

“Yes” or “No”

Isn't He good? Isn't He satisfying? And all we receive from Him is overflowing, never ending, grace upon grace. Let's go to Him now to receive more grace. Father, we ask that as we open your word, that your spirit would do the impossible.

It's amazing, Father, that we can call you Father. And it's all because of what you've done. It's because you have adopted us. It's because your son was unashamed, was proud to call us brothers, bled and died in our stead. You have made us your palace for the spirit of Christ to dwell and to reign and to rule.

Oh, Lord, we are so secure, so loved, so satisfied when we have our spiritual wits about us. And so we ask now that you would do more than we could ask or imagine, that you would give us strength and power to believe your word and together with all the saints to comprehend the incomprehensible love of our King Jesus. We ask it in His name. Amen. Amen.

Well, we are in Matthew's Gospel. We're continuing our study in the Sermon on the Mount, the greatest sermon ever preached. It's a high point in Matthew's Gospel. It sets the standard in many ways for Matthew's Gospel. And we find ourselves in chapter five, verses 33 to 37.

Last night we were at a wedding, a gorgeous wedding. Drew and Grace, now Washburn, got married, and we celebrated with them, phenomenally glorifying to the Lord. And Marla James, one of our deaconesses, came up. We talked for a short while together, and she mentioned an article that I should read. Well, I got home that night, she sent it to me, and she was right.

I needed to read this article. And here she is making the front page of the sermon. So she was very wise to give me this article. It's titled How Can We Measure Spiritual Progress? Wow.

I haven't thought much about that. We can measure progress in many different ways and physical things. Whether it's a project you're working on and you could tell I'm about 75% done, or whether it's growth, you know, you're working out and building muscle. You can measure the results, everything. You could pretty much measure your progress through a process.

But how can we measure spiritual progress? How can we measure what we can't see visibly? How far along in the Lord am I? How can I measure that? Can anyone in here say, I'm about halfway there?

Perhaps someone might say I'm about 3/4 sanctified. We don't speak in these terms and it's funny to us because it is mysterious, isn't it? Well, what is the safest answer we could give? What's really the only correct answer that you and I can give about our spiritual progress? I, Sam Musgrave, am somewhere between justification, glorification, and that is an incredible place to be.

I am put right with a holy God, and I will dwell with the Holy God forever. And in the meantime, He's making me like Him.

Kind of blew my mind to read this wonderful quote that grace is nothing else but the beginning of glory.

Grace is glory begun, grace is glory be launched. And the rest of our life here on planet Earth is just a violent takeoff. It's bumpy, it's rocky. We're not sure we're going to survive it, but here we are. Dear Christian, you are somewhere between justification and glorification.

That positions our heart well, doesn't it? To receive the word of God gladly, to not come so focused on the things that we want Him to sanctify so much as to see Him. We wish to be sanctified, to resemble. I want to be like Him. I want to look like Him.

I want to love Him unhindered. I want to obey Him untethered. I want Christ.

Our hope is to hear Him speak and to see Him with the eyes of faith and to love and trust and obey Him.

Now we find it easy to think about ways that people have failed us, to think about rash decisions or thoughtless commitments that people have made and have broken. They sort of present themselves to our mind, whether it be parents or authorities or advisors or. Or leaders and politicians. We could think about the broken promises, but it's way more difficult for us to reflect and recount on our own rash decisions, on our own thoughtless commitments, such as I'll always be there for you, or maybe more simply, I'll be there this weekend, or I'll call you tomorrow, or I'll pay you next week, or maybe more commonly, I'll pray for you. We make a lot of commitments, we make a lot of vows, and we prove in many cases how relevant this text is for us today.

I want to even take a step back further, and I want to reveal why you this is even an issue, how dishonest we are by nature and by God's grace, He's transforming us. But I want you to think about this. How often do you find yourself saying to be honest, or if I'm being honest, or can I be honest, or in all honesty, what are we saying about all the other Times. I'm lying to you all the time. But right now, I'd like to be honest.

Have you ever said to God, God, if you fix this, if you solve this, I promise I will will.

Then we forget something comes up. I wonder, as you hear this today, does this seem insignificant to you?

You know, we tend to sort of relax into talking about the big, mega nasty sins that people really look down on and to take those very seriously. But. But does that make this seem insignificant? Because Jesus prioritizes it. So far in the Sermon on the Mount, you've got murder, adultery, your word.

