest, willing to grow, forgiving, sincere, courageous and committed.

You're blessed. Now think about who you would like to be in relationship with. If your partner in life, a family member, your spouse, was humble, non controlling, willing to learn and grow, was forgiving, sincere, courageous and committed, wouldn't you have the perfect relationship? You would. And that, my friends, is the recipe to be Christ like.

to be created in his image. It's there in red and white in the Bible, in his own words. Now you couple that with a reflection of who God is. God is love. God is patient. God is kind. God keeps no track of wrongs. And he doesn't. And we're going to talk about that next week when we talk about repentance. When it comes to forgiving your sins, if you confess to God and repent, he either has amnesia or he keeps his promises because they are blotted from the book of life.

They are blotted from the book of life. The cross of Jesus on the hill at Calvary that we've recently celebrated, if that's the word, over Easter is your key to eternal life. Everything happened at the cross. Everything that is essential about faith happened at the cross. Everything that is essential about your relationship with God and others happened at the cross.

Think about it. On a hill that afternoon, having been tortured for the previous 24, 48 hours, with a crown of thorns buried into his skull, dragging with on a back that had the flesh stripped away from it. A heavy wooden cross through the streets of Jerusalem to the hill where he was to be crucified. Then to be hung and nailed on that cross.

To have two other members of that crucifixion party hanging on a cross beside you. Both thieves, both, both being punished for their illegal activities. Both mocking you. You say you're the son of God. Go on. Get yourself down off the cross, get us down with you. To look at his torture, and the mocking continued.

And then as the pain became unbearable, and it looked like the end was coming, Jesus looked up to his Father and said, Father forgive them, for they know not what they do. One of the thieves on the cross kept mocking Jesus. The other one saw something in him that made him realise. that hanging on the cross next to him was the son of God.

And he said words to this effect, you really are the son of God. Please Lord, when you get to where you're going, will you make a place for me? And God guaranteed it to him that day. He said, I tell you this day, when I get to heaven, there will be a place for you. I will make a place for you. And when the soldiers around the cross heard that, the centurion took off his helmet and looked at Jesus in the face and said, Oh my God, I've just crucified the Son of God.

And several of the soldiers around the foot of the cross stopped casting for lots and fell to their knees. And the rest, as they say, is history. Where are you on your journey? Look at the little symbol on the shelf behind me. 8 32 John 8 32. That's what that means. It's a symbol for the freedom movement, but what it means is freedom way beyond that, that we, we, we contemplate is people who are seeking freedom here on Earth.

That's eternal freedom. 'cause once again, written in real letters in John 8 32, Jesus said. Know the truth, and the truth will set you free. I am the way, the truth, and the light. The only way to the Father is through me. It's basically what he was saying. And that's what that symbol means. So if you're a freedom seeker, you are seeking the ultimate freedom by taking this journey.

And I'm so grateful to be walking this journey with you. Because beyond a shadow of a doubt, you are free. I don't know how this world is going to turn out in the political sense. We've got no idea what's coming tomorrow. If you listen to too much media, you're going to be given a whole lot of doom and gloom and a whole lot of fear is going to be pumped into you at an irregular rate.

Push all that aside because perfect love casts out all fear. Give your faith and your heart to Jesus and leave it in His hands. and then concentrate on staying in that relationship. Concentrate on your character development. Stay in the light. One of the best bits of advice I was given in aviation was when I was a crop dusting pilot in the Hunter Valley, learning how to fly an airplane under power lines and around trees for living was pretty arduous stuff.

It was a lot of fun too. But one of the best bits of advice I was ever given was when you're flying under a powerline don't look at it because you'll hit it. We often had to fly under powerlines to keep the chemical low to the crop. Otherwise it would evaporate in the sun before it got to the crop. So what he said was fly around the job site, know where all the powerlines are, make sure you can fit the airplane under every powerline and forget they're there.

concentrate on flying as low as you can. And that's what we used to do. And truly I say to you, if you were flying under the power line and you looked up at it as you were going, you would pull back on the stick and you'd fly

right into it. The whole purpose of my survival when I was a crop dusting pilot, as a young lad, was to focus on flying low and leave the rest to God.

And that's what we're doing in this war. Focus on flying in the light. Stay out of the dark. Focus on his face. When everything looks insurmountable, when you're on a tightrope and you're looking down and you're terrified, you will fall. Tightrope walkers never look down. You look ahead at the other end of the wire and there you see the face of Jesus beckoning you.

Don't look down, just come to me, walk this way. Focus on him and you will get through. He will get you through. God bless you and let's close with a prayer. Dear Lord Father in heaven, it has been a joy to open your word and to comprehend it in a way that brings practical faith to our hearts and enhances the joy that we have in forming this relationship with you.

For those who are starting this journey for the first time Lord, bless them and keep them and thank you for bringing them to this place. And for those who have been in the faith journey for many, many years, And who are now seeking to criticize what we're doing, or in fact, downright deny it. We pray, Lord, that you will fill them with your Holy Spirit, that they will see the reasons we're doing this and why it's important that they support it.

Because many, many people are literally dying to know you. So we ask you to build us, strengthen us, encourage us, and grant us the mercy that you give us in amazing grace. In Jesus holy name. Amen. Thanks for watching us, and I'll see you next time on Church Without Walls. God bless you, it's been a joy spending this, uh, part of an hour with you, and I look forward to your comment and feedback, and remember that we will be going live on some of these in the near future when we get the technology sorted, and we build our base up and our website up, but we have to make a start somewhere because time is running out.

God bless you. Much love to you and your families. You are loved. You are worth it. And God numbered every hair on your head and every molecule in your body. All those molecules that were given to you by him and not some man made source. God bless you all in both.