

The promise of resurrection

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[0 : 00] Death, no one likes talking about it. It's a topic that we like to avoid if we can. And yet it is something we must all face sooner or later.

Certainly you have to face your own death, sorry to say, unless Jesus comes back before that day. But also, even I think more disturbing a thought is the inevitability of someone you love dying.

If you live long enough, that's going to happen. Inevitably. Undoubtedly, you will lose a loved one. And that's not a nice thought, is it?

And I'm pretty sure you didn't come to church to hear about death this morning. And yet it's so important as Christians to talk about because death is very different for a Christian than it is for the rest of the world.

The Bible teaches that while we must all face death, the way we deal with it as Christians is very different to how the world deals with it and how the world sees it and how media portrays it, if it does at all.

[1 : 08] And how every other faith system sees death. Christians see death in a markedly different way. And I think if you're a Christian, you know this, right? You've been to the Christian funerals where the pastors read out the Apostle Paul's words, We do not grieve like the rest of mankind who have no hope.

We know that we see death differently. But what you may not have known is that it's this rather strange story in Genesis that reminds us just why that is.

As we read about how Abraham dealt with the death of his wife, Sarah. Now it's an odd story. At first read, it seems quite mundane. Interestingly, God is not mentioned once in this chapter.

It's all about a business transaction, really. The purchase of a burial plot. You know, it's not the story your kids will look forward to reading at bedtime. Oh, can we please hear the one about Abraham buying the burial site again?

It's not very exciting. And so we wonder what we can possibly learn from this strange story. We wonder why it's even here. Although when we understand it, when we get into it a little bit, what we come to realize is that it's actually a very encouraging story.

[2 : 25] Because it's not a story about death. On the contrary, it's actually a story about resurrection. And this morning I want you to see why. So let's have a look at Genesis 23 and see just why that is.

Now it starts with the death of Sarah, which is no small thing, by the way. Sarah has been mostly silently at Abraham's side this whole time in Genesis.

Since we picked up the Abraham story in Genesis 12. Right from before Abraham even received those epic, life-changing covenant promises from God, Sarah and him had been together.

When he left his homeland in obedience to God. Remember that? God comes to Abraham and says, leave your home. Leave your people. And we say, wow, Abraham's such a great man of faith. He left all that behind. We don't think about Sarah.

She also did. Right? She submissively and silently went along with her husband. Also had to sever all those ties with her people. Leave what she knew. And together they went to dangerous journeys in Egypt and the Negev.

[3 : 30] Where Abraham almost lost Sarah to foreign kings twice. Through his own mistakes. Through the war with Kedaleoma. Remember that? Abraham going off with his troops to fight on a suicide mission seemingly.

And Sarah having to stay behind. Pray for him. Wonder if he's okay. And then of course them witnessing the cataclysm of Sodom and Gomorrah. You know, they would have had quite a photo album if the cameras had been invented then.

This couple had been through a lot together. And then also if you think about it, the years of silence from God. When they didn't hear for years and years anything from God. And all they needed to do is together wait and trust in God's word.

And the trials they went through. Sarah struggles with barrenness. Abraham struggles of faith. And even, we saw last week, Sarah seeing her husband take their only child away to sacrifice him.

This marriage had been through quite a lot. Right? And if it's true that what doesn't kill makes it stronger, you can imagine how strong this marriage was. How strong this bond between Abraham and Sarah was.

[4 : 46] They were soulmates. They were inseparable after what was probably more than a hundred years of marriage. If you think about it. If you do the maths. Oh, by the way. Congratulations to John and Helen.

Who celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Friday. A great gift from God. Well done. You're halfway there.

But anyway, you can appreciate what a loss this is for Abraham. To lose the closest person he's ever known.

And so it's no wonder he mourns like he does. You read in verse 2 at the beginning of the story. Abraham went to mourn for Sarah and to weep over her.

Now, it could have just said mourn, but it doesn't. It says he wept over her. He felt this. It was painful to him. He showed real pain at her death. And you can absolutely understand why.