I mean, before revenge, before hatred, before giving to the poor in prayer, before forgiveness, fasting, finances, before anxiety or hypocrisy. How often have we justified discontinuing a commitment or a resolution or relationship, a pledge or a fast, when the emotions just, eh.

You know. King Solomon, years before Christ, says, watch your steps, do not be hasty with your mouth or impulsive in your heart, for for God is in heaven, but you are on earth, so let your words be few. Better to not vow than to vow and not pay. And do not say that your vow was a mistake. Rather fear God.

Israel famously says, we will obey God. We'll obey everything that God has said on the mountain. And then they go and they worship a golden cow.

Jephthah, in His merriment and in His desire to win a battle, vows to sacrifice the first thing He sees out the door and His precious daughter runs to greet Him. Saul curses any soldier who eats before sunset, and His son Jonathan, ignorant of that curse, is nearly killed. Samson promises to share the secret of His strength with Delilah, and she betrays Him to the Philistines. Herod grants whatever a dancer wishes, even up to half His kingdom, and she demands the head of John the Baptist. Peter pledges loyalty even to prison and to death.

And then hours later, He thrice swears He doesn't even know the man. Ananias and Sapphira claim unnecessarily vow voluntarily to donate all the proceeds from their sold property and their struck debt.

No wonder the king says that hatred is murder, that lust is adultery, and that swearing or vows or oaths are evil. That sounds just like Satan.

Read with me Matthew 5:33, 37.

Again you have heard that the ancients were told, you shall not make false vows, but shall fulfill your vows to the Lord. But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet. Or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great king. Nor shall you make an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. But let your statement be yes, yes, or no.

No. Anything beyond these is of the evil one. This is the word of the Lord. Moses says, fulfill your vows. Messiah says, make no vows.

Can you just picture the jumping eyebrows? Can you picture the foreheads crinkled in confusion, mystified by what this man is saying atop this mountain? We've got two points today, very simple. Number one, the law of Moses demands we fulfill our vows. Verse 33.

Secondly, the law of Messiah demands we make no vows. Verses 34 to 37. Jesus says again the sequence that He's continued this pattern that He's continued. I know that you've heard that it was said, but I say unto you again, you have heard that the ancients were told, you shall not make false vows, but shall fulfill your vows to the Lord. He's quoting and summarizing the teaching of the law, the Torah.

This was spoken by God to the people long before it was written. But here we have it written down by the time of Christ. Leviticus 19, Numbers 30, Deuteronomy 23, which say, and I quote, you shall not swear falsely by my name so as to profane the name of your God. I am Yahweh. If a man makes a vow to Yahweh or swears an oath to bind himself with a binding obligation, He shall not violate His word.

You shall be careful and do just as you've voluntarily vowed. So do you hear what the law is commanding and what it's not commanding? What is the law of Moses commanding? Are you under obligation to make vows or to swear oaths? No.

But if you do by your own volition, voluntarily, you had better not break your promise. I want you to think about how seriously Jesus takes this. It's actually quite staggering to read what He said in Luke 16.

He who is faithful in a very little thing. Think, for example, the most casual commitment.

He who is faithful in a very little thing. Even the most casual commitment is faithful also in much. And He who is unrighteous in a very little thing, such as the most casual commitment is unrighteous also in much. Matthew 12. Jesus says, I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment.

For by your words, you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned. You say, I say a lot of things about myself. I say, I'm going to do this, or I'm gonna do that, or I did this and I did that. And Jesus says, listen, judgment day is gonna be hard enough if I just judge you based on what you said and what you actually did. That standard alone would destroy you.

Which tells us that we have a very serious problem on our hands. But you protest. You say, no, I've had good intentions. When I made that vow, when I made that promise,

when I swore that oath, I meant what I said. And Romans 12 comes along and says, no, you just think higher of yourself than you ought to.

If you recline into your intentions as a justification for your actions, you think way higher of yourself than you ought to. You might respond and say, but you don't see my heart. You don't know my heart. And Proverbs 21 says, Your way is only right in your own eyes.

The Lord weighs the heart, not you. You're deceived by your own heart. You don't see your heart, the Lord does.

