

Death and Glory

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[0 : 00] Yesterday I had a chance to attend a home-going service that was the most convicting and encouraging service I've been in a long time as a funeral. It was Pastor Billy McKillop's mother's funeral and they had two of them, one in South Florida where I was yesterday, so her church there could celebrate her life.

Brothers and sisters, that's the way to go out. That's the way a Christian goes out. Her testimony, she was a retired missionary who never retired. No one told her what retirement meant, so I guessed 101, 102 years old and she went to the glory.

So pray for the McKillop family as they are celebrating and yet still grieving her great loss. We turn now to John chapter 12 verses 20 to 26. This will be in two parts. Let's pray. Father, thank you.

We've sung some very challenging words that you would be our treasure, our priority, and our everything. Often we sing higher than our heads. So it's a prayer. We are praying as we have sung that you would make it real and true in our hearts and lives.

Lord, show us how to live this way. Lord, show us how to live this way. Because you are everything. To us, you are everything. Father, Son, Holy Spirit, you are everything. Lord Jesus, you are our priority. Teach us to seek first the kingdom of heaven.

Lord, Lord, seek first the kingdom of heaven. Seek first the kingdom of heaven. Lord, your glory as king. Forgive us for what we have failed. But don't leave us like this. Do a work. Get glory. Bear fruit. Do it all in us and through us. For we are yours.

[2 : 21] Lord, Lord, you decided that you decided that a long time ago. Thank you. Thank you for your love and mercy. May your word find us now. May your word show us the glory of Jesus. May your word reprove us, rebuke us, encourage us, instruct us. May your word do that holy surgery that convicts and leads us in righteousness.

And leads us in righteousness. Show us Jesus in your word. Show us our own hearts. Use your unworthy servant as you have been working on him. Oh, Lord, may your word continue to find him too.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you for Mom McKillop and the legacy of righteousness you left through her. May the McKillop family be encouraged and strengthened. May grandchildren and great-grands come to Jesus. May the word that Billy's brother preached yesterday find good soil. Amen. May we all remember that we must pass this way. We too must return ashes to ashes and dust to dust. May we live like we know that. And may we live for you. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. John chapter 12, verses 20 to 26. Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, Sir, we wish to see Jesus. Philip went and told Andrew. Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.

[4 : 18] And Jesus answered them, The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone.

But if it dies, it bears much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it. And whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

If anyone serves me, he must follow me. And where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

Wow. That is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Please be seated. Thank you, praise team us again. Thank you. Thank you, deacons, for leading us in giving this morning.

Okay, I'm going to geek out. I'm sorry. It just fits, y'all. I'm going to geek out. So if you've never seen any of the Lord of the Rings movies, I'm sorry.

[5 : 34] I'm telling you now, I'm sorry. But many of you have read the books. And I know some of you have seen the movie. And I hope this helps because it's such a good scene.

It's the two towers, y'all. The two towers. And keep in mind, the reason I refer to the Lord of the Rings from time to time, because it was written by J.R.R. Tolkien, who was a Roman Catholic and committed Christian, actually an associate of C.S. Lewis.

And Tolkien's writings are a picture of the reality of the kingdom of God. You can't read those books without seeing images of Christ and the reality.

Remember the ring. The ring. Why? It was sin. It corrupts. Gollum is corrupted and changed because of his desire for the ring of power.

We who desire power end up corrupting ourselves. Sin does that. Okay? And so all throughout the books, there's this wonderful picture of the kingdom of God.

[6 : 44] My friend for Reichen wrote a book on the subject about Middle Earth, so read it if you get a chance. Anyway, here's what's happening in this scene. It's at the end of the two towers. The heroes are trapped.

Okay? They're in something called Helm's Deep, which is their final last stand. It was a keep, a garrison, a place where the people of Rohan could run when they were in danger.

They would go to Helm's Deep. Helm's Deep had never been defeated, had never been captured.

So they're in Helm's Deep. And the forces of darkness, the orcs and the orokai, these are creatures that were made not by the true gods, but made by a false god.

And they were creatures and they were corrupt. They were, ooh, idiots and flesh-eating monster kind of people. Okay? And they had overwhelmed the keep.

They had overwhelmed it because there were so many of them. And they didn't mind dying. They would kill each other to try to kill the heroes who were, the humans who were there.

[7 : 56] King Theoden, who's the king of Rohan, is lamenting. He watches as his people are dropping like flies. The women and children are trapped in the deep. And he sees no way out.