[5 : 40] And it reminds us as well. Just that. Just the fact that Abraham wept and felt this and was grieving over the loss of his wife. It reminds us that while God's people don't grieve like the rest of men, we still do grieve.

And there's no escaping that. We are never immune to the pain of death. No matter how close we are with God. No matter what truths we know from his word. We can't escape the inevitability of death.

And we can't escape the painful tearing away of relationships that it always causes. Even Jesus wept at the death of Lazarus.

Because God's people weep. We cry. We feel pain. We feel separation. And there's nothing wrong with that. In fact, we should. Because of all people, we know that death is not meant to be.

Death is an alien invader to this world. And by grieving properly and by mourning and by feeling pain and by letting people see that pain, we are making a statement that we do not agree with death.

[6 : 49] We are not happy with it. And we feel the pain of it. And so here Abraham is doing that. He's mourning and weeping next to the body of his lifelong partner, Sarah, thinking probably of all their experiences together.

And most likely in their tent. There were nomads wandering the desert. They stayed in tents most of the time. So he probably had this mourning tent. And the local Hittite population, we're told, were outside.

Showing their respect, of course. But then after a while, in the middle of his grieving, we read on in the story, something happens. Inside Abraham, a resolution forms in his heart as he's grieving his dead wife.

And he stands up. He goes outside. The Hittites see him coming. They're like, well, you know, what can we do for you? Anything. How can we help you? And he says to them this.

He says, look, I know I'm only a foreigner. I know I'm only a stranger in this land. But I need some of it. I need some land, please, to bury my wife.

[7 : 53] Now this, we need to understand, is a big ask. It's a very unexpected request. Firstly, because foreigners had no right to own land in a country that wasn't their own.

Especially wandering nomads like Abraham. But secondly, it's unexpected because there's no evidence in history that burial was even practiced by the Hittites at this time.

It was possibly a very foreign concept. You want to what? You want to put your wife in the ground. You don't want to burn her like we do with our dead. And that's what pagan cultures normally did.

They would burn their dead on a pyre. And so burial for Abraham on a piece of land in Hittite country would have been a very strange request.

And yet we read on and it turns out they're quite accommodating. They've obviously grown to respect Abraham. They call him a mighty prince. No doubt they know of his special connection with God.

[8 : 54] Maybe they've heard of how he defeated Kedileoma and they don't want to mess with him. But they have a great respect for this man. And so they offer him his choice of land to bury his wife. And he chooses a particular cave which happens to be in a field owned by a guy called Ephron.

And Ephron is told about this. He comes back and says of course listen you know what take the cave take the whole field free of charge. Anything for you Abraham. Which is of course really generous of him.

But surprisingly that's not enough for Abraham. Because if we read on we see he goes on to insist that he doesn't want it for free.

He wants to buy it for its full market value. And he makes a point of it. Have a look in verse 9. He's saying about Ephron. He says he will sell me the cave of Machpelah which belongs to him and is at the end of his field.

Ask him to sell it to me for the full price. He's very adamant about this. And then of course Ephron comes back surprised. I mean he's just offered Abraham this field for free.

[9 : 59] And he comes back in verse 11 and says no no. You don't understand Abraham. I'll give it to you free of charge. Now at this point anybody would have gone wow. That's so touching.

Thank you so much. Thank you. I'll take it. But not Abraham. He was adamant. Look at verse 13. His response to that. Listen to me if you will.

I will pay the price of the field. Accept it from me. But even then Ephron seems to still offer it freely to look good in the eyes of the Hittites.

While this time sneakily mentioning how much it's worth. The ESV captures it well. The English Standard Version which is a little bit more literal. In verse 15 Ephron finally says a piece of land worth 400 shekels.

What is that between friends? You know it's a very sneaky way of mentioning to Abraham what the full price is. Which is what he wants. And so of course the moment he hears it.