So we have the law of Moses back behind Messiah saying, you shall not promise something if you are not certain that you're going to bend over backwards to fulfill it. You certainly should not make any vows that you do not mean, but you shall not break your vows. And Jesus comes, the new lawgiver, giving His new law and the new covenant. And He demands that we make no vows. Verses 34 to 37, Jesus says, but I say to you, I say to you, make no oath at all.

All you see, the law had allowed divorce, as Jesus talked about, but it never commands divorce. And the law of Moses allowed oaths, but never commands oaths. You see, it was delivered to a dead people. A people who were not spiritually animated by the spirit of Christ. That you and I now have.

People freshly rescued out of Egypt like a. Like a brand taken from the fire. And people that were immersed in deceit and lies and broken oaths. And so the law of Moses comes to them and says to this lying people, you are allowed to make oaths, to fence in and to border in, to hedge in your commitments and to prohibit you from breaking those commitments. But now Jesus speaks a new law to a new people.

Blood bought, spirit wrought, supernatural, new creatures indwelt by God himself. And He says, listen, you shouldn't even have to make any vows. You love the truth.

You're new. You're something totally new. You're a people like no other people that's ever walked the planet. James 1 says, in the exercise of His will, God brought us forth by the Word of Truth. Do you know why you love the Word of God?

Do you know why you love reading the Word of God? Do you know why you love hearing the Word of God preached? Do you know why you love singing the Word of God? Do you know why you love when the Word of God is brought into your memory suddenly as you're driving along the way? Do you know why you love the Word of God?

Because it brought you into existence.

Truth is our nature, our new nature. Ephesians 4 says that we grow up in Christ truthing in love. This is life. 1 Corinthians 13. Love rejoices with the truth.

But we're so used to empty exclamations. I swear, I promise. We mistake Jesus as relaxing the law here.

Get rid of the oaths, get rid of the vows, get rid of the swears. Let's just get rid of that. And we go, oh, sounds a little bit more lenient.

We misunderstand Him. If that's the case, what does our king command? Make no oath at all. Either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great king. What a picture that Jesus has just painted.

And it's laced with scripture. He's just invoking scripture. But you've got heaven. No, you can't swear by heaven. Heaven is God's throne, and there He is enthroned in heaven.

But I'll swear by the earth. And Jesus says, no, that's where He rests His feet. Well, I'll swear by the capital city of Jerusalem. And Jesus says, that's His capital. That's the city of the great King.

Well, where can I go to swear by something, to invoke something that will agree with me and testify with me that I'm telling the truth. And Jesus says, it's all God's.

You've got nowhere to go.

Stop this swearing business, this oath business. Now, let's think about this. What is an oath? What does it do?

It's essentially grabbing something and it's pulling it down with you. To say this agrees with me. Heaven knows that I'm telling the truth. Earth knows that I'm not lying. Jerusalem is here to rid you of any doubt as to what I'm saying.

May heaven, earth and Jerusalem testify I am speaking the truth. We don't realize this is pervasive in our culture. We were raised and reared in this kind of language. Do not look here at the original audience of Jesus word and think to yourself, ah, that was a superstitious ancient age. We've grown up since then.

Are you kidding me? I don't know about you, but I was raised listening to the Beach Boys.

They wrote, I may not always love you, but long as there are stars above you in heaven, you never need to doubt it. I will make you so sure about it. God only knows what I'd be without you. You hear the language, these oaths they manipulate, they obligate heaven and earth and Jerusalem. All that's within them know that I am telling you the truth.

So you and better believe me.

It says who? Heaven, earth and Jerusalem. Of course, now, as a child of the 90s, I witnessed a cinematic renaissance. Maybe some of you aren't aware of this, but the greatest films in history were made in the 1990s. Best moving pictures ever.

But as I watched these movies growing up, I was subjected to a common superstition. In many of these movies, I would find that children would cross their fingers and hide them behind their back to nullify the lies that they said. I didn't know that that's what crossing your fingers could do. That's a pretty neat trick, right? Very useful.

You mean that I can lie to my parents if I just take those two puppies and twist them behind my back? Yeah. Means you don't really mean what you're saying. That's exactly what's going on here. It says, religion in this sense is as childish as that superstition.

The leaders, so called, of the nation had made these loopholes for oaths. And so they said something along the lines of, you can swear by heaven or by earth or by Jerusalem, so long as you never swear to God, as you never swear by His name. If you swear to God, you have to tell the truth. But let's think of a couple things that are kind of like close to God, that if we swear by them, it's not binding. It just sounds really good.