And he says at one point, what can men do against such reckless hate? He was lamenting. He knew they were dead. There was no way out.

But Aragorn, the ranger and the future king, on top of Christ too, comes to King Theoden and tells him, we must charge. Ride out to meet them, he says.

Ride out. Ride out. Now, he knows. This is probably a death sentence. They're hoping to buy time for the women and children to sneak out through the tunnels and escape.

But they know even that probably won't last. But they got to make this one last chance. Then Aragorn remembers that Gandalf the White, another type of Christ, is promised that he would come.

[8 : 57] He would come with reinforcements at the light of the third day, I think. I think it was the third day. And so he knows it's the third day. He's hoping in his heart that Gandalf will come, that as they ride out to certain death, he's hoping that they'll show up in his mind and heart.

But he's got to convince Theoden. He's got to convince the king to ride out with him. And so he gives him what I call a rah-rah man's testosterone speech.

Let us ride out to meet them. And Theoden, he begins to warm to the idea. You see, the king wants to make a good end.

He wants his life to matter. He wants to die saving his people, at least buying them time. He's their king after all. He loves them. And he's watched them die.

And his heart's broken. And he's going to... So he looks at Aragorn in the eye. He looks at him and says... He almost asked the question...

[10 : 04] For death and glory? Yes. Yes. Fell deeds await.

Now for wrath. Now for ruin. And a red dawn. He warms up to the idea. And now let the horn of Calhamahan shine once again in the deep.

And they're ready to charge out and meet the orcs and the orakai, even though they know it's sudden death. For death and for glory.

Jesus comes. Lord, it reads this fiction. Based upon some truths, but it's fiction.

Jesus... Back up. The eternal second person of the Trinity, the Son, takes on human nature and we call him Jesus.

[11 : 08] Jesus... The God-man comes as king of an eternal kingdom, breaking forth in new power upon the earth.

Sin and the forces of darkness have killed many. But this king comes. And he... And he...

Must die. He knows it. He's come for that purpose. To die. Because he knows that in his death is death and glory.

He has come for this purpose. He... And in doing so, he gives us this great principle of kingdom living. It is the opposite of what the world believes and lives.

Success, blessing in his kingdom comes to those who also give themselves for death and glory.

[12:12] That's our calling. But what kind of death? And what kind of glory are we talking about? Let's learn from Jesus.

The triumphal entry we looked at last week. The king has entered into Jerusalem. This is, again, Palm Sunday. It's the last time he's going to enter through those gates in this life.

The crowds welcomed him. And what we found out was he also... But then he wept over the city. As the crowds are singing and rejoicing.

Hosanna! Save now! Hosanna to the son of David! Save us! Save us! Do it! Do it! As the crowds are chanting and crying out.

He's weeping over the city because he knows they're going to reject him. And ultimately, God's blessing. Because they want a different kind of king.

[13:18] They want a different kind of life. He knows this will lead to their destruction once again. But in all of this, you see, Jesus is following a divine purpose.

And even a divine script. He's right on time. Point thing... First point I want you to notice. Jesus seized his hour for death and glory.

Those first verses here. Those first three verses. 20 to 21. 20 to 23 or so. 24 verses.

He seized his hour. You see, what happens here is notice that there's some Greeks that show up. I mean, what? Greeks? I mean, we're talking about Jesus going into Jerusalem.

And John wants to tell us about some Greeks. Greeks basically saying Gentiles. Non-Jews. They show up to this amazing time of Passover.

[14:22] This great Jewish celebration. People, Jews from all over the empire are coming there to celebrate their deliverance years ago through Moses.

And these guys have a... These Greeks have a purpose. They want to see Jesus. Are they looky-loos? Jews? I don't know.

They could have been... They were likely God-fearers or proselytes to Judaism. God-fearers were Gentiles who worshiped the God of the Jews but didn't get circumcised and proselytes went all the way.

You see, there were many Gentiles who admired the Jewish faith in the Roman Empire. Jewish faith in one God and the moral values that came from that faith. They admired that because it was better than what they had.

It was better than what their culture taught. All the multiplicity of gods and the immoral lifestyle of the Roman Empire. These people admired the Jewish faith.

[15:33] But there was a problem. Jews and Gentiles didn't get along very well. And many Jews probably didn't even care for the God-fearers or the proselytes either.

But they were still not Jews in their minds. So they approached Philip. They don't know if Jesus was going to welcome them because he's a Jew. So they go to Philip.

