

The Light That Cannot be Darkened

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 29 November 2015

Preacher: Edward Lobb

[0 : 00] Well, now we come to our Bible reading. We're leaving the Psalms tonight where we've been for a week or two, and we're going to turn now to John's Gospel, John's Gospel, Chapter 1.

And I hope to spend both tonight's sermon and next Sunday evening in this great first chapter of John. Now, you'll find this in our Church Bibles at page 886, 886.

And I'm going to read the first 18 verses of Chapter 1. Which is generally known as the prologue to John's Gospel. In which John introduces the Lord Jesus, who is the subject of the whole Gospel. So John's Gospel, Chapter 1, verses 1 to 18. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.

[1 : 08] In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from God whose name was John.

He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him.

He came to his own people, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us. And we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

[2 : 23] John bore witness about him and cried out, This was he of whom I said, He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me. And from his fullness we have all received grace upon grace.

For the law was given through Moses. Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. The only God who is at the Father's side.

He has made him known. Amen. This is the Word of the Lord, and may the Lord add his blessing to it for us tonight. Well, let's turn again to John's Gospel, Chapter 1.

The Light That Cannot Be Darkened is my title for tonight. Persuasion is the title of one of Jane Austen's novels.

I can't remember whether I've read it, actually. But I've known that title for many years, and I've always found it to be a striking title, and rather haunting. Persuasion. And the desire to persuade people is one of the characteristics of the human race.

[3 : 53] It operates on many different levels. So, for example, in politics, Karl Marx and Adolf Hitler both wrote enormous books in which they sought to persuade people to accept their views and to follow them.

In the House of Commons every week, Mr. Cameron and Mr. Corbyn are seeking to persuade people to change their positions on ISIS or Trident or economic policy or whatever.

And then think of the teacher's role at the school. Teachers at school are seeking to persuade their pupils. For example, in an end-of-term report, a teacher might write this.

If Alistair were to make full use of the abilities, which at present he is deploying only sluggishly, he could do well next summer in his National Fives.

The desire to persuade is everywhere, but nowhere is it practiced more strongly or more nobly than in the Bible.

[4 : 59] The Bible has been described as God preaching, and that is a good description. By nature, we human beings don't want to accept the Bible's message, or at least parts of it.

And therefore, God seeks to persuade us, seeks to change our minds. And John's gospel is a prime exercise in persuasion. In fact, John explains at the very end of his gospel that he's written his account of Jesus to persuade his readers to believe in Jesus, not just to be informed about him, but to believe in him.

In fact, John says at the very end of the book in chapter 20 that his purpose is that the reader may come to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing the reader might have life in his name.

Life. So to John, it's a matter of life and death. To believe in Jesus is to have life, eternal life. But not to believe in him is to be under sentence of death, eternal death.

So John's motive in trying to persuade the reader about Jesus is the most loving motive. He wants the reader to come to understand Jesus and to believe and trust in him, because John is convinced that Jesus is the only savior, the only way to God, the only way to heaven, the only way to forgiveness.

[6 : 26] And John does not want his readers to perish, but to enjoy eternal life. John loves his readers, and he knows that Jesus loves John's readers.

And that's why John seeks to persuade us that Jesus really is the Christ, that he really is the Son of God. John himself has tasted deeply the delight and joy of being a Christian, and he wants all his readers to share that joy.

So John is not writing up his record of the life of Jesus as if it's just a list of historical facts. John's gospel is not a chronicle of bare facts about Jesus.

It is full of facts, and they're true facts. But John has a message. He's not just seeking to inform. He is seeking to persuade. Now let's bear in mind who this John, the author of this book, was, because he was uniquely qualified to write this book.

The author of this book is not John the Baptist. Now you'll see that a John is mentioned here in verse 6. Have a look at verse 6. There was a man sent from God whose name was John.

[7 : 34] Now that is John the Baptist. And the central section of chapter 1, beginning at verse 19, is about John the Baptist. But the author of this book is the other John, John the Evangelist, John the Apostle, who was one of Jesus' 12 apostles.