[11 : 01] Now that the price is named. Abraham immediately. Next thing. Weighs out the silver and hands it over. No haggling. No negotiation. Which would have been the norm for Middle Eastern business.

No. Just here's the money. Give me the land. And it's no small amount either. It's 400 shekels. 400 pieces of silver. It's equivalent probably to a few million rand.

In modern equivalent. But Abraham doesn't care. He's adamant to own this little piece of land. And then the last few verses of the story.

From verse 16 onwards. Actually read like an ancient legal document. They read like it's like a deed of sale. That's put here in the Bible. Confirming that Abraham did indeed take possession of the field.

The cave. Even the trees. And mentions the legal witnesses involved as well. So that no one could dispute. That Abraham had actually taken ownership of this field.

[11 : 56] That is primarily what this chapter in the Bible is here for. To make sure legally that we all know. And the ancient world knew that Abraham took possession of this field.

Question is. Who cares? Why is it so important? Why is it in our Bibles? Why spend a whole chapter telling us about this land transaction?

And also. Why is this wandering nomad. Suddenly some insistent on getting a permanent ownership of land. You know. He's not willing to rent.

Even if it's for free. He needs to buy this. Well you can only understand why that's so important. If you know the story so far.

In Genesis. You see. God had promised Abraham this very land that he was in. Canaan. That the Hittites were living. And he had promised that to Abraham and his family as an eternal possession.

[12 : 57] To live and to be blessed by God. And enjoy the fruits of the land. In a way that was uncursed. It was a reversal of the curse.

Remember God's promises to Abraham in Genesis 12. We looked at that. And we looked at how through God's promises to Abraham of land and blessing. And family and descendants. And being a blessing to the world.

He was going to undo slowly undo the curse. And it's this very land here. That Abraham is now in. That God had promised him. But of course.

He knows by now that he's not going to get it in his lifetime. He's. He's going along in age. His wife's just died. And we read on in scripture. We realize it was going to take generations before his descendants.

The Israelites even stepped into this land. And still thousands of years after that. And still counting. Before Abraham and Sarah would live in the land under God's blessing as he promised them.

[13 : 56] But Abraham. Even though he couldn't see the fulfillment of those promises now in his lifetime. He still trusted them. And we see that through how he deals in this chapter.

He decides to show just how much he trusts in God's promise for the land. And he does that by putting a stake in the land already. Generations before he's actually going to inherit it.

He decides to spend all this money. To buy a tiny bit of this land for his beloved wife. So that one day. When God did fulfill those promises to Abraham and his family.

And raise them to life again. Sarah would be right there in the land already. It's a very sweet touching gesture isn't it for his wife. But it's also a very profound statement of Abraham's faith.

Faith in the resurrection of the body. Faith that Sarah would rise again to live in the land that God promised they would inherit. As would he and his children.

[15 : 04] And that's why he buries her by the way. He fully expects her body to physically rise again. And so he preserves it as much as he can. As a statement of faith in the belief of resurrection.

Resurrection. And that by the way is a uniquely biblical hope. Resurrection of our physical bodies. These things that we are in now. Resurrection of these things.

Not escaping the body. But resurrecting the body. Is a uniquely biblical hope. You don't see it in pagan religions. Pagan religions are all about escaping the physical world.

Not coming back to it. But physical resurrection was Abraham's hope. And not just resurrection for Sarah. But resurrection for all of his descendants.

All of the true children of Abraham. It's interesting. The cave he chose. Was a cave called Machpelah. Which in the Hebrew means double. That's the direct translation.

[16 : 05] And it was called that because it's actually a system of two very large caves. And you can actually go there today. It's one of the few places that we still know the location of.

From the ancient times. It's in Hebron. In the Palestinian West Bank. And incidentally at present a huge mosque has been built over it. And sealed over the entrance to the cave.

That's deep underground after thousands of years of buildings. And decay. And you know how things get buried over time. So this cave is deep underground. And the entrance to it is inaccessible.

It's been sealed over. Centuries ago. But if you look in the picture behind me. The cave systems under it can still be seen.

