

Program Transcripts

May 2023



IN
SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY[®]

SEARCH PROGRAMS

May 2023

Topics subject to change without notice

MAY 7 – FINDING THE TRUTH

Where do you go to find the truth about eternal life? Remember you are risking your soul, if you choose an unreliable source. In this program we're exploring the only sure source of religious truth.

MAY 14 – I AM NOT ASHAMED

We're living in a culture where people say they respect Jesus except when they disagree with Him. Many people claim they are not ashamed of Jesus, but they ignore His words. We must see the need to stand up for Jesus.

MAY 21 – REJOICE IN THE LORD

Many want all the pleasures of happiness, but there's something better than momentary happiness! What's better than happiness? Joy! In this lesson we'll explore why the joy we have in Christ is much better than passing pleasures.

MAY 28 – CAN I REPENT?

The pleasures of sin can easily addict or enslave people to do things that make them ashamed of themselves. They long to be free from sin by forgiveness and truly to repent. How do we repent and how can we repent?

Finding the Truth

Where do you find the truth about eternal life? Now remember you are risking your soul. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." And today we're going to talk about the sure source of religious truth.

We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. God urges us in Proverbs 23:23, "Buy truth, and do not sell it, Get wisdom and instruction and understanding." Your most important purchase comes in buying the truth about God and about salvation. Where will you find the truth? A thousand voices are confusing us with contradictory ideas and fanciful notions. Is there a standard? Is there a sure and undeniable source of truth? Yes, my friend there is.

You've probably heard: "No one really knows what the truth is," or "There are no absolute truths," or "There is no right or wrong; only what people think." Do you remember the exchange between Pontius Pilate and Jesus, before His crucifixion? Jesus told Pontius Pilate in John 18:37, "You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" Well, that question has burned in the hearts of many people: "What is truth?"

Webster defines truth as, "the true or actual state of a matter." Truth conforms to reality or to fact. Truth stands against what is false. Courts seek facts to determine innocence or guilt. Doctors test to find out the truth about our health. Where do we find spiritual truth? We want to know who we are, where we come from, why we're here, and what will happen to us when we die. Humans can't answer these questions on their own. We must seek answers from above and hear from God.

Our reading today comes from the gospel of according to John and it talks about Jesus in His last days. Talking about His place in promises and how that He is the truth.

"Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way where I am going.' Thomas said to Him, 'Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.'"

That's the words of Jesus. The way the truth and the life. John 14:1 to 6. Let's pray together. Father we're thankful that our Lord and Savior Jesus is the way and the truth and the life and that You because of Your grace have sent Him to this earth to help us to know the truth. Father we pray that You will give us strength to put our faith in You and to trust You always. And to be obedient to Your will. This is our pray in the name of Jesus, Amen.

People search for the truth in lots of places, but some sources aren't trustworthy. In fact, some sources are dangerous. Let's look at some harmful sources: First, some people look to their feelings for the truth. When Joseph's brothers got angry with him, they sold him into slavery; but they told their father a wild beast had devoured him. Now Jacob believed his ten sons and thought Joseph was dead. And so he mourned for years, even though Joseph wasn't really dead. Jacob's feelings were real, but they were based on a lie. People often trust their feelings. They want something to be true so badly, that they're willing to believe a lie. Well what we feel often differs from the truth. The Jews had a zeal for God, but it wasn't according to knowledge (Romans 10 verse 2). Martin Luther wrote that, "Feelings come and feelings go; and feelings can be deceiving. I rest my warrant on the Word of God; nothing else is worth believing."

Second, some look to popular opinions or a consensus for truth. They reason well, "if the majority believes it, it must be true"; but the majority isn't always right. Opinion polls aren't always trustworthy. Acts 28:3 to 6 says, "But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat and fastened itself on his hand. When the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand, they began saying to one another, "Undoubtedly this man is a murderer, and though he has been saved from the sea, justice has not allowed him to live." However Paul shook the creature off into the fire and suffered no harm. But they were expecting that he was about to swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But after they had waited a long time and had seen nothing unusual happen to him, they changed their minds and began to say that he was a god." Opinions and beliefs are fickle and changeable. He was neither a murderer nor a god. God's spiritual truth is not like popular opinions; God's truth does not change. You can't rely on popular opinion, but you can depend upon God.

Third, some go to authorities. Now authorities are a blessing, but they aren't always right. Compare any history, science, or psychology textbook from 50 years ago, 25 years ago, and the present. Well, even your dictionary has thousands of words in it that were not in existence a century ago. People get a second doctor's opinion, because they want to be sure. We have appeals courts, because sometimes a court makes a wrong decision. Authorities disagree. And we hear contradictory information about diseases, the foods we eat, the medicines we take. What was bad for you in one report is good for you in another. We're often left confused and wishing for answers.

The fact is, even authorities are human and make mistakes. Their knowledge and their judgments are imperfect.