His brother, you'll remember, was James, and their father was Zebedee. And they ran a small family fishing enterprise on the Sea of Galilee. But Jesus called both James and John from their fishing, and he called two other brothers as well, Simon, Peter, and Andrew.

And these four young fishermen became four of Jesus' chosen band of 12. And this means that John knew Jesus very well.

He spent those three years of Jesus' public life with Jesus. He listened to his preaching again and again. He observed Jesus at work, healing the sick, raising the dead, stilling a vicious storm, driving out hideous demons from people who were demon-possessed.

John was with Jesus on the night before he was crucified, listening to his teaching. And he was there, close to the cross, on the Friday afternoon. He watched Jesus die.

[8 : 48] He heard what Jesus said as he hung up there on the cross. And he met him two days later, when Jesus was raised from the dead. So John was a witness to everything that had happened.

He knew the facts. And after Jesus returned to heaven, John worked for many years as a preacher and teacher and evangelist. He was one of the leading apostles in Jerusalem.

And later, it's thought, he became established at Ephesus, where he led a church there. And it was probably in Ephesus that he wrote this gospel in old age, some 50 or even 60 years after the events.

So this book, written by John, but under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is the mature, carefully considered work of a man who was uniquely qualified to write about his master.

He knew him very well. But he was not writing merely to inform. He was writing to persuade and to change the mind of those who read.

[9 : 51] Now, this evening, I want us to look only at the first five verses of chapter one. And as soon as you look at these first five verses, you can see why persuasion is so necessary.

Because what John has to say about Jesus is so extraordinary, so beyond the normal run of human experience, that it would be unbelievable if it were not true.

Now, Jesus is not actually named until we get to verse 17. But the first five verses are all about him. So let's see what John is so keen to persuade us about as he begins his account of the life and death and resurrection of Jesus.

You'll notice that he doesn't start in Bethlehem, as Matthew and Luke do in their gospels. He goes back a great deal further to the remotest place, beyond history, beyond Genesis chapter one, verse one.

He goes back to the beginning, even beyond the beginning. And echoing the first verse of the Bible, he writes, in the beginning was the word.

[10:59] So let's notice five things about the way John presents the Lord Jesus to us here. First, he is the word. And if he is the word, it says something glorious to us about the nature of God.

It tells us that God has a message that he is wanting to communicate to human beings. Now, the reason why we use words is that we want to communicate with each other.

But the fact that we have words and can use words effectively is a reflection of God's own nature, because we are made to be little mirror images of God.

We are like him. And therefore, we have the capacity to use words, because he was using words before we were. God is able and willing to speak to us.

Now, this can be a shock to people who are not yet persuaded about Jesus. The typical modern person, the typical agnostic, does not think of God as a God who has something to say to the human race.

[12:02] In fact, the typical modern person is very dubious about whether God exists at all. I guess we've all seen cartoons that show a man in a situation of desperate difficulty and loneliness.

And he's looking up. He's gone outside. And he's looking up into a vast and empty sky. And he shouts out, Is anyone there? Modern man is like that.

He need not be. But that's what he's like. But really, it wasn't very different in the first century A.D. When Paul the Apostle, for example, and we read this in Acts chapter 17, when Paul was walking through the streets of Athens in about 48 A.D., he noticed an altar set up at the side of the road made of stone.

And somebody had inscribed upon this altar, to an unknown God. Now, those Athenians could have lived in the 21st century. Can God be known?

That's what people ask today. And even if there is a God, surely he is unknowable. But John's reply would be, But he is knowable, because he wants us to enjoy a relationship of love and joy and understanding with us.

[13:14] And he has made himself known for that reason. He began to reveal himself, to reveal his beauty and his power, when he made the universe. And later, when he created the first man and the first woman, he communicated with them in the Garden of Eden.

He spoke with them. And using words, he taught them how to love him, and how to live with him and for him. And even after they had rebelled against him, and had forfeited their place in his hearth and home, he continued to speak to them.

And then through the long centuries that followed, he spoke with human beings again and again.

He spoke to Noah, before and after the flood. He spoke to Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and he established a relationship of special covenant and promise with them.