There was a story. It almost read like an Indiana Jones movie. Of these Jewish archaeologists. Who without the Muslims knowing.

[17 : 02] They broke through this seal. And went down and discovered this. And then there was riots. And all sorts of problems. And you know how it is in the Middle East. But they discovered that in this picture you can see actually two large caves.

Deep down. And that confirms this is actually the cave of Machpelah. Double. A double cave system. And I think Abraham chose this cave system.

Because he knew there would need to be space. For the rest of his family. To be buried there. One day too. As they awaited the fulfillment of God's promises.

Which is exactly what happened. As we read on in Genesis. Abraham was buried by Isaac. In Genesis 25. Two chapters later. In the same cave. Machpelah. Jacob buried Isaac there.

And then Jacob. About to die in Egypt. Told his sons. And he made a point of this. He said guys. You are taking my bones back to Machpelah. You're taking my bones back to that cave.

[18 : 05] And Joseph did the same thing. He also said. I want my bones to go back and be buried in Machpelah. Even though. He was in Egypt at the time. And the Israelites were in Egypt.

And they didn't go to the promised land. Until 430 years later. But even then. They still threw that wilderness wanderings. They took Joseph's bones with them. And Joshua eventually did.

After conquering the land. Take his remains to Hebron. And put him to rest. In this very same cave. So this cave is very important. It became a monument.

Of the patriarch's ongoing hope. In the resurrection. Okay. So I hope you can see now. How this story is far from a mundane bit of business.

Can you see that? Rather. Abraham burying. His wife here. Buying this land. To bury her.

[19 : 04] Is it. In fact. A profound act of faith. In God's promises to him and his family. Against all present appearances. The writer to the Hebrews.

Puts it like this. Dylan read it for us earlier. All these people were still living by faith. When they died. They did not receive the things promised. They only saw them. And welcomed them from a distance.

Admitting that they were foreigners. And strangers on earth. It's exactly what Abraham says. At the beginning. To the Hittites. I'm a foreigner in this place. But I still need this land. He still needed to. Make a point.

Of putting his stake in the ground. To show what he knew was coming. He's seeing the things promised from a distance.

Knowing that at present. He is still a foreigner in this world. But then it's interesting. The writer to the Hebrews. Is actually writing to Christians. It's in the New Testament. And so he's mentioning Abraham.

[20 : 00] And all these patriarchs. And them being buried in this cave. As an example for Christian faith today. Because the truth is. Our situation as Christians. Is really not that different.

To Abraham's. Is it? We today. Are people of the covenant. We have God's covenant promises. Of forgiveness of sins. Through the death of Jesus on the cross. But also we have the promise of resurrection.

Real bodily resurrection. And we know that. Because of the real bodily resurrection of Jesus. From the dead in Jerusalem. 2,000 years ago. Recorded as historical fact.

This is no wishful thinking. God wanted to make absolutely sure. That we knew resurrection was real. And so he showed us. He made it happen in our world.

It was his ultimate statement. That he hasn't forgotten his promises to Abraham. It's still coming. Resurrection is still coming. So that those promises can be fulfilled. And so just as the tomb that Jesus was put in.

[21 : 01] Today is empty. So the tomb of Machpelah. Will also be empty. When Abraham and his family rise. To possess the land.

God promised them in the new world to come. And when we. Covenant people today rise. To possess that new world too. That was his hope. And it should be our hope. And it should determine how we live.

And so we can also express. You know that very same hope. That Abraham expressed. Even in the face of death. And mourning. And of course if you're not yet a Christian.

I want to tell you. You can have this hope too. Because of what Jesus did. On the cross for your sins. If you would trust in him. You can come into this covenant.

God has done everything possible. There's no hoops you've got to jump through. There's no works you've got to perform. God knows you won't be able to anyway. And so he opens the doors. To his covenant people.

[22 : 00] The children of Abraham. To all people. Of all nations. Through Jesus Christ. You can come into this covenant. That God made with Abraham. If you repent and believe in Christ.