Fourth, some look inside to their consciences as a moral guide. Now the conscience, if trained properly by Scripture, can be a marvelous motivator to do what's right and to avoid what's wrong; but the uninformed conscience can believe a lie. In Acts 23:1 Paul, looking intently at the Council, said, "Brethren, I have lived my life with a perfectly good conscience before God up to this day." Well, he was speaking about his life before his conversion. He thought persecuting Christians was the right thing to do but later learned that he was wrong! He admitted in 1 Timothy 1:15 that, "It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all." Now he acted according to what his conscience thought was true; but Paul's conscience was as wrong as wrong could be.

Some people's consciences harden to the point that they're past feeling anything. 1 Timothy 4:1 to 2 says, "But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times (that) some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron." Well branding irons destroy the nerve cells, so the person no can longer feel. You may know people past feeling remorse, who no longer have a conscience. If we're looking within our consciences for truth, we cannot find a standard of truth that is indisputable.

Where, then, do we find the truth? It's obvious the truth isn't in man. Jeremiah admitted many centuries ago in Jeremiah 10:23. He said, "I know, O LORD, that the way of man is not in himself, that it is not in man who walks to direct his steps." Man, left to his own ingenuity will dream up what he wants but will ignore what he needs. Solomon said in Proverbs 14:12, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death." When people walk their own ways, never giving God a second thought, they manufacture a false substitute for God. When people empty themselves of God, they fill their lives with false gods, false hope, or false fairy tales. Without God people lose their sense of justice and morality.

Truth is essential to life. Solomon urges us in Proverbs 23:23, "Buy truth, and do not sell it, Get wisdom and instruction and understanding." Truth is a precious and costly thing. Telling the truth cost

Jesus His life. The apostles died because they wouldn't deny the Lord or His truth. One must work to get truth. Buying the truth may mean discovering what you believed before is wrong. Truth requires you to leave an old error and start in a new direction. Buying the truth will lead you to change your ways. Confessing the truth calls for repentance. One reason people refuse to believe the truth is that they don't want to change—even if that old life is destructive.

Once a person has the truth, he must treasure it and never sell out for shoddy thinking or worldly ways. It's tragic that some sell the truth to gain some personal advantage. Paul challenged Timothy in 2 Timothy 4 verses 2 to 4 to "preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths."

We must follow the Truth because Truth sets us free. In John 8:31 to 32, Jesus promised those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." Now whether we know the truth matters, because truth sets us free. Free from what? Well, free from the lies that deceive. Lives that enslave and destroy us. When we know the truth, we can spot the lies. Then lies won't have the power to hurt us or to lead us astray.

Many preachers today tell people what they want to hear rather than what they need to hear. I fear many are sold on false hopes found in the teachings of men. Jesus said in Matthew 15:13 that, "Every plant which My heavenly Father did not plant (speaking of human traditions) shall be uprooted." The religions of men, because they conflict with the teaching of Christ, will not stand and cannot save. When people push their own ideas and refuse to hear Jesus, they're planting something that will be uprooted. By forgetting God people destroy themselves and their lives. The lives of themselves and their loved ones. Foolishness will never grant us spiritual freedom. Freedom doesn't come from falsehood or deception but from the truth—the truth found in the words of Jesus Christ. That's what makes the truth of God's Word so valuable to our lives. And nothing can replace it.

The Lord Jesus said in John 14:6: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; (and) no one (no one) comes to the Father but through Me." Jesus personalizes what truth is all about. He is so real, so genuine, so authentic as the Son of God, that He is the truth. He is the standard of right and wrong. And every concept, every belief, and every religious doctrine must be weighed against the life and the words of Jesus. Jesus said, "He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day" (John 12 verse 48). We won't be judged by our feelings, opinions, human authorities, or by our consciences. We'll be judged by what Jesus teaches. Doesn't it make sense that we know as much as possible what His will for our lives is?

Jesus said in John 16:12 to 13, "I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come." Jesus promised all truth would come to the disciples. Now the Holy Spirit will speak from God and will tell them what God say. He will guide the apostles and prophets of the first century into all the Truth. "Now all the truth." That means the Spirit revealed through the apostles in the first century every religious truth God wanted us to know. Now if that's true, then there are no new truths being revealed today, since they received all the truth in the first century.

Jude in verse 3 of his brief letter confirms this understanding when he says, "Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints."

Now the faith Jesus, that He wanted us to know has been revealed once for all time within the pages of the New Testament—the Word of truth. We don't need to search the literature of the world or the philosophies of men for truth. The truth that leads to heaven is found in the New Testament. We need to read it, love it, meditate on it, memorize it, obey it and share it with others, so that they too can understand the truth.

Peter said in 1 Peter 1:22 to 25, “Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God. For, All flesh is like grass, And all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, And the flower falls off, But the word of the Lord endures forever. And this is the word which was preached to you.” Now the Lord purifies our souls when we obey the Truth! That's when we become Christians, children of God, who are washed in the blood of Jesus.