Philip has a Greek name. And he lived in Bethsaida. And so that was a Gentile area of influence. So they're hoping he might be a little bit more sympathetic. So they go to him.

And Philip says, kind of like some folk when people come in the church door and they don't look like our kind of people.

And they want to come in and some folk will go, one second. Philip does a one second. And he goes and finds Andrew.

[16:36] Why Andrew? Andrew's one of the first disciples. He knew Jesus very well. So he goes to Andrew. And Andrew says, he said, Drew, come here, man. Don't fuck when I see Jesus. You think that's okay? Andrew being much sure than Philip says, let's take him to Jesus.

Let's go to Jesus and talk about him. I want to be sure. Before we take him, I want to be sure. And so Philip and Andrew go to Jesus. And when Jesus hears their request, it confirms what he already knew.

And he says, the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. It's finally here. It triggers. This is it.

This is it. Remember, all throughout the Gospel of John, chapter 2, chapter 7, chapter 8, John kept telling us, Jesus' hour had not yet come.

Remember seeing that several times? His hour had not yet come. Two of those times is in reference to the Jewish leaders not being able to arrest Jesus because his hour had not yet come. [17:50] But now the hour has come. The signal has been given. Then they will be allowed to lay ungodly hands on the Lord of glory.

He will be arrested now. At the end of this week, he will be arrested and he will be put to death. These Greeks are seeking Jesus because Jesus is seeking them.

They don't know it. But that's what's happening. What is that hour?

Okay, we already know, but let's humor me here. It's the hour, he says, when he will be glorified. To be glorified means to praise, to magnify, to celebrate.

It's to cause the dignity and worth of a person or thing to be manifest, to be revealed, and to be acknowledged.

[18:59] Jesus is saying, he's embracing or seizing his destiny. He's about to be seen for who he truly is.

He's about to be met. His glory, who he is as the eternal son of God is about to be made clear. Who he is as he who has been sent by the Father is about to be seen in a very dramatic way.

The cross. The hour of his glory is the cross. The place of torture, shame, and agonizing death is the throne upon which the glory of the king of kings is revealed.

It's like when Jesus goes up on the cross, he is reigning from there. He had predicted it.

In John chapter 8, verse 28, When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he. And then I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me.

[20:11] Then you will know. When I go up on the cross, then all of the world will know. It reminds me of the book of Ezekiel. Because all throughout Ezekiel's prophecies, God promised to act.

God promises to do something, to save and to bless his people. And he kept saying these haunting words to Ezekiel that Ezekiel wrote down. If you read the book, you'll see it.

God kept saying, after I do this, then you will know that I am the Lord. And it's capital, all caps.

Then you will know that I am Yahweh. Then you will know that I am the I am that I am. Then you will know that there are no other gods besides me. Then you will know.

Jesus says, when he's up on the cross, then you will know. Then you will see.

[21:13] When he's being crucified, you remember the story, an earthquake took place. He made those powerful statements from the cross that we study every Good Friday. Including things like, Father, into thy hands I give my spirit.

And of course, his final word, *testelestai*. It is finished. But there was another natural phenomenon that took place at the cross. Do you remember?

Who remembers? What is it? Say it again? Speak loud. You say darkness? The curse. The curse. Yes, curse.

But a natural phenomenon. Curtain was torn. Curtain, that's right. Curtain. And what else? Dark. Somebody said dark. Remember, an eclipse took place. Don't you remember? For hours, there was darkness over the earth.

Don't you? The Romans worshiped Saul, S-O-L, the sun. When Jesus, when the sun eclipsed as the Lord of glory lay dying and the earth shook and Jesus spoke words from the cross that were amazing.

[22:26] Matthew 27, 54. When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe and said, truly this was the Son of God.

Then you will know. What do you see? Then you will know the cross. Jesus himself will say when he sends Judas out to betray him.

Jesus sent Judas out. He knew Judas was going to betray him the moment he called him as a disciple. He knew it. And at that moment in the upper room, just before his arrest, he sends out Judas.

And in John 13, 31 and 32, this won't be on the screen, so listen. When he had gone out, Jesus said, now is the Son of Man glorified.

And God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and glorify him at once.

[23:39] Glorify him at once. Oh. The cross is glory. It's the glory of God in Jesus.

It's Jesus being magnified and exalted and lifted up so that all the earth can know, all of history now can know, that he is the Son of God.

Sent by the Father to give us life. Jesus, the hour, he's seizing the hour for death and for glory because that is the way.