The seed of Abraham. Abraham. And you can also have. Real hope. The same hope Abraham had. In real. Bodily. Resurrection. Don't delay.

You actually want this hope. You really do. You need this hope. Because. You're going to die one day. If not from the coronavirus. Or crime.

It'll be from old age. It's going to get you. Sooner or later. One way or another. Right. We're worried about the coronavirus. And we should be.

We see it in the news. Right. This. Virus that's killing people. Over 500. I think now. And yet. Actually. Influenza. Still kills more than that per year.

[22 : 59] There's a whole lot of other viruses and stuff. Now this is a scary one. Because we don't know how to treat it. But. People die from all kinds of things. I mean. A certain amount. A hundred people die from toasters every year.

You're going to die. Sooner or later. You can't avoid it. It's going to get you. And so you need this hope of resurrection. Don't wait until your hospital bed.

One day. With pipes in you. And doctors and nurses rushing around you. Before you seriously think about this. Don't wait till then. Before you think about this.

And realize that. As your life is ebbing away. That God didn't actually make you to die. This isn't how it's supposed to be. God made you to live. In his world.

And enjoy him. And all of his gifts. Forever. That all the pleasures of this broken world. Can only ever hint at. Even the greatest pleasures of this world. Can only give you a very.

[23 : 57] Very poor taster. Of what God made you to experience. In his. Creation forever. Forever. And he sent his son. So that you can live. That you can rise again.

In the body. So don't wait. Until your deathbed. To accept what Jesus has done. For you. To make that possible. But now. If you do have that hope.

If you're a Christian. You have the hope of resurrection. Then what I want to do now. Before we finish. Is I want to draw out. Two challenges. That I think this story. Is making to us today. The first.

Challenge. To us. Is to see this world. From a foreigner's perspective. It's hard to do. But it's very important. Abraham did. He said to the Hittites.

I am a foreigner. And a stranger. Among you. And he did that. Because he realized. That this land. Was not his home. It would be. But it wasn't yet. And so he wasn't.

[24 : 56] Too invested. In life. Here and now. He was. A nomad. Wandering around. He didn't. Invest in buildings. And cities. And truth is.

When he died. The only property. He had to his name. Was this field. In this cave. Well the Bible. Challenges us. To see our lives.

In the same way. As Christians. To see that this world. As it is. Is not our home. And not to treat it. Like our home. To realize.

This life. Is not it. That we are foreigners. Passing through. This present world. As it is. Because when we think like that. When we have that perspective.

Then you know what. We begin to see death. Differently too. We begin to realize. Death is not the end. In fact. It is. It is the way home. I remember.

[25 : 53] One of my. Most bittersweet. Goodbyes. At an airport. Airports. Are. Amazing places. Because they are so. Filled with emotion.

Aren't they? Either emotion. Of sadness. Or emotion. Of happiness. People arriving home. But. One of my. Most bittersweet.

Goodbyes. Was when Jean. Left London. Where I was living. At the time. She had come to visit me. We were very much in love. I lived in London. And she. Had to fly back.

To South Africa. Took her to the airport. And said our goodbyes. And she had to go. Because she was a foreigner. In London. It wasn't her home. And I was heart sore.

To see her go. I was going to miss her. Except I was comforted. By the fact that. I was also a foreigner. In London. And a few weeks later.

