

Your Sins Are Forgiven

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References: **Mark 2**, Mark 2:1-12; Luke 4:16-19; Isaiah 61:1; Psalm 45:2; John 8:24; Hebrews 9:22; 1 Timothy 1:15; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 2 Peter 3:9

[Mark 2:1-12 NKJV]

¹ And again He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house. ² Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them.

³ Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men. ⁴ And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying. ⁵ When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you."

⁶ And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, ⁷ "Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

⁸ But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, "Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? ⁹ Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise, take up your bed and walk'? ¹⁰ But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"—He said to the paralytic, ¹¹ "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house."

¹² Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

Introduction: The Carpenter of Nazareth

Now, as many of us know, maybe all of us know, the Lord Jesus was born in Bethlehem and spent very little time there. He was actually raised in the city of Nazareth. He was a carpenter. He was the son of a carpenter.

They tell us, those who know these things, that based on the gospel account of the Lord Jesus, most likely Joseph wasn't with Him right till the thirtieth year. That Joseph probably passed on to his heavenly reward sometime before that. But nonetheless, the Lord Jesus was the son of Joseph, who was a carpenter, but as the Bible clearly lays out, He was the Son of God. He was just Joseph's foster son. Raised by Joseph, but He Himself became a carpenter. And so He lived. He lived in Nazareth and served the people of Nazareth as a carpenter till He was thirty.

As a carpenter's son, He would have probably started serving by the age of twelve, learned the trade, and was already serving. And they tell us that a carpenter wasn't just a builder of wood. He was an artisan. Herbert Lockyer's book, *All the Trades of the Bible*, talks about the skill that these men would have had. They could do more than just woodworking. They could do all sorts of things. Certainly we get that from the Old Testament. We had these artisans who worked with metal, who worked with wood. They did gold plating. They did tapestry. They did all sorts of artistic, skillful things. And so this was the story of the Lord Jesus. He would have been more skilled, obviously, as the maker of the universe than these men. So we don't struggle with that. So He served as a carpenter in Nazareth.

And then came the day, age thirty, He was baptized, and He went back to Nazareth. And as it says in Luke chapter 4:

[Luke 4:16-19 NKJV]

¹⁶ So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. ¹⁷ And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me,
Because He has anointed Me
To preach the gospel to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives
And recovery of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;

¹⁹ To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."

And He read from Isaiah 61:

[Isaiah 61:1 NKJV]

"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me,
Because the LORD has anointed Me
To preach good tidings to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives,
And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;

And He read the words that were prophetic in Isaiah, but He applied them to the present tense. The Spirit of the Lord, He said, is upon me. He has anointed me to heal the brokenhearted and such. And He worked through this long list of what the Messiah would do.

And so the people of Nazareth, they would have been sitting in the synagogue, all facing the front. And He... as a young man, would have been in the back, and... And so He applied those words. He read them like they had never heard them. I mean, they knew the scroll of Isaiah. They knew the words, but they never heard them like that before. And so no doubt they turned to see who it is. Sometimes we do that, don't we, in church? Hear somebody speaking from the back and we're like, "Who is that?" Try to—girls have a mirror so they can hold a mirror up and look, and look back. You know they do that, right? Or do they not do that here? I've seen them do that in places.

But anyways, we do that. And so no doubt in Nazareth this happens, and they turn and they look. And they're not encouraged, they're offended. They're like, "This is the carpenter's son. We don't... We know Him, He's not the Messiah."

And so they take the Lord Jesus, it says, and they try to push Him off the cliff on which the city of Nazareth was built. And so He leaves there, and He goes to Capernaum. And so the language of the first verse is that He now has a house in Capernaum. Some translations say this was His house. And so then people are like, "Well, He never owned anything. So how could this be His house?" Well, most likely it was Peter's home, because Peter was from Capernaum. And when the Lord Jesus was in Peter's house, he's like, "Lord, this is your home. I'm submitted to you. You're not just Lord of the universe. You're not just Lord of my heart. You're Lord of my home." And so that could be why the language was such that this was His... His house, because Peter had given Him... His home to the Lord.

The Crowd at Capernaum

And so now He's in Capernaum. He's in what Mark calls His house. And now people are coming from everywhere to hear Him. In Luke's account of this miracle, he says they came from Galilee, from Judea, and all the way from Jerusalem. People travel a long ways to hear the Lord Jesus. Why? Well, I mean, most basically because nobody ever spoke like Him. That's the bottom line. That's what they said. His enemies even said, "Hey, nobody ever talked like you before."

And so you say, "Well, what does that mean, nobody ever talked like Him before?" He said, "Well, your words have authority, first off." Not just that He spoke with authority, He did do that too. He would say things like, "You've heard it said in the Old Testament... You've heard it said in the Old Testament this, but I say unto you." And they're like, "What? Is He saying His word is more authoritative than the Old Testament?" That's exactly what He was saying. And so they heard that.