It sounds really serious.

Later in Matthew 23, Jesus explicitly condemns this superstitious crossing of the fingers. He says, woe to you hypocrites. Woe to you blind fools. You say so stupidly that you can swear by the sanctuary, but. But not by the gold of the sanctuary.

Otherwise that's obligating. You can swear by the altar, but not by the sacrifice on the altar. That's obligating. You know, there was even one rabbi who said, you can swear by Jerusalem, but don't you dare swear toward Jerusalem. That's binding.

And Jesus says, this is outrageously ridiculous.

You're ravenous to find ways to lie, to deceive. Think about the things that David says I've put every false way I hate every false way I've put lying away. Give me grace, God, to get rid of all dishonesty, of all deceit, of all misleading.

That's what the man of God says.

Jesus quotes Isaiah 66 in Psalm 44, and He brings that upon this false, hollow religion of theirs. Thus says, the heaven is my throne and the earth is the footstool of my feet, for my hand made all these things. Thus all these things came into being. Here is what the king of the cosmos. I love this next line.

It's so pertinent for today's text. But to this one I will look. This is the one that gets my attention. This is the one that has my whole focus. Here's where I'm looking.

I'm looking at this person. To Him who doesn't say, scout's honor, who doesn't say, swear to God.

But this is the one to whom I will look, to Him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at my word.

Humble men don't invoke the throne of God or the footstool of His throne or. Or His capital city to manipulate people that they're telling the truth. Humble men say, here's the truth. You and I both know that we have a king to answer to.

I mean, it's as if Jesus is saying to them, this is what God says. Whoa there, tiger. Get your own universe, get your own heaven, get your own earth. Get your own Jerusalem, get your own capital city. I'm the king of everything in this universe.

Every word that you exhale is a vow before the great throne. There's no superstitious finger crossing before the one true God in my universe. Every breath is you take, every move you make, every bond you break.

What, I'll be watching you. And Jesus adds in verse 36. This really gets to the heart of the matter. This is what He's really aiming at. He says, nor shall you make an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair for white or black.

Ah, we see. Here it is. This is what He's getting at.

Heaven's not your heaven. Earth is not your earth. Jerusalem's not your Jerusalem. You're not the king of the universe. We already have one of those.

And your head is not even your head.

You cannot guarantee anything.

Who are you to swear by your head? You might say to yourself, aha, this is proof that Jesus didn't know about Rogaine. But this is a ridiculous response. The ancients had been dyeing their hair for 1500 years before Jesus spoke these words. His point is, you as a black headed young person cannot age yourself a day to be a older with white hair, and an old person with white hair cannot reverse time and make them any younger.

You are not sovereign, you are not God, you are not king. You cannot add a single cubit to your lifespan as He'll say in the next chapter. How can you swear something will happen? How can you vow that you will do this or that as if there's not a big billion trillion other variables that affect the outcome of your life? You are not the king, but praise God, there's one who is, and He's really good at it.

James 4 says, Come now, you who say today or tomorrow we will do this or that, you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. Have you ever thought about that? I don't know that I've sat down and really drilled it into my heart and mind. I actually have no idea what tomorrow is gonna look like because I have ical and I put all my events in Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday. I've got every day planned out, color coordinated between now and the end of the year.

And the word of God says to me, come on, come on, you don't know what life is going to be like tomorrow. I say, well, I'm going to do a little bit of this, a little bit of that. And He says, you don't know that.

You don't know if you're making it home tonight, buddy.

You are a vapor that rises for a moment, then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, and by saying He means, this is how you ought to think, this is how you ought to feel, this is how you ought to operate. This is how you ought to relate to God. Instead, you ought to say, if the Lord wills, if the Lord desires, if the Lord wants, if my king is so pleased, I'll live to see tomorrow, and I'll do this or that, and I'll do a little bit of stuff that I wasn't planning, and I'll do a little bit less of the stuff that I had planned to do. But I live before my king.

I am His slave. He is my king, He is my father, and He is good. But James says, you boast in your arrogance and all such boasting is evil. It's not just silly, it's not just foolish, it's Evil above all. James says in the final chapter of His book, above all, my brothers.

Above what? Above all. Above all. That's in James 1:4. Above all.