- [26 : 45] I was going to leave. And move back home. And ask her to marry me. Which. As you can see. Worked out pretty well. But you see. We as Christians.
- Are to see ourselves. As foreigners. In this world. And even if we have to part with each other. For a time. While we're traveling through this life. We can be comforted by knowing.
- We'll see each other at home. And there'll be a great party when we do. 1 Thessalonians 3 says to Christians. You know this passage. Brothers and sisters.
- We do not want you to be uninformed. About those who sleep in death. So that you do not grieve. Like the rest of mankind. Who have no hope. For we believe that Jesus died. And rose again.
- And so we believe. That God will bring with Jesus. Those who have fallen asleep in him. 2 Corinthians. Paul puts it like this. For while we are in this tent.
- [27 : 42] That's what Paul calls our present world. It's not a permanent home. It's a temporary dwelling. And while we're in it. He says. We groan. And are burdened. Because we do not wish to be unclothed.
- But to be clothed instead. With our heavenly dwelling. So that what is mortal. May be swallowed up. By life. We. As you know.
- I've told you before. Our family often goes camping. Probably at least once a year. For a couple of days at a time. It's a great getaway. And we stay in a tent. When we do that.
- Now why do we stay in a tent? Well because we know. We're not there permanently. Right? It would be silly. To spend our entire camping trip. Trying to build a house. To live in.
- It would be a waste of our trip. And also when we leave our campsite. We don't. We don't cry. And get all depressed. Because we know. We're going back to our house.
- [28 : 36] Which is actually much better. Than living in a tent. Well in the same way. It is a waste. Of your years. In this world. To spend so much money.
- And effort. Trying to build. Your home. Here. When you're only going to be here. For a short while. And it's not really your home. You see.
- We need to realize. We're foreigners. Like Abraham realized. We need to have that attitude. Which also means. While we feel it. We don't. Despair. And get depressed.
- When we leave. If we know. We're going home. To something. Far better. I think that's. Why. Jeremy Marshall. Could write that book. Talking about.
- His cancer. Why he wasn't. Defeated by it. Because he knew. He's only a foreigner. In this land. And that's the first. Challenge. I think the story gives us.
- [29 : 31] To. To learn. To live our lives. As foreigners. Like Abraham did. But there's a second challenge. That the story gives us. And that is to make.
- Costly and public statements. Of your hope. In the resurrection. Because that's what Abraham. Does here too. He makes a costly. And a public statement. That he.
- Knows. Resurrection is coming. He spent a whack load. Of money. To buy a field. He would never benefit from. In his lifetime. But he invested. His money in it.
- For the life to come. He invested in this. Looking forward. And so it's no surprise. That Jesus calls Christians. To do the very same thing.
- With what we own. In this life. He says these words. In Matthew. Do not store up. Treasures for yourself. On earth. Where moths and vermin destroy.
- [30 : 25] And where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourself. Treasures in heaven. Where moths and vermin do not destroy. And where thieves do not break in and steal. For. Where your treasure is.

There your heart will be also. Store up. For yourself. Treasures in heaven. What does that actually mean? Well it seems.

Weird. But it's true. That when Abraham bought. This grave. In this story. He was actually storing up treasures in heaven. Not on earth. Even though. This grave. Was on earth.

And the reason is. Because he was investing in something. That counted for the life to come. After the resurrection. He was investing in a piece of land. That he wouldn't really get to use. Until after the resurrection.

And that's what storing up treasures in heaven means. It means investing. In heavenly priorities. For the heavenly age to come. That we'll only see the results of.

[31 : 25] After the resurrection. When heaven comes down to earth. And those heavenly treasures will be opened here. Does it make sense? That's what storing up treasures in heaven is.

It's not about escaping this earth. It's about putting. Our resources. And our focus. In the age to come. When heaven and earth. Come together.

In the new creation. So in other words. Jesus was actually. Giving us some very sound investment advice. You know you're. If you have an investment consultant. He'll say that the art of.

Good investment. Is to put aside resources. That could give you immediate gain. So that they can earn dividends. That you'll only see later. It's what parents tell their children all the time. To do with their pocket money right. They want to buy this thing immediately.

That they see. But you explain to them. Well if you. If you actually don't. Buy that thing right away. Then in a few months. You'll have enough money. To afford this really great thing. That you want. Well Jesus.

[32 : 24] Is just giving us. Some good investment. Advice. Because we know. We're foreigners. In this present world. And so we need to be shrewd investors. And we need to put aside resources.