And so He spoke with this authority, but the words themselves were authoritative. They had power, so people witnessed that. I mean, a man who couldn't stand up—the Lord Jesus asked him, "Do you want to be made whole?" He says, "I can't." The Lord Jesus said, "I didn't ask you if you could do it. I said, do you want? Are you willing to?" He said, "Well, I want to be healed, obviously." The Lord says, "Well, stand up." And so then he stood up. And so they had never seen that before. So He spoke with authority. Nobody ever spoke like Him before.

The prophets from the Old Testament said when the Messiah came, He would have grace poured into His lips.

[Psalm 45:2 NKJV]

You are fairer than the sons of men;

Grace is poured upon Your lips;

Therefore God has blessed You forever.

So His words were authoritative. They had authority. They were gracious. They were kind.

I was thinking as we were singing of making the world a happy place. I wonder, sometimes people speculate, did the Lord Jesus ever smile? Did the Lord Jesus ever laugh? I mean, it's recorded that He cried, He wept. But did He laugh? Did He smile? You know, you get out in sort of those, you know, theological, you know... I don't even know if that's the deep end of

the pool, but you're out in the water, you're paddling around, and you're wondering, I wonder what is true? Because the Bible doesn't say anything about that.

I'm reminded of the illustration of a young girl when that question was asked: "Did the Lord Jesus ever smile? Did the Lord Jesus ever laugh?" She said to the preacher, "Well, sir, He must have. Because children were drawn to Him. And they're not drawn to you because of your stern face." This is what she said to the preacher. And I think, yeah, there is some truth to that. People were drawn to the Lord Jesus.

Now, as we said in Luke's gospel, they weren't all drawn for pure motives. Some of these people that were here were there specifically to trap the Lord Jesus in His words. No doubt the scribes that had come all the way from Jerusalem, they were there with impure motives. And you say, "Well, I'm thankful we're so far removed from going to church for impure motives." They were. I have a friend whose testimony was that he went to church to meet a girl. He wanted to marry a Christian girl; he wasn't even a Christian. Now, miraculously, the Lord saved him in the process, but his motive was impure. And so we don't have any trouble believing that there were people there in the house this day that the stories record—this historical event is recorded—that were there for impure motives.

And so no doubt they had come in, and they were seated in the front. The Lord Jesus often talked about the Pharisees and the scribes, these people who self-promoted. He said, "You guys, you always come in and you sit at the best seats." The best seats in those days were the front row. Well, it's like here, the front row is empty. Well, this is reserved for Sunday school, it says.

I used to live in Hunter Mile, and there was a church up the road. They had a sign that says, "Come early for a back seat." If you want to sit in the back, you've got to get there early because that's what filled up first. And you know that. You've got to go down to the front if you're late. Well, that's not how it was in this day. These guys, they came right to the front. The Lord Jesus said, "You guys never start in the back and... and... and be invited up." Somebody, the house owner, give you the opportunity to show them honor by inviting them to move up. He said, "You always come in and you sit right at the front. You really don't deserve that honor 'cause you're not that honorable people."

And so that's the basic gist of the story. So they're in here, they're here, seeking to trap the Lord Jesus. The house is full, that's what the story says. It's plumb full, plugged full, everybody's there. Some for impure motives, some are there because they're just drawn to the gracious words of the Lord Jesus, and they love to hear Him speak.

And so as we try and picture this home, and it's called His house and it's full, we wonder about amplification. Can everybody hear the Lord Jesus speak? Maybe He's a preacher. You know, they talk about preachers, you know, their veins, they pop out on their neck and they yell. Maybe that's what it was. They say, "Well, no, we can't go for that. That doesn't sound right." I think the hymn writer had it best when he said of the Lord Jesus that He speaks, and the sound of His voice is so sweet that the birds hush their singing. And so the hymn writer is saying that when the Lord Jesus spoke, you could hear a pin drop because people were waiting on His next word.

Faith in Action: Tearing Off the Roof

And so that's the... scene I suggest that's what this looks like. The house is full, people are listening, and in the town of Capernaum, there are four friends who have a friend who's paralyzed. And so they have faith. That's what the Lord Jesus... He commends them for. He commends the four friends. Not the single, the paralyzed man, but He commends the four friends for their faith.

And so what was their faith? Well, their faith was in the Lord Jesus. Their faith was this: that if they could get their friend into the presence of the Lord Jesus, He could help them. Now, I don't know if that's your story, but more than all thoughts your story, that's your faith. But that's certainly the faith of... well, the... people who put this building up. And... that's the purpose of people who built this building however many years ago. They wanted a place where anybody could come and sit in a comfortable pew and could hear a message from the Bible about the Lord Jesus that could help them, could heal them.

That's exactly what happens in this story. There's a man paralyzed, and his friends were convinced that if they could get their friend into the presence of the Lord Jesus, He could heal them. Now, of course, they'd seen it happen before, no doubt. And if they hadn't seen it, they'd heard it. But they believed it. That's what the word faith is. They believed it.