Truth is one of God's great gifts. While such gifts are free, they aren't cheap. The truth that can change your life is expensive, but only if you open your heart and listen will it save you. Truth is like medicine, it only works when you are willing to swallow it. It won't do you any good if you merely look at it, play with it, judge it, or throw it away. It only works when you welcome it and obey it. The truth can make you free from sin, free from the heartache and destruction that sin brings. Without the truth, we're all left in confusion, trying things that won't last or give us life. The truth is where it's always been—in the Word of God!

Let's pray together. Heavenly Father we're thankful for this wonderful gift of Your Word. That we may know the truth and be able to make a distinction between truth and error, right and wrong, good and bad. Help us Heavenly Father to be devoted to Your will always. In Jesus name, Amen.

Many Christians find little satisfaction because they hold onto Christ with one hand, while they hold onto the world with the other. They're never happy in their Christianity and never happy in the world. Jesus said in Matthew 6:24 that, “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other.” Why not give God a real hearing. Deciding to listen to God, who created you and loves you, will change your life for the best. God ought to have the first voice in your life. The world wants to silence Him, because they would rather live on their own terms. They forget they'll have to face the consequences of their actions one day. And when we shut God out, what we destroy what is good and throw away our hope.

We all need a good long look at the cross. Once we see the love of God, we'll listen to Him. You can build your life on Him and what He teaches. The God who loves you will always keep His promises; He'll never lie to you. Put your trust in the Lord. Believe the gospel message that Jesus died on the cross for you, was buried, and on the third day rose from the dead. Trust Him, turn from every sin and repent, confess the name of Jesus, and be baptized (that is immersed) in water so that your sins will be forgiven. When you're baptized, the Lord will add you to His church and count you as His child. Don't be fooled by popular religion, feelings, or the notions of men. Look to Jesus. You'll never regret it!

I Am Not Ashamed

We're living at a time when people say they respect Jesus except when they disagree with Him. Today we're talking about the need to stand up for Jesus.

We can only be as confident of the Lord Jesus as we are confident of the truth that He has taught. If we don't believe His words, then we don't believe Him. And if we're ashamed of the teaching of Jesus, we're revealing we are ashamed of Him and of His Father who gave Him His words. No, we should be unashamed of our Savior and Lord and unashamed of the truth that He teaches. We can put as much trust in the Scriptures as Jesus did, and He put total trust in the word of God. Thanks for taking time with us today. We'd love to hear from you and want to be a part of your life each week.

A person who is ashamed feels inferior or unworthy of respect over a belief, or an action, or a characteristic. Many are ashamed of themselves because of these things. When people become embarrassed or ashamed of the Lord Jesus and His word because of how they may appear to others, they have ceased to trust in the Lord as worthy of their love and loyalty.

The suffering, crucified Messiah endured shame while on the cross; and Hebrews 12: 2 says He despised being shamed and humiliated. Though condemned by men, He was innocent and righteous. Though He was despised and rejected, the day will come when He returns in indescribable glory!

We must not be ashamed of any disgrace or reproach that we may undergo from our devotion to Jesus or His words. 1 Peter 4:15 to 16 says, "But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler. Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name."

Our reading today comes from Paul's second letter to Timothy chapter 1 verses 8 to 13.

"Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher. For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day. Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus."

That's a reading of God's holy word. Let us pray. Father help us to never be ashamed of all the things You have taught and all the things that You have given to us. We know that You are a great God and a beloved God and we can always trust in You. This is our prayer in the name of Jesus, Amen.

You don't have to be ashamed of anything Jesus ever said or did. He lived a compassionate, holy life, free from sin. Hebrews 4:15 says Jesus was tempted in every respect as we are, "yet without sin." Jesus healed the sick, fed the hungry, taught the truth, died for our sins, fulfilled His promise to rise from the dead, forgave sinners, and gave people hope of eternal life. No, you don't have to be ashamed of Jesus.

The world offers nothing that compares with the Lord Jesus. The world offers the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life; but 1 John 2:15 to 17 says that "the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever." When people love this world and its desires, their love for God vanishes. Recently Dr. George Barna of the Cultural Research Center said that

82 percent of American adults fall into the category of “World Citizen”, where people embrace a few biblical principles but generally believe and behave in ways that are distinct from biblical teaching. When they disagree with the Lord's teaching, they actually fight against it.

Now our culture and time is very much like the days of Jeremiah when the people of Judah had embraced idols and were turning away from God. They became callous about their sins. In the context, even the prophets and priests were dealing falsely with others. God said in Jeremiah 6:15, “Were they ashamed when they committed abomination? No, they were not at all ashamed; they did not know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; at the time that I punish them, they shall be overthrown,” says the LORD.

Likewise, the Jewish leaders living in the days of Christ's earthly ministry despised and rejected Jesus. John 9:22 notes that the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue. John 12:42 to 43 tells of some people who secretly believed but were ashamed to let anyone else know. “Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.”