That could give us immediate gain. In this world. And rather invest them. In the bank of heaven. Which will pay dividends. Only after the resurrection. That's what Abraham was doing. By buying this cave.

At Machpelah. And that is by the way. The complete. Opposite. To the message. Of the charlatan preachers today. Who say that. You must invest.

In them. To have benefit now. In this world. The prosperity gospel. You see it all over. I don't need to tell you. The names of the preachers. Because I hope by now. You can spot who they are. But the ones.

Who promise you. All the blessings of God. Post resurrection. And they promise. That they're going to happen here. That's not Abraham's faith. He would have laughed at them.

[33 : 19] And walked away. And we should too. No. We are in. We are to invest. In the life to come. And we can do this. We can store up treasures in heaven. In very important ways. Today.

Putting money into gospel work. Is an obvious one. Supporting missionaries. To reach more people. With the gospel. Building Christian schools.

To reach the next generation. With the gospel. Spending time. Serving your local church. And discipling other people. And helping other people. To follow Christ. Anything.

That will use your time. And resources here. In order to forward. The great commission. That Jesus has given us. To make disciples. To save lives for eternity.

Is storing up treasures in heaven. And when we do that. When we actually. In a costly and public way.

[34 : 13] Use our resources. In a way that people can see. Then people look on. And they don't. See you building for this life. Like everyone else is doing. And they wonder. When your priorities are different.

To the world around you. And it's obvious. That is a powerful. Public statement. Of your hope. In the resurrection. That is certain.

And sure. It's interesting. In 1 Peter 3. 15 to 16. Peter says. Always be prepared. To give an answer. To everyone who asks you.

For the hope that you have. That's funny. That he's assuming. That people are going to ask you. Why you have so much hope. Why are they going to ask you. Well obviously. Because they can see it.

In how you spend your money. And how you spend your time. And in fact. Making those public statements. With what we have here. And investing them. In the life to come.

[35 : 10] Investing them. In the world to come. Is proof. That you actually believe. In the resurrection. That you really believe it. But if you find yourself.

Clinging too much. To this life. And if you fear death. Above all other things. And you fear losing. What you have here. Then I must ask you. Do you really believe. In the resurrection. Do you really believe in it.

The bodily physical resurrection. From the dead. Do you really believe. That if you are in Christ. You will rise from your. Grave. One day. Even if your bones.

Are turned to dust. By then. That God will reconstitute. Your body. And that you will live. On the new earth. One day. That is far better. Than this one has ever been. And you will be reunited.

With God's people. And God himself. Never to be parted. Again. Where you will enjoy. All of his gifts. Forever. Without limit. Do you believe that. Do you believe that.

[36 : 03] Do you believe. That's actually going to happen. Now I don't want. If I came to. Everyone here. In this church. And I said. Do you believe that. They say. Oh yeah. Sure. I believe that. But deep down inside. Beyond what.

You expose to anyone. Do you really believe. That's going to happen. You see. If you really did. Believe that. And God has given you.

Every reason to believe it. Through the physical resurrection. Of Jesus from the dead. And what he did for you. So that you can have that hope too. If you really believe that. Then your hope will be seen.

In how you live. As a foreigner. Not clinging to this world. That is passing away. It'll be seen. In how you use your money.

And your time. What you invest in. In this life. And it'll be seen. In how you respond. When one day. You are faced. With the inevitable visit.

[36 : 55] Of death itself. Let's pray. Lord we do. Thank you. That in the face of. Death.

And suffering. And brokenness. That we see. Around us. Every day. In this world. We thank you. That you have given us. A living hope. In a real. Bodily resurrection.

From the dead. Through Jesus Christ. I pray Lord. That that would be a hope. That everyone sitting here. Or listening to this recording. Will have through Christ. That they will put their faith in him. If they have not yet.

That they will come into your covenant people. And that they will know the hope. That you have made possible. For all of us. And I pray that you would help us. To live out that hope. Each and every day.

In how we live. In what we focus on. And how we engage with other people. And we pray this in Jesus name. Amen.