Of utmost importance, James, do not swear either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath, but let your yes be what? And let your no be so that you may not fall under judgment. You know, this is actually getting at another thing. It's not just about what we say. We should only speak the truth.

But in order for my yes to actually be yes, this requires integrity that not only do I speak the truth, but I need to do the thing I said I was gonna do and not do the thing I promised I wouldn't do. So this is speaking truth. This is acting according to truth. This requires the whole integrated man. You know, we can't sit around as Christians and complain that generation after generation of young people increasingly do not embrace a world of absolute truth, a world of moral relativism.

You know, we can blame the universities and the colleges, and they certainly do not help. That's true. But here's where this relativism emerges. They were raised in homes where dad and mom promised to do things and didn't do them, and promised punishments they didn't execute.

They saw marriages that vowed, I will love you forever. This is a commitment before God. And they saw them broken. They saw the love fade.

Moral relativism in our culture that doesn't believe in absolute truth begins in the home.

They saw relativism all day long.

Brothers and sisters, we listen. We at our best, we are going to fail miserably. But to whom does He look? To the one who is humble, is broken in their spirit, and who trembles at His word.

When you say yes, you better mean yes, and it better be yes. And when you say no, you better mean no, and it better be no. Because the world is watching. Your family's watching. The church is watching.

A lost world is watching. Where does James get this idea it's okay to plagiarize? Plagiarize Jesus, just as long as you're not writing a paper. You got to make sure you give Him credit there. But you can copy Jesus all day long.

He loves to be plagiarized. Verse 37. Jesus says, Let your statement be yes, yes, or no. No. Anything beyond these is of the evil one.

Brothers and sisters, we utterly contradict ourselves if we walk into this room together and we pray together, deliver us from the evil one. And then we spend our life exaggerating hyperboles, superlatives.

I just even think I'm convicted. About my response to you in conversation, Sam, Will we see you there tomorrow? Absolutely. Whoa. We should start responding to one another that way.

That'd be helpful, wouldn't it? Absolutely. Whoa. Hey. Whoa.

That's a little strong. Can you say absolutely?

We're just people of exaggeration. And then we call it sweet things like stretching the truth. The truth cannot be stretched. The truth is not laffy taffy, okay? The truth is the truth.

And the second that you stretch it, it becomes non truth. It becomes untrue. If the whole world lies in the power of the evil one, are they going to be saved? Are they going to be won by. By superlatives or by a beautiful, sweet, simple yes or no?

The truth in its simplicity is maximally beautiful.

That's the nature of truth. Anything more than the truth or less than the truth is not truth. It just has to be the truth. Yes or no. Why would they believe?

After spending all day in the office with us and we're blurring the lines, we're cutting corners. And where there's a hard no, we say, well, maybe. And where there's a hard yes, we say, I don't know. And then we come and we say, Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. And they say, says who?

Why should I believe you?

I mean, why wouldn't they respond like their father the devil? And a question, did God really say, brothers and sisters, we want to live in such a way, born of the word of truth, loving the truth, rejoicing with the truth, growing up in Christ, truthing in love, we want to be able to say, whenever they ask, did God really say? We say, yes, He did. And they say, I believe you. I hate it maybe, but I believe you.

And when they bring up falsehoods and they say, did God say this? We say, no, He did not. And they say, I believe you. I hate that. I hate that you're so intolerant.

But I believe you. I have no reason to doubt you.

You see, Christ, what He's putting forward us before us is a vision that is beautiful. A bride that is lovely, decorated and dazzling. Truth.

You think about John the Baptist. They send this delegation out to Him and they question Him. He knows what they've come to question Him about. And they question Him. Who are you?

He says, I am not the Christ. Are you Elijah? No. Are you the prophet? No.

Who are you? Read Isaiah 40. I mean, that is a gorgeous portrait of the faithful man or woman. You know, you and I, as Americans, we would watch that Conversation. We'd go, gosh, John the Baptist is kind of rude.

He spoke the truth. We want to flower it up. And where there are many words, sin is not absent. With every word we choose to annex that sentence, we increase the likelihood of. Of inaccuracy and worse, sin, adding to yes and subtracting from no.

Let God be proven true by our lives. Let every man be proven a liar. Speak plainly. Speak plainly. Can you imagine.