Even people close to Jesus faced weakness, giving in to peer pressure and the culture around them. When Jesus was taken prisoner and condemned, His disciples scattered, and Peter denied Him. Luke 22:54 to 62 tells the story. Having arrested Him, (that is Jesus) they led Him away and brought Him to the house of the high priest; but Peter was following at a distance. After they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter was sitting among them. And a servant-girl, seeing him as he sat in the firelight and looking intently at him, said, “This man was with Him too.” But he denied it, saying, “Woman, I do not know Him.”

A little later, another saw him and said, “You are one of them too!” But Peter said, “Man, I am not!” After about an hour had passed, another man began to insist, saying, “Certainly this man also was with Him, for he is a Galilean too.” But Peter said, “Man, I do not know what you are talking about.” Immediately, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed. The Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had told him, “Before a rooster crows today, you will deny Me three times.” And he went out and (he) wept bitterly.

Peter, an apostle and a friend of Jesus, fell to the temptation of hiding his relationship to Jesus Christ. We can all face the temptation to deny what we are or what we believe. The Lord forgave Peter, and He can forgive us too, if we turn back to Him. What will we do? The Lord Jesus challenges us to take our devotion to Him seriously, even when the people that we love most don't agree with our commitment to Christ.

The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 10:34 to 37, “Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a person's enemies will be those of his own household. Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.” Christ must come first in our lives.

Jesus loves sincere believers who follow Him, people for whom He tasted death. Hebrews 2:9 to 11 says, “But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone. For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings. For both He who

sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren.”

Our task is to be bold enough to stand up for Jesus Christ against sin and the devil. Acts tells of the stoning of Stephen and the death of the apostle James. Paul and Peter suffered for their faith and they died in Rome. Christians through the centuries have died for their faith in Jesus and for translating the Bible in their own language. William Tyndale became convinced that the Bible alone should determine the practices and doctrines of the church and that all believers should be able to read the Bible in their own language. Well, his enemies falsely condemned him for heresy; they strangled him and burned him at the stake in 1536. 2 Timothy 3 and verse 12 reminds us, “Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.”

Paul told Timothy, “Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God.” There are times when we must speak out what God says, even if the world hates it. Paul reminded Timothy in 2 Timothy 1 verse 7, “For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.” We must preach the truth and do what is right, even when it is difficult. People need the good news of grace and love.

Paul said in Romans 1:16 to 17, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it (that is the gospel) the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, ‘The righteous shall live by faith.’” People need the gospel to be saved; and nothing else will save. The gospel teaches how to be right with the living God and to how to live with Him forever. Nothing in the world can replace the gospel. This is why we must hold fast to our faith!

Some preachers try to placate the culture, but Paul said in Galatians 1 and verse 10, “For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.” Our relationship with the Lord Jesus demands that we please Him. When we fail and fall to peer pressure and cultural demands of our time, we fall away from the Lord. Proverbs 29:25 says, that “The fear of man brings a snare, But he who trusts in the LORD will be exalted.”

The Council of the Jews in Jerusalem arrested the apostles after they had been preaching Jesus. They banned them they from preaching the name of the Lord. In Acts 5:29 to 31 says, “But Peter and the apostles answered, ‘We must obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.’” Well the Council decided to beat the apostles and charge them again not to speak in the name of Jesus. Acts 5:41 says, “So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name.”

You see when you love the Lord, you love the gospel, you want to hear the truth that Jesus teaches, and you take His promises seriously. And when you take the Lord Jesus seriously, you take His commandments seriously. The Lord Jesus simply said, “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments” (John 14 verse 15). It's that simple and that clear. Love for Jesus means listening and obeying Him. It also means caring more about what the Lord Jesus thinks than what people think.

Worldly glory doesn't last. And we must prefer the eternal salvation of our souls before any secular concern. People who serve the Lord, and they only, that are willing to deny themselves and take up a cross will live with Him eternally; but those fall to the temptation of being ashamed of Christ will certainly have no share in its triumphs. The Lord Jesus is coming again one day in the glory of the Father

and of the holy angels. He will bless those who hold firmly to Him. People who aren't willing to confess Jesus aren't willing to deny themselves or take up a cross to follow Him.

Now we're tempted at times to remain silent about our faith. It could be that when we're confronted with our sins that we want to be silent. Our culture has rejected the morals taught by Jesus in reference to their sexuality, their honesty, and their attitudes. Some people stop worshipping at church because they don't want to hear that sin is wrong; they don't want to hear anything that asks them to repent of their sins. Some preachers in our culture refuse to speak about sin, repentance, or hell. They fear telling the whole truth to people, but would rather tickle their ears.