And then later on, he spoke to Moses. And through Moses, he spoke to the whole people of Israel. And he continued for centuries to speak through numerous prophets, and great kings like David and Solomon, whose words form large parts of the Old Testament.

But finally, ultimately, fully, and comprehensively, he has spoken to us through his son, Jesus, who is, par excellence, his word.

[14:32] Jesus brings the message of God, and Jesus is the message. He is the speaker of the message, and he is the content of the message. And yet he speaks not just about himself.

He also speaks about God, the Father. Just look on to verse 18 in our chapter. I'll just, I'll read it again, and I'll just change one, one word, legitimately, I think, to make it a bit clearer.

No one has ever seen God, the only begotten, who is at the Father's side. He has made him known. And throughout John's gospel, Jesus is the one, supremely, who reveals the nature of God the Father to us.

It is Jesus who makes God the Father known. God is not the unknown God, and he is not the unknowable God. Quite the contrary. As we listen to Jesus' words, and as we see Jesus' life, see him at work, above all, as we see Jesus dying and rising, we see what God the Father is like. Jesus, whom his disciples could see, expresses fully and beautifully the nature of God the Father, whom no one can see. He is the word.

[15 : 48] Now second, he is the eternal word. These first two verses are making the point that his existence goes back forever, just like the existence of God the Father.

In the beginning already was the word. Verse two, he was in the beginning with God. Now isn't that a bold and remarkable claim that John is making for his friend, Jesus?

John knew perfectly well that Jesus was a man as human as John himself. He had seen Jesus eat and sleep, I guess sneeze and cough and shed tears and grow tired.

His humanity could not be doubted. And yet John had come to understand that Jesus' existence had no beginning. If his Father was the ancient of days, Jesus was similarly ancient.

Now it's a point that our popular Christmas culture, we're just beginning to brace ourselves for Christmas, aren't we? It's a point that our popular Christmas culture has not understood.

[16 : 53] Popular Christmas culture focuses on what it thinks is the beginning of Jesus' life. I know it focuses on lots of other things, but in as much as it thinks about Jesus, it thinks of the beginning of Jesus' life.

Think of the kind of nativity play which will be put on in many schools over the next couple of weeks. The focus there will be on the beginning of the earthly life of Jesus.

You know the kind of scenario, we shall have stables and cows and asses, we'll have Joseph and Mary dressed in blue, and we'll have wise men, quite young wise men, but they'll come in carrying boxes of treasure, won't they?

There'll be an innkeeper who comes out and says, out the back please, my dear, no room in the king's arms, all booked up here. And then of course we'll have a baby, a doll, a safe baby, wrapped up in a long piece of cloth with its little face peeping out.

And the assumption behind the school nativity play will be, this is the beginning. This is the start of Jesus' life. This is where it all began. But in his very first verse, John is saying, no, there is no beginning to Jesus' life.

[18 : 00] What happened in the stable at Bethlehem is described at verse 14. The word became flesh then, and dwelt among us. At Bethlehem began Jesus' life as a human being, but his existence as the eternal word has no beginning.

The apostle Paul says of him very simply, he is before all things. Now, it's a great joy to us to know that he is eternal. Let me explain it like this.

If our savior were a mere mortal, how effective could his rescue of us be? There have been plenty of rescuers on the human level in history, but their benefits quickly come to an end.

You might say, for example, that Winston Churchill rescued Britain in the 1940s, and indeed, we're still very grateful for his extraordinary achievements. Nelson Mandela is honored as the man who rescued the black peoples of South Africa from apartheid.

And there are many rescuers like that in human history, and we look back at their lives with real gratitude. But there is something in the human heart that is made for eternity.

[19 : 13] Why do we find death such an outrageous and horrible thing? Because it seems to sabotage what we sense we were made for, which is eternity.

The book of Ecclesiastes tells us that God has put eternity into the human heart. And perhaps this explains why we can never quite come to terms with the speed at which time passes.

You know the kind of thing. You visit friends whose daughter you last saw as a little child of eight.

And that was ten years ago. Now she's eighteen. And you look at her and you are genuinely astonished at how the giggling little child that you remember has been transformed into this graceful young lady.