Listen, God is sovereign. If we thought that it was up to the way that we speak the eternal faith of souls, we would drive ourselves mad. I'm not suggesting that, but can you imagine someone justifying their refusal to bow the knee to King Jesus in faith and love because the only gospel witness they've ever heard is from you, and you spend all your time exaggerating. I'm not believing them. I'm not believing that the gospel is an exaggeration.

That would break my heart.

You know, we saw Drew and Grace get married yesterday. Even there, the Christian vow is what I do. Beautiful. Speaking of which, by the way, put under oath by the living God. You remember, Jesus is arrested, He's betrayed, He's put through the kangaroo court.

It's a wicked. Under guise of night, just total mistrial, total injustice. And yet they do it. And they're beating Him, they're mocking Him. They are.

They are questioning Him, interrogating Him. And He is totally silent. He does not respond to them at all. But when that wicked high priest says to Him, I adjure you, I put you under oath by the living God. Tell us whether you are the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Tell us whether you are the King of the second Psalm. Tell us there. When put under oath by His authorities, Jesus speaks and He says, you said so. Still He's modest in His speech. Still He says the minimal amount.

He doesn't go on and loquaciously just begin to prove everything. He. He just says, you yourself have said it. That's how we behave as Christians. We're not Anabaptists, we're not Quakers who say, you can't make me swear, you can't make me vow.

If we're put under the court of law, we vow. If we're asked by an officiant in a wedding, do you vow? I do. But we don't go around voluntarily saying, you, please believe me. I swear.

I promise. We're just broadcasting that we're practicing perjurers, that we're liars, that you can't trust me the rest of the time. And this is unbecoming of God's people.

The truth is. Yes or no? Satan lurks between and beyond. Yes or no? So I want you to think about this as we close.

Think about how beautiful yes and no is. Think of how beautiful the truth is. Is. Someone asks, is there grace in Christ for a sinner like me? And we say yes.

Will Christ ever cast me out if I come to Him? No. Can it possibly be? Yes. Should I ever doubt it?

No. How can you be so sure?

Because God, who cannot lie, has sworn that it is so.

Oh, yes. A God who cannot lie does what He does not have to do. He who controls the universe. He who could swear by anything, swears by nothing because nothing's greater than Himself. Hebrews 6.

When God made the promise, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by himself. I love this. He cannot lie. We should believe if He promises something. If He says something, He doesn't even promise it.

If He says it, it's true. We trust it. That's the end of the God goes further. He swears by himself. Why Desiring even more.

Yeah, I want to. This is the gospel, folks. Christian. You need to hear this person. If you have been outside of Christ, you need to hear this right now.

This is the heart of your God, who's not trigger happy. He's not looking to throw you into hell. He takes no delight in the death of the wicked. Here's the God that says, I crucified my Son. And He was crucified voluntarily to erase all your sins.

I said it. It's true. But in case you doubt it, I am going to seal it with an oath. I swear that it happened. He swears it by an oath desiring even more to show the heirs of the promise, the unchangeableness of.

Of His plan. God guaranteed it by an oath. So that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who've taken refuge in King Jesus have strong comfort to grab the hope before us. He says, I can't lie. And I tell you I crucified my Son for you.

That's enough. We believe it. He says, no, no, no, no. I. I desire that you be even more sure.

I swear that I did that.

We say two unchangeable things. You are unable to lie in either of them, and you gave us both. So I want you to see that He swears not because He lacks faithfulness, but because we lack faith. He loves us. I want you to look at Christ crucified and I want you to hear your Father say, I promise you He died for all your sins.

And then I want you to see Christ risen from the grave. And I want you to hear the Father say, I swear it.

I even I am He who blots out your sins. And I remember them. No, no more. And I do that for my own sake. Oh, I love God's wills and shalls.

All He will and will not do. He cannot love me more, He cannot love me less. All His promises are true.

He swears that they're true.

And He swears, out of the bounty of His incredible love, I will never leave you or forsake you. I will never cast you out. I swear it. What a good God. Let's go to Him now.

Father. Oh Father who does not lie, Father who has sworn and vowed in the blood of Christ. We are your children. Forgive us, Lord, for the great unkindness that we commit against you to doubt that you love us. Oh Father, help us search out that one thing in us which most causes us to doubt your love and to wage all our forces against it.

We ask, O Lord, that you would now move in our hearts with resolve to trust you and to obey you. We ask it in Jesus name, Amen.