The Lord Jesus said in Luke 9:26, that "For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels." If you intentionally hide your convictions about Jesus and about what He said, then Jesus will intentionally hide God's glory from you. Is that the price you're willing to pay? To have worldly glory you must give up Heavenly glory. Well, which matters most to you—the world's ways or God's ways? And which are you following—the world's wealth or Christ's reward? Now which will you receive? You can't remain happy with sin if your soul is miserable and hopeless, but the soul may be happy though life is difficult in this world. Your conscience will remind you that if you've sinned, that failed to hold fast to your faith.

Now you may want to save face with your ungodly friends and keep your faith a secret to please them, but what will you do when you face Christ? The price today for denying the Lord is a guilty conscience. Peter denied the Lord and went he out and he wept bitterly. When you give in to the desire to save yourself from persecution by denying the Lord, you aren't a winner. You're a loser of the most valuable thing that you own, your soul. The person that values and saves his worldly life will lose it, and he will lose that which is of infinitely more value, his precious soul. Oh, I hope you will stay faithful to the Lord and unashamed.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father we're thankful for the truth that You teach us. Help us Heavenly Father to hold fast to You in easy times and in difficult times. And to do Your will always. This is our name in Jesus, Amen.

We must firmly believe in Jesus Christ and in his words and never be ashamed of them. And we must firmly believe that if we lose our life for the sake of holding on to Christ and His teaching, that we will save it to our eternal and infinite blessing. The Lord Jesus will abundantly bless us with eternal life in Heaven. James 1 verses 2 to 4 says, "Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing." Now this world is not the focus. The final judgment is the focus. The world's judgment does not matter about our eternity. Your obituary isn't the final word on your life. The final word comes from the Son of Man when He returns to judge the world. He will either say, "Well done!" or "Depart from Me!"

Now what kind of Christian are you? Are you one who acknowledges Him, loves Him, and serves Him to His glory? 1 John 2:28 says, "Now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming."

To get right with the Lord, we must believe in Him and in the gospel. We must turn in our hearts from an old life of sin to a new life in Christ; that's repentance. We must confess Jesus Christ is the Son of God; and we must be baptized, immersed in water, for the forgiveness of our sins (Acts 2 and verse 38). Make the decision today and every day lovingly to put your trust in the Lord and to obey Him. Don't let a day go by lost.

Rejoice in the Lord

Many want happiness, but there's something better than happiness! What's better? Joy! Today we're going to explore the joy we have in Christ.

If you ask people what makes them happy, they usually speak about all the things they like and want in their lives. They might speak of ideal houses, cars, or jobs, thinking they can find happiness in possessions or position. They might consider the satisfaction of their fleshly desires or the accomplishment of some goal in life and how that will bring them happiness. Many discipline themselves to gain riches, fame, education, or to set a record. Well, these things, however, belong to this life; and they're only temporal. Solomon said in Ecclesiastes 1:14, "behold, all is vanity and striving after wind." What really matters? What lasts beyond this life?

The Lord Jesus told this parable in Luke 12:16 to 21, "The land of a rich man produced plentifully, and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' And he said, 'I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry." ' But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God." Have you laid up treasures in heaven? Is God an important part of your life?

Our reading today comes from Philippians chapter 4 verses 4 to 7. And they talk about our relationship with the Lord and the joy it brings.

"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Oh, how wonderful it is to be a Christian. Let's pray together. Heavenly Father we're thankful for the gift of Your son Jesus who died for our sins that we might live with You. And receive all the blessings You give us including the peace that passes understanding. Help us always Father to be devoted to You to love You and to serve You. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

Everyone is hungry for joy. Joy is that true pleasure over a blessing or a loving good relationship with someone. The joy we have in Christ is a mindset of delight and wellbeing that comes from knowing and serving God. This joy arises from all the blessings and promises grounded in what God has done for us in Christ. It comes from knowing God that He's our Father and Jesus is our Savior and Lord. You can have no greater blessing than a relationship with the God who created us and can give us an abundant life here on earth and eternal life in heaven. It's no wonder Scripture urges us to "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!" (Philippians 4 verse 4).

Joy and our relationship with God are unchangeably united. When we're right with the One who created us, who loves us, who sustains us daily, and who sent His Son Jesus to give us eternal life, then our joy is multiplied with peace, hope and gratitude. Day by day God is good and takes care of us. And every blessing, the answer to every prayer, the forgiveness of all our sins, and the love of brethren are good reasons to rejoice in the Lord always! If you want more joy, then count your blessings every day.

Christianity is more than a faith or a religion; it's a relationship with our Father in heaven. The Lord taught us to pray to Him and to obey Him. In prayer we can pour out our hearts and our requests. God has given us His Scriptures to guide us and lead us in the right path. Both prayer and following God's teachings are matters of love and blessing. The Lord Jesus said in John 15:9 to 11, "Just as the Father

has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full." When people love each other and maintain a right relationship with the Lord, joy grows and grows.