Or we say things like, can it really be twenty-six years since the Berlin Wall came down? Can it be so long? You look at yourself in the mirror and you say, can I really be as old as I look?

I don't feel it, but the truth is I am. There's something in us that just can't cope with the passage of time, which suggests that time is not really our native element.

[20 : 24] God has put eternity into the human heart. So if our Savior is eternal, we have a Savior who matches something in our own makeup. And if our Savior rescues his people for eternal life,

and that is the constant message of John's Gospel, we have a Savior who promises us a wonderful future, quite beyond the confines of life in this world.

A future where death is abolished, where sin is not only forgiven, but is completely absent, banished forever. A future where tears and mourning and pain have no place.

The Bible calls it the world to come, and it's an adventure that has no ending. Jesus is the eternal Word. Third, He is God.

Now John is full-blooded about this. Look again at verse 1. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. Now in the first of those two phrases, the Word was with God, John, you'll see is distinguishing Jesus from God the Father.

And in the second of those phrases, the Word was God, John is asserting the deity of Jesus without reservation. Now let me put this as clearly and simply as I can.

[21 : 44] In John's Gospel, and throughout the New Testament, Jesus and God the Father are distinguished from one another, and John's Gospel frequently speaks of them as the Father and the Son.

No New Testament author ever says that Jesus is God the Father. In the four Gospels, and not least in John, Jesus is several times shown as praying to the Father.

So when Jesus says in John's Gospel chapter 10, I and the Father are one, what he means is the Father and I are one in our essential nature.

both the Father and I are God, fully God, united in being and heart and purpose and will. God the Father and God the Son.

And then later in John's Gospel, Jesus speaks also of the Holy Spirit, whom he describes as another comforter. And the word he uses for another means another of exactly the same kind as the first.

[22 : 50] Jesus is the first comforter or strengthener. And the Holy Spirit who is to come to the disciples after the ascension is of the same nature as Jesus, also fully God.

Now a little illustration here might be helpful. Willie Philip, our minister, has to be away this evening. But if Willie were here, sitting in the front row, I might say to Willie, please stand up, Willie, and turn around and look at the congregation.

And then I could say, imagine him standing up, I could say to all of you, this is Willie Philip, and I would be telling you the truth. I would then ask him to leave the room. You'll understand why in a moment.

Now just imagine that I also have up here on this little stage a large framed photograph of Willie Philip. I could then hold the large photograph up and I could say to you, this is Willie Philip.

And again, I would be telling you the truth. Now as I said, Willie is out of the room. But imagine him then telephoning me on my mobile phone from somewhere else in the building.

[23 : 55] Well, I pick up my phone out of my pocket where I always carry it. I press the appropriate button and he speaks to me. And he says, hello, Edward. I hope you're enjoying good health and have had an excellent lunch. And I say to him, yes, thank you, Willie, very much.

Mrs. Lobb's kitchen was on good form today. Now perhaps I can hold up this phone, Willie, and ask you to say a word to the congregation. So I hold the phone up and he speaks. And all of you hear his voice.

And that too would be Willie Philip. And I'd be telling you the truth. One man, only one man, revealing himself in three different ways.

In person, in the photograph, and speaking through the mobile phone. There is only one God. But he has revealed himself to us for our comfort and our salvation in three different ways.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And throughout John's gospel, John keeps showing us how Jesus, though distinguished from the Father, is one in nature with the Father.

[25 : 01] He is, like his Father, the I Am. And he takes that name, the name of God, upon his lips several times in the course of the gospel. He shares his Father's very name.

I am the bread of life. I am the good shepherd. I am the light of the world. I am the resurrection and the life. I am the way, the truth, and the life. I am the true vine. And he says at one point to the Jewish leaders, before Abraham was, I am.

And at the very end of the gospel, after his resurrection, Jesus asks Thomas, who is the arch skeptic, he asks Thomas to put his fingers in the marks of the nails and place them into his side where the spear went in.

And Thomas does so, and then falls at his feet and says, my Lord and my God. One of the greatest and truest things ever said by a mortal man.