How does Jesus' death affect you? What do you see when you look at the cross? Does it fill you with awe and worship?

Or has it become boring? Has it become only like the pretty crosses many wear as jewelry around their necks, a fashion symbol, meaning nothing really?

[24 : 51] When you look at the cross, do you see Christ's death and glory? Do you see it?

Do you see him? He sees this moment so that you who trust in him might be able to seize moments, your moments, for death and glory.

He embraced the cross this way for a reason. And that's the next point.

Jesus saw success in his death and glory. See, verse 24, this wonderful little parable.

Truly, truly, I say to you, verily, verily, truly, truly, amen, amen, is how it really reads. Amen, amen, he says. Get this, people. He's saying, y'all need to get this.

[25 : 50] Don't miss this. Always note those truly, truly statements, okay? I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls unto the earth and dies, it remains alone.

But if it dies, it bears forth much fruit. Death is the great fear of humanity.

It's the final enemy to be conquered by Christ's resurrection. 1 Corinthians 15, 26 reminds us the last enemy to be destroyed is death. Those who have no hope in Christ's work believe all kinds of different things about death.

You ever hear people talk about death who don't know Jesus? It's heartbreaking. Some believe it's just nothingness. Atheists believe it's just nothingness.

They'll tell you all the time, all this religion, faith stuff, it's just nothing. When you die is over and done with, goodbye. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust, goodbye to you.

[27 : 01] But to others, it's like the Prince Rogers Nelson song. We all call him just Prince. He had a song called Let's Go Crazy.

Anybody know Let's Go Crazy? The afterworld. A place of never-ending happiness. We're all excited.

Don't know why. I don't know why. Maybe it's because we're all going to die. When we do, what's it all for? Better live now before the Grim Reaper comes knocking on your door.

Let's go crazy. Let's get nuts. Let's look for the purple banana. Until they put us in the truck. Let's go.

I think the truck, I think he meant by that the hearse. I'm no expert on Prince, but that's just my thought. Amazing guitarist, though.

[28 : 05] Well, it was. You see, that's how some people, that's how many people think about death. They think they're hoping for some afterworld, some place of never-ending happiness.

And Prince even told them, when you go see that doctor in Hollywood, doctor, everything's going to be all right. You know? They want to go to that doctor. And they want people to tell them, it's all going to be all right.

But they have no clue. It's all wishful thinking. Jesus, our Lord, saw his death as a seed.

A seed. And I'm no expert on biology and seedology. So, some of you who are, you can correct me later. But seeds, I think, are useless until you put them in the ground along with water and proper temps.

Otherwise, they're useless. You can put seeds in your hand all day and walk around with them and nothing's going to grow. You can throw them out there on the concrete. Nothing's going to grow. Seeds are useless until once they get in the soil and proper moisture, water is put in them, they begin to swell.

[29 : 22] And that outer hard shell of the seed begins to break down. See? It breaks down. And then the life begins to shoot through and push through the soil. It's amazing how strong those little plants can be.

Pushing through the soil. That's not easy. But the seed's got to break down. It's got to die, as it were, so that the plant can grow and live. As long as the seed lives, no life comes.

The seed fulfills its purpose by dying that life may come. Years ago, the pastor, Dr. Charles Stanley, now gone to glory, preached a series of messages.

I was a teenager. I was a new believer. Must have been around 18 at the time, maybe 19. I remember listening to Charles Stanley preach a series on this passage, actually, based upon this passage.

It was called Brokenness, the Way to Blessing. He saw suffering. He saw suffering. He saw suffering. That is, the breaking down of the seed's shell.

[30 : 32] Something ordained by God for our lives as God's way of bringing us to the end of our own strength. So that we learn to rely on him and live for his will and not our own.

Brokenness. The seed must be broken. The seed, Jesus says, the seed must die. And when the seed begins to die and the brokenness takes place, we find new faith and hope leading to fruitful service for Jesus.

This is what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 1, 8 and 9. Is that up there? I don't know if it's going to be up there or not. It's one of my favorite passages now. Paul is talking to the Corinthians, a church that had turned against him because they had gotten super apostles that come and turned the church against Paul.

And so Paul is writing one of his most personal and passionate letters. His heart's broken for his people. And he's telling them about his life. He says, for we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of, listen, of the affliction we experienced in Asia.

For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself.

[32 : 02] Indeed, we felt that we have received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves, but on God who raises the dead.

Did you catch it? He says, listen, I went through crazy hardship in Asia. We call that place Turkey now. We don't even know what it was that actually happened.