From the time Jesus entered this world, He's brought joy and hope to mankind. Everything about Him speaks of an abundant life filled with joy, peace and promise! When Jesus was born an angel of the Lord appeared to some shepherds out in the field as they were watching over their sheep. The glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. Luke 2:10 to 11 says, that "But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." Truly the beginning of the greatest joy in all history was the day Jesus Christ the Lord came into the world.

Can you imagine all the joy that Jesus caused people as He forgave sinners, preached the gospel of the kingdom, and healed everyone who came to Him? The blind could see, the deaf could hear, the lame could walk, the lepers were cleansed, and those who were maimed, that is had some limb missing, were made whole. Jesus fed the multitudes, cast out the demons, stilled the terrifying storms, raised the dead, and welcomed tax collectors and sinners. People's lives were changed for the better for having known Jesus. He brought true joy everywhere He went.

Luke 15 contains three stories of joy, where something is lost and then found. A shepherd who lost one of his sheep searched until he found it. And with joy he calls together his neighbors and friends and asks them to rejoice with him. The Lord Jesus said in Luke 15:7, "I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance." Repentance is a reason to rejoice. In the second story a woman lost a coin. Searching diligently, she finds it and calls to her friends and neighbors to rejoice with her.

In the third story a younger son causes himself to be lost in sin by wandering off to a far country and wasting his inheritance. A famine caused him to be destitute and hungry. When he came to his senses, he came home acknowledging his sin, but the father rejoiced over his penitent son. With hugs and kisses, the father put the best robe on him, shoes on his feet, and a ring on his finger. He said in Luke 15:23 and 4, "bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found." And they began to celebrate." God loves to forgive people; He rejoices when people repent and turn their lives around. And we too should rejoice when we see people turn their hearts toward God to follow and serve Him.

Now Jesus knew that He would die on the cross, and it caused Him great sorrow, to the point of death. And even those who went to the garden with Him sorrowed; Luke 22:45 says that Jesus found them "sleeping from sorrow." Now speaking of His resurrection, Jesus said in John 16:22, "Therefore you too have grief now; but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you." Now though He suffered through a painful trial and bore an agonizing cross, Jesus could see joy in His suffering. Hebrews 12 and verse 2 reminds us to fix "our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." What could possibly be joyful in the cross?

The joy of the cross was not in the pain or the suffering or the shame the Jews heaped upon Him as they mocked Him. No. The "joy set before Him" was what allowed Him to endure the cross. And it came from what He was dying for. He died to save people, people who would follow Him in this life and live with Him forever. Acts 20:28 says He purchased the church with His own blood. He was willing to sacrifice Himself on the cross, because He loved us. He knew that in dying, we would come to understand

just how far He was willing to go to demonstrate His love and to save us from our sins. He knew His death would make a difference in our lives. He rejoices every time a sinner repents and comes to Him.

When the women came to the tomb to anoint the body of Jesus early on the first day of the week, they saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. A severe earthquake had occurred, and the angel rolled away the stone. The guards shook for fear of him and became like dead men. Matthew 28:5 to 8 says, "The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. "He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying. "Go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, He is going ahead of you into Galilee, there you will see Him; behold, I have told you." And they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to report it to His disciples." Jesus conquered the grave, and we can rejoice in the promise that He gives to us that one day we will rise from the dead.

You may be going through a tough time right now. You may not have much to rejoice about or be thankful for. But even in our heartache, the Lord can bless us. James 1:2 to 4 says, "Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. (patience) And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing." You see your struggles may be the very thing that allows you to grow and become the person that God wants you to be and prepare you for eternity. Rejoice even in your trials. Like Paul, we can say: "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us" (Romans 8 and verse 18). If all we see is the suffering, we may miss what great things God has in store for us.

Christians find their joy not only in what the Lord has done in the past by forgiving their sins but also in the future. Paul spoke of "Rejoicing in hope" in Romans 12:12. We have a living hope in Christ that cannot be taken from us. 1 Peter 1:3 to 5 says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

Salvation and a home in heaven are certainly great reasons for joy. In fact, verses 6 to 9 say, "In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; and though you haven't seen Him, you love Him, and though you don't see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls."

Yes, Christians will suffer various trials and tests; but when Christians face trials, their faith sustains them. God sees the proof of their faith and blesses them for it. Though we've never seen Jesus, we love Him. Though we do not see Him now, we expect to see Him when He comes again. We rejoice with a joy inexpressible, because we know we have a place reserved in heaven for us. Just for us. Faithful Christians have their names written in heaven and an inheritance in heaven. And nothing, nothing can take away the joy that comes with a living hope.

Now God proved His love for us by sending Jesus to us, and Jesus proved His love for us by dying upon the cross. When we demonstrate our faith and love for Him, our faith becomes more precious than gold. Our faith will result in praise and glory and honor from our Father. One day the Lord will reward those who remain faithful. Paul proclaimed in 2 Timothy 4:6 to 8, "For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the

course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing." Do you believe? Do you love the Lord? Will you rejoice when the Lord comes again to receive His own? Will you love Him on that day?