The word was not only with God, the word was God. The late C.K. Barrett, who was a learned commentator on John's gospel, has written this about the very first verse of John's gospel.

[26 : 11] He says, John intends that the whole of his gospel shall be read in the light of this first verse. The deeds and words of Jesus are the deeds and words of God.

If this be not true, the book is blasphemous. How could a mere man open for us the gateway to heaven?

Let's thank God, the Father, that he sent us God, the Son. Fourth, the word, the eternal word, is the eternal divine word, and he is the Father's agent of creation.

That's the next thing, the Father's agent of creation. Verse 3. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.

Now, verse 3 is a very carefully worded statement. All things were made through him. In other words, by means of him acting as the Father's agent.

[27 : 17] And this helps us to clarify our understanding of the opening verses of Genesis. Genesis 1 speaks of God creating and the Holy Spirit brooding over the face of the deep.

But John 1, verse 3, puts it a bit more precisely by telling us that God the Father carried out his creative work through or by the agency of the word who is Jesus.

It was the word of God. Think Genesis 1 again. It was the word of God that created the sun and the moon and the stars and everything else. And John is telling us that the word was Jesus.

Paul the Apostle is even more explicit in Colossians chapter 1. He writes, By means of him, that is by means of Jesus, all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities.

All things were created through him and for him. Now John is briefer here, but let's notice the second half of verse 3 as well as the first half.

[28 : 23] All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. Now that second half of the verse is fighting talk.

In the first century AD, a lot of people hesitated to believe that God made everything. And the reason for this was the presence of evil in the world.

People said, look at the world, there's so much wrong, there are natural disasters, there are man-made horrors. So if God were thoroughly good, as we think he must be, he cannot have made the parts of the world where evil lurks.

Those parts must have existed already to account for the presence of evil. So when God created the world, he must have used a certain amount of material that already existed, material where evil was lurking, material that God is not responsible for himself.

Now you can understand why people were saying that. They were wanting to protect God from the charge that he might be responsible for evil. But in doing so, they were reducing his almightiness.

[29 : 35] They were saying that he wasn't responsible for the creation of everything. And John won't let people get away with that idea. That's why he says so strongly in verse three that not one single thing was made except through the powerful agency of Jesus the Word.

John's point is that God the Father and Jesus working with him are almighty and they have made every last thing. Everything. Every peacock's feather, every cat's whisker, every duck bill platypus's bill, every pig's squeak.

Now that doesn't mean that God the Father and the Lord Jesus are the sponsors of evil. Not at all. The Bible insists that evil is the devil's work, not God's.

When God made everything, Genesis 1 insists that everything God made was good, was very good. So in verse three, John is saying to his readers, you mustn't have a diminished view of the power of Jesus.

He is God's agent in the creation of everything. And John is going to go on to explain, as the gospel unfolds, how Jesus is also the vanquisher of Satan.

[30 : 50] Evil may have its temporary triumphs, but the devil is no match for Jesus. And in the new creation, there will simply be no place for him.

Then fifth, the eternal word is the light of men. Here is verse four. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

Now let's take the first half of the verse first. In him was life. John means that in him, in Jesus, there was always life. And there's something that Jesus says in John chapter five that helps us to understand this.

He says, for as the father has life in himself, so he has granted the son also to have life in himself. Later on in John chapter 14, Jesus says, I am the way, the truth, and the life.

I am the life. So when Jesus, as God's agent, created everything, he gave to it the life which welled up from his own being. But this life of Jesus is not simply biological life, like the life of cats and hamsters.

[32 : 04] It is eternal life. It's the life of heaven, life that cannot be snuffed out in those who possess it. It was this power of eternal life that made it impossible for Jesus to remain dead after his crucifixion.

Now there's a great paradox here, and Charles Wesley expresses it so well in his famous hymn, Tis mystery all, the immortal dies. There's the paradox.

Is that impossible? No, it's the truth. Jesus says in John chapter 10, I have authority to lay down my life, and I have authority to take it up again.

This charge, this ability, I've received from my father, he says. So he has the power of life and death, and he tells us several times in John's gospel that he gives eternal life to those whom the father has given to him.