We have suspicions, but we're not sure. Whatever it was, Paul thought he was going to die. He thought it was over. The afflictions. He despaired of life. He thought it was it.

This is an apostle talking, okay? This is the man of God. One of the greatest of the apostles, in my opinion, certainly. And he's talking like this. The affliction, the pain, the suffering, the trial that he was going through was mammoth.

And he says, behold it. God was at work. This happened. This is an apostle talking.

[33 : 09] So that I might learn not to rely on myself. Paul, rely on yourself. He's human. This happened.

To make us. He says, but this happened to make us. I love that phrase, make us. God sometimes has to make us grow up a little bit.

Make us rely not on ourselves. Bring you to the end of yourself, to despair. But then to rely on God. Watch this. Who's able to, who raises the dead.

He thought he was going to die. But then he realized, but God raises the dead. He thought this trial was going to be the end of him. He thought this was it. But God, he said, but I remembered. God, show me.

He's the one that raises dead folk. Be encouraged, he said. He said, whoa. That set him free. That's what Jesus is talking about. That broken, the seed must die.

[34 : 14] God is working on killing you. We're going to talk more about that next week. I'm sorry. I got to save that for next week because we don't, you don't want to preach an hour.

I know. Listen. Here's what we do today. Stanley called it brokenness.

And you've heard that phrase, brokenness, in the Christian sphere, probably, maybe, if you've been around for a while. You've heard people talk about being broken. God is breaking me.

But today, when we speak of brokenness, it becomes a time of sulking in our pain. Licking our wounds.

Not in order to be fruitful, but in order to run away. To withdraw. To really, and many times, pull attention to ourselves.

[35 : 11] Sometimes we call it self-care. And while there are legitimate times when God calls you to come to be alone with him for true self-care. Self-care is necessarily not evil, necessarily.

There are legitimate times for that. Especially to go along with God for fasting and prayer. So he can work on you. But then when he works on you, he sends you back into the fight.

Now, he may send you back with a limp. Come on, Jacobs. He may wrestle with you for a while.

And give you a little limp to remember that you were in a fight with the living God. But you're going back into the fight. It's not for you to withdraw and stay alone and stay holed up and run away.

No, no, no. His way of breaking down that shell around your heart. That shell around your life.
[36 : 15] So that you learn to rely on him and not on yourself. That's a good thing. It's difficult, but it's a good thing.

Jesus' death will bring great fruit. Great success. The seed must die.

But it's not the end. The death of the seed is fruit for life.

What he's doing in you is death to glory. That you may be fruitful.

That you may serve. That you may serve. That's fruit. That's the fruit. It's character and service. It's service in character.

[37 : 23] Or character in service. It's fruit. It's not just so you can... I can... Kevin Smith. Because, you know, I get... You know, I'm like, just leave me alone. Don't...

Disc. I'm going to play disc golf. Leave me alone. That's not what he's doing for this. I got... No. Then you can work in Kevin and begin to show Kevin where he's been relying on himself more than relying on Jesus.

When you can begin to show Kevin, well, you know, maybe you were wronged. But that doesn't mean you're all right either. Or maybe, Kevin, you the problem.

You blame everybody else. Blame shifting man that you are. But you the problem. I need those moments. Don't you? Yes, you do. I'll help. Let me help you. Take it by faith.

You need those moments. Trust me. Healing is not found in isolation. It's found in community service as you go before God and die so that you might reveal his glory.

[38 : 32] I'm trying not to get ahead of myself. So, yes, Jesus' death will bring great fruit, great success. It's the very thing the Pharisees were worried about. It's the very thing.

You remember, Lauren? It's the very thing they were complaining about. Verse 19. Verse 19. Look. When he came into Jerusalem, they said in verse 19, look, the world has gone after him.

The very thing. What they saw was nothing compared to what was coming. The cross is not the end of Jesus or his mission. It is the goal. It is the method.

If the force of their darkness knew this, they would not have crucified the Lord of life. Paul says it.

The cross is God's wisdom to glorify his son and save his people.

First Corinthians 2, 7 and 8. But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age understood this.

[39 : 33] For if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. They wouldn't have done it. John Piper is eloquent here.

I gotta tell you. I gotta give it to you. He talks about the fact that sin, evil, and Satan committed suicide when they killed Jesus. Come on, somebody.

Sin, evil, and Satan committed suicide when they killed Jesus. Let me give you, Piper. Here, this is good. I want you to hear this. God did not just overcome evil at the cross.