Let's pray together. Father we're thankful for all the reasons to rejoice that You have given to us. Your love, Your bless, and the hope we have. And Father help us in every way to remain faithful. To grow in our faith and in our commitment to You. And to do Your will always. In Jesus name, Amen.

Let me repeat: everybody hungers for joy. We want a joy that never fades, a joy that lasts forever. There can be no greater joy than this, to know that we are forgiven, to know that we are walking in the truth, to know we are right with the living God, to know He hears our prayers, and to know that He watches over us, and that He has prepared an eternal home in heaven for us. Now lasting joy, which is so much better than temporary happiness can come only from Jesus Christ!

The more you share joy in Christ, the more you have. Paul wished everyone was a Christian, and so do we. We rejoice when we hear of people repenting and being baptized, when souls are forgiven by the Lord, or when prayers are answered. We rejoice when people become children of God, and we rejoice when saints are called home to be with Jesus. Indeed, the joy of the Lord is our strength (Nehemiah 8 verse 10).

Do you have the joy of the Lord in your heart? Are your sins forgiven? Are you at peace with God? If you have unresolved sin in your life, you're missing the joy that God wants for you. Give your heart and life to God. To become a Christian, believe in the Lord Jesus and His words with all your heart, repent of your sins, confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And when you're baptized God will wash away your sins (Acts 22:16). And after the Eunuch was baptized in Acts 8:38 to 39, he went on his way rejoicing and you can too!

Can I Repent?

It's common to hear people say, "Well, this is the way I am; and I can't change!" They assume people can't change their hearts or lives. Today we're asking, "Can I repent?"

The Word of God gives us hope! We don't have to be trapped in a life enslaved to sin. We can find freedom from sin and be born again with a new heart and a new spirit that serves the Lord with joy and peace. We don't have to live with guilt and fear of the Judgment; we can become children of God living holy and godly lives. And that's why we turn to Scripture that corrects us and trains us in righteousness. Thanks for taking time with us today. We'd love to hear from you and want to be a part of your life each week.

Many today feel trapped by their sins and they suffer the guilt and shame of knowing sin is present in their lives. A popular doctrine suggests that people are born in sin and incapable of doing anything good or changing their hearts and lives.

That God expects all people to repent is clear in Scripture. The Lord Jesus said in Luke 13:3, "I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish." Repentance is not optional; it's as necessary as faith! Paul told the pagan philosophers at Mars Hill in Acts 17:30 to 31, that "The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead." Repentance is required for all who wish to be saved. Faith is essential to salvation, but faith alone apart from repentance will not save. Being baptized is necessary to salvation, but baptism without repentance will not save us. We must repent.

Our reading today comes from Psalms 103 verses 8 to 14. And here David is expressing his great gratitude for the compassion and grace of God.

"The LORD is compassionate and gracious,
 Slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness.
 He will not always strive with us,
 Nor will He keep His anger forever.
 He has not dealt with us according to our sins,
 Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.
 For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
 So great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him.
 As far as the east is from the west,
 So far has He removed our transgressions from us.
 Just as a father has compassion on his children,
 So the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him.
 For He Himself knows our frame;
 He is mindful that we are but dust."

That's a reading from God's holy word. Let's pray together. Father we're thankful for Your compassion and grace and love for us. And that You want strive with us. Help us to be people who give ourselves fully and completely to doing Your will. In Jesus name, Amen.

I can think of no blessing so great as forgiveness and salvation. Sin leads to death, but the grace of God grants forgiveness to us. That grace was not cheap to God, and we should not cheapen it by presuming the grace of God will save us whether we repent or not. Grace is precious, but it demands response. God doesn't give us His grace to leave us where He found us. He forgives us by His grace, but

His grace leads us to something better. It leads us to life, to abundant life, to newness of life, and to eternal life.

Some people have become what George Barna calls "Don'ts." They don't believe, don't think we can know God, or don't care. Well, this is really not new; many people through the years have ignored God. 2 Peter 3:3 to 9 says, "Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, 'Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation.'" For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water.

"But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance."

We all find ourselves struggling with sin and needing God's grace and needing to change our hearts and lives. Repentance is something that we do, but we need the help of God to do it. God's word offers us grace. And that opens the door for us to change our hearts and lives. Titus 2:11 to 14 says, "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds." We can become different people, saved by grace, and living godly lives.

Can people repent? Well, the Bible everywhere assumes people can repent of their sins. Man does have free will. The Bible frequently speaks of "whosoever will." Revelation 22:17 says, "The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come.' And let the one who hears say, 'Come.' And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost." In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus clearly reveals two paths: "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it" (Matthew 7:13 to 14). We're choosing a way to life or a way to destruction by the paths we choose and whether we follow Jesus Christ. If we choose Christ, we can repent.