So eternal life is his gift. So that first statement of verse four is very comforting. Life, not merely biological, but eternal life, was always in him.

[33 : 13] But John doesn't stop there. He adds the second phrase of verse four. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. Now what does that mean?

The life was the light of men. I think verse five helps us to understand. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. Now darkness in John's gospel, it's quite a powerful idea throughout the gospel, and it always means the power and the realm of the evil one. So the darkness of verse five means the darkness of sin. It means the godlessness of human society in the grip of Satan, the way in which men and women are alienated from God at the mercy of greed and cruelty, lust and envy, love of money, hatred, everything else that spoils and dehumanizes people.

But into this devilish darkness, darkness, there shines a light. Perhaps the best way to picture it is to think of a lighthouse standing on the rocks in a very dark place in the wintertime.

That lighthouse casts out a powerful beam of light into the darkness. The light cuts through the darkness, and the darkness has no power to put it out.

[34 : 32] And the experience of twenty centuries of the church confirms that the darkness has not been able to put the light out. Since Jesus was born in Bethlehem, there's been a great deal of darkness in the world.

Wars, endlessly, bloodlettings, ethnic cleansings, genocides, holocausts, massacres, and so on. There's been great violence and fierceness concentrated against the Lord's church as well.

And as we know, every day in various parts of the world, Christians are being lynched or shot or cut to pieces. And as well as the darkness out there in the world, there's a great deal of darkness inside every individual.

The destructiveness of nations and movements out there is simply the destructiveness of individuals writ large and spread abroad. There are dark things in all of us, things that cramp us and diminish us and rob us of our joy and energy, things that God hates, things of which we're ashamed.

But verses 4 and 5 in our passage bring such good news to us. However dark the darkness has been, the light shines steadily into it and the darkness has not been able to master it.

[35 : 48] So on the big scale, the church has been and continues to be fiercely persecuted, but it keeps going, it keeps growing. And on the personal scale, think inside there, for a moment.

Your life, you may think, has had more than its fair share of darkness and yet the truth about Jesus remains and nothing can diminish it. And the truth about Jesus remains for you.

You wouldn't be here today, would you, if the light had been snuffed out. It's because you know that the light still shines, that you're drawn to him and you seek him. Now we've only read the first five verses of the book, about a tenth of the first chapter and there are 21 chapters.

But in these first five verses, John is laying the foundation of what he calls his testimony and his aim is to persuade us to receive his testimony about Jesus.

Now it may be that you're not yet a Christian and if that's the case with folk here, do be open to persuasion. I know there's a lot to think about. It takes time so do keep thinking but do please keep on coming to church.

[37 : 02] Church is not just for the converted. And think of it, every one of us here who is a Christian now was once upon a time not persuaded. Each one of us has to think it through for ourselves.

But if you're not yet a Christian, listen to John. John, Jesus' apostle and friend. What he's giving us here is good news, the best and truest message in the world about a savior who can be trusted.

And if we learn to trust him and follow him, our lives will undergo a profound transformation and we shall come to know eternal life. Now what about those of us who are Christians?

Are you persuaded? Yes, you are. And yet, one of the joys of the Christian life is that this persuasion grows deeper as our life goes on.

A healthy Christian is one who is being ever more deeply persuaded. You know and love and trust the Lord Jesus now. But you'll know him and love him and trust him more as you allow the Bible to teach you further week by week and year by year.

[38 : 12] And the more we become persuaded, the more deeply we come to rejoice because we are known and loved by Jesus through whom God has spoken his true message, his word to the world.

Jesus is the eternal word. He's the divine word. All creation was made through him. Eternal life is his gift. And the light of his character, his teaching, and his truth shines out into the darkness.

And the darkness has not overcome it. Let's bow our heads and we'll pray. Our dear Lord Jesus, we think also of your words.

I am the light of the world. He who follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life. And we pray, therefore, that you will so graciously persuade our heart hearts that we shall want with all of our hearts, with our whole being, to follow you and to be committed to you, to be unashamed of you, to love you, to serve you.

So have mercy upon each one of us, we pray. And we ask it for your dear name's sake. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[39 : 35] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.