He made evil serve the overcoming of evil. He made evil commit suicide in doing its worst evil. In the death of Christ, the powers of darkness did their best to destroy the glory of the Son of God.

But precisely in putting Christ to death, they put his glory on display. The very glory they aimed to destroy. The apex of evil achieved the apex of the glory of Christ, the glory of grace.

[40 : 44] Ah! Wow! The greatest comeback in history. They thought, Jesus says, this is the hour for me to be glorified.

He's seizing this moment. He's going to the cross. And he's seizing, and this is the moment. And the forces of darkness are, get their knives out.

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha. He will say again in John 12, 32, and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.

Ha, ha, ha. That's crazy. The Romans thought that was foolishness. The Greeks thought it was blasphemy. I mean, the Romans thought, and the Jews thought it was blasphemy.

And yet, it was the wisdom of God. The cross. It was the glory of God. The cross. That place of torture and shame and death.

[41 : 52] The seed had to die. And when the seed died, it bare forth much fruit. All people would be drawn to Jesus through that implement of death, torture, and shame.

And that hope would not be found in doing better anymore. Hope would not be found in getting more education. Hope would not be found in governmental programs.

Or as Arnold Schwarzenegger in his new book says, hope would not be found in being useful. All those say we can save ourselves.

We don't need help. No, the cross says hope is found in a person. And that person is Jesus of Nazareth, the eternal son of God.

Not his example. Dr. Boyce pointed this out. It's not his example that saves you. Be like Jesus. I'm going to speak French now.

[42 : 59] Good luck. There's no hope in being like Jesus. You and I can't be one-tenth. We fail. If the gospel is be like Jesus, we're dead.

If you have to live up to Jesus' example in order to be saved, you're doomed. It is faith in his death on the cross, in your place, a sinner, and his resurrection that saves you.

Trusting your life and what he did alone saves. And that message was set free into history. The seed died, but the seed bore fruit.

It is the great message, the glorious message of the gospel that God came to save us, that God didn't cause to save ourselves, that God didn't leave us to ourselves, that God had mercy and love and kindness and pity upon us, that he came to make us his children.

He did what we could not do and didn't even really want to do. glory to God toward his message of gospel grace and you are the fruit.

[44 : 17] Listen, you are that fruit, that fruit that he talked about. Look at yourselves. You are that fruit and more. He's not done yet. Amen.

For he says that he is the vine and you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit for apart from me you can do nothing.

He's not done bearing fruit. Derek, he wants to bear fruit through you. He ain't done and you ain't done. He wants to bear fruit through you.

Janet, he wants to bear fruit. Come on, keep living. Phil, he wants to bear fruit through you. You can't do it.

He's the vine. Not you. He's the vine. You're just a branch. Your job, what's the branch's job? Stay there. Now, since we're human beings and not plants, this is, this is something we have to think about.

[45 : 19] We got to remember because the stuff he puts us through is that we might learn not to rely on ourselves but on the vine who gives life and also raises the dead.

You ain't got to run. You ain't got to go into a hole. Yes, you're suffering. I'm going to come, I got, stay, let me not get there yet. This is success, y'all.

This is what success is in the kingdom of God. Jesus sets us free to define success not by what we're able to work so hard to make happen but by what he does in us as we rely on him, know him, and surrender to him.

Branch, branch, branch, trust divine. Amen. So how are you defining success, huh?

What does it really look like? Let me ask you a question. Does it look anything like death and glory?

Parents, how are you defining success for your children?

[46 : 33] How are you telling them what success means? How are you showing them what success means? Anything to do with death?

We're going to talk more about that so just hang on from Lord willing next week. Does it look anything, just think about Jesus. Does he die? Does it look anything like death and then glory?

Father, have mercy upon us. we don't want to die in any way.

We don't want to die physically, certainly, and death is an enemy. And we certainly don't want to die the way Jesus is calling us to die, to self.

Have mercy. help us to see death is the way to glory. Help us to see that we, that our outer shell has to be broken a bit so that your life can shine forth.

[47 : 56] Help us to see that suffering is not the end. glory. It's the beginning. It's the path. But it's not the end of our story.

Glory! You've decreed, you decreed glory for us. And even in this life, though we ache and struggle, is that you might teach us to rely on you and to stop relying on ourselves.

Will you show us that? Help us do it. So we all need to know so that, Lord, we can rely on Jesus and follow this great, this great king for death and glory.

in Jesus' name, Amen.