Romans 6:16 to 18 says, "Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, (that) you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness." Now here were slaves of sin who gave themselves from the heart to obedience to do specifically what the Lord teaches. Consequently, God freed them from sin; and they became slaves of righteousness. People can change. And don't let anyone say to you people cannot change.

Ezekiel 18:21 to 23 says, "But if the wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed and observes all My statutes and practices justice and righteousness, he shall surely live; he shall not die. 'All his transgressions which he has committed will not be remembered against him; because of his righteousness which he has practiced, he will live. 'Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked,' declares the Lord GOD, 'rather than that he should turn from his ways and live?'"

Jonah tells of the widespread repentance of a heathen people, who heard the word of God and reacted appropriately. Yes, even unbelievers can become believers and repent. Jonah 3 verses 3 to 10 says: So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, a three days' walk. And then Jonah began to go through the city one day's walk; and he cried out and said, "Yet forty days and Nineveh will be overthrown." Then the people of Nineveh believed in God; and they called a fast and put on sackcloth from the greatest to the least of them.

When the word reached the king of Nineveh, he arose from his throne, (he) laid aside his robe from him, (he) covered himself with sackcloth and sat on the ashes. He issued a proclamation and it said, "In Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let man, beast, herd, or flock taste a thing. Do not let them eat or drink water. "But both man and beast must be covered with sackcloth; and let men call on God earnestly that each may turn from his wicked way and from the violence which is in his hands. "Who knows, God may turn and relent and withdraw His burning anger so that we will not perish." When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared (that) He would bring upon them. And He did not do it.

Now if we can repent, how do we do it? Obviously, wanting to change is the first step to making a change. When people love the Lord, want to please Him, and wish they hadn't sinned, they start looking for the way to overcome the sins in their lives. When someone realizes they've sinned and realizes how their sins have caused the death of Jesus on the cross, it moves them to see how terrible sin really is.

When they take a long look at the cross and recognize the great price that Jesus paid for their sins, they begin to take sin seriously. When people realize how great a love Jesus showed in dying for their sins, they no longer think their sins are so pleasurable. Isaiah 53:5 to 6 reminds us, "But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him." Jesus bore the punishment for our sins, punishment that should have fallen on us. Love moves us to live for the Lord.

Romans 2 and verse 4 asks, "Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?" When people take the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience seriously, they repent! They don't presume they can go on committing sins. Romans 6:1 and 2 says, "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?"

When we hear the gospel, the story of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, it leads us to have the kind of faith and love that leads to a change of heart and life. Acts 26:18 says the Lord Jesus sent Paul to preach to the Gentiles, "to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me." Preaching is by nature persuasive, leading us to God and to salvation. James 1:21 reminds us, "Therefore lay aside all filthiness and (the) overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls."

Committing a sin and feeling like you have gotten away with it leads people to feel like they can practice that sin without fear of punishment. That is delusional. Ecclesiastes 8:11 to 13 says, "Because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed quickly, therefore the hearts of the sons of men among them are given fully to do evil. Although a sinner does evil a hundred times and may lengthen his life, still I know that it will be well for those who fear God, who fear Him openly. But it will not be well for the evil man and he will not lengthen his days like a shadow, because he does not fear God." Continuing in sin can lead people to love sin more than they love God. Loving God more than evil leads to repentance. What are you choosing?

One cannot sin against God repeatedly and get away with it. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 24:48 to 51, "But if that evil slave says in his heart, 'My master is not coming for a long time,' and begins to beat his fellow slaves and eat and drink with drunkards; the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour which he does not know, and will cut him in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." You don't have to die lost; you can turn your heart to the Lord.

Ephesians 6:10 to 18 says, "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

"Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take (up) the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication." God gives us seven pieces of armor that protect us from sin: truth, righteousness, the Gospel of peace, faith, the promise of salvation, the Word of God, and prayer. Take up God's armor!

Let's pray together. Father we're thankful that You provide for us the things necessary to fight against the devil. And against those who are evil. Help us to do what is right and to love the truth and to love You and to obey Your will. In Jesus name, Amen.

The apostle Paul asked in Romans 2:4 to 8, "Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance? But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to each person according to his deeds: to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation." My friend you're making a choice by your heart and life as to what your eternal destiny will be.

Following Christ demands that we place our faith in Him and in what He teaches. If you don't believe what He says, you show you don't really believe in Him. Following Christ demands repentance. When people fail to turn away from sin, hunger for righteousness, and turn to the Lord, they show they haven't followed Christ down the narrow path. Following Christ means confessing Him before others and not hiding your faith. Following Christ means repenting and being baptized into Christ (that immersed in water) for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2 and verse 38).

And when you're baptized God washes away your sins and causes you to be born again, giving you a new life. The old man of sin is dead, and you're a new person united with Christ (Romans 6:3 to 7). Perhaps you have obeyed the gospel but have strayed from God and the truth, repent and return to the Lord. Perhaps you've stopped worshiping at church, repent and return to the Lord. And today is the day to repent.