And so they come to the... to the back door of the house, and they can't get their friend in this bed through because the house is full. So they don't give up. They go around—maybe to the side or the back. We don't know where the stairs are, but they get up on the roof of this house, okay? And they get up on the roof, and the roof is a, you know, foot, foot and a half thick of beams and clay and tile, all sorts of things. It's a patio, it's a deck as well, because you'll test in the bed, but, you know, balcony around it so people couldn't fall off these rooftops. And so they come around, and they get their friend and their bed up onto the roof, and... and then the language is very precise. It says then they... then they... then they... then

they tore the roof off this place. That's what this is. They unroofed the roof. They tore the roof off.

And so now you come back inside. So you've got these guys up on the roof. They're tearing the roof off this house. And so now you're back in, and here's the Lord Jesus speaking. You could have heard a pin drop. People are listening. The people in the front here, they're trying to hear something that He says that they could trap Him in, some untruth, some claim that they could use to prosecute Him and eventually murder Him. That's where they were at. They were offended at His authority, the fact that people love to hear Him speak and follow Him. They were envious of that. And so they're sitting there.

And so as the roof is coming off this... this house, no doubt there's dirt falling. I mean, it's falling on them—I'm not sure—but the Lord Jesus, and He's at the front, and more is coming down. And so the whole meeting goes quiet. Like, He stops speaking because then Mark is very precise that it all becomes internal. It's what people are thinking. That's what the whole rest of the story is. It's what people were thinking inside, what they were thinking in their minds.

And so you get this paralyzed man, he's lowered down. And the meeting is stopped. So he comes down in front of the Lord Jesus. Now, we don't know if he ever met the Lord Jesus. We assume not because he was still paralyzed. We assume that if he had met the Lord Jesus before, he wouldn't have been paralyzed. So we assume this is his first... time meeting the Lord Jesus. And so what the Lord Jesus is about to say to him is the first impression, his first impression of the Lord Jesus.

And so it's interesting, one of the other Gospels, Matthew, tells us the first words of the Lord Jesus. It's not what it is here in Mark. It's something else, actually. The Lord Jesus actually says to him, "Son, don't be afraid." That's the first words he heard the Lord Jesus say. "Son, don't be afraid." Hear now, what we have here is actually His second one, the second sentence to the paralyzed man. He said, "Son, your sins be forgiven you."

Man's Greatest Need

Now, this is, this is... and... this is very insightful. You know, because as we think about human need, you know, it's different everywhere. At least we feel like it's different everywhere. You know, it doesn't matter where you go in the world. It's different on the other side of the world than it is here. But the Bible cuts through all of that.

You know, I like to preach this message to kids in the summer. And I ask them at this point, "What do you think man's greatest need is?" They're like, "Well, I don't know." I say, "Okay,

all right, how about that? What do you think this man's greatest need was?" He's paralytic. And you know what they almost unanimously say? "He needs to walk again." Like, you know, that's what I used to think. But according to the Lord Jesus, what was his greatest need? It was to have his sins forgiven. It wasn't about walking. You know, if the Lord Jesus had healed him of his paralysis and never forgave him of his sins, he would have gone to a lost eternity. "Son, your sins be forgiven you." That's what the Lord Jesus said to him.

And so, again, we don't know all of what people were saying because it was quiet. We know some of what they were thinking. So this man who's paralyzed, and then we know what the friends were thinking. They were thinking of getting their friend into the presence of the Lord Jesus. The paralyzed man, he was burdened in his heart, obviously. I mean, yes, he was concerned about his paralysis, no doubt. But his heart was burdened by his sin.

Then we know what these people were thinking. Notice what they said. They started to reason, in verse 6, in their hearts. They said this, "Why does this man, Jesus, why does he speak blasphemies? Who can forgive sin but God alone?" Was that right or wrong? Well, it was both. It was right in the sense that only God can forgive sins. Where was it wrong? Well, they were wrong about what they thought about the Lord Jesus.

Do you think that's important? Do you think it matters what people think about the Lord Jesus? Yeah, it does. The Lord Jesus was very straightforward about that. He one day said to the same group of people in a different part of the country, He said:

[John 8:24 NKJV]

Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."

And so... these guys, these Pharisees and scribes, lawyers of the law, they were half right. Half right in the sense that only God can forgive sins, but wrong about who the Lord Jesus was. And so you can be half right and all wrong.

The Authority to Forgive Sins

And so the Lord Jesus, He now speaks directly to them. That's who He's talking to. He's not talking to the people behind now. He's talking to the front row. He's in essence saying, "I couldn't help but overhear what you guys were thinking."

That's got to be shocking. That's got to be shocking to be sitting in a meeting and have the speaker know what you were thinking. I sometimes with kids try and guess. I'm like, "I'm going to try and guess what you're thinking." Just can't. Usually just before lunch. I'm like, "You're thinking, what's for lunch?" Is anybody? You know, there's a couple, they are actually thinking that. "When's this going to be over?" They're like, "Well, we were thinking that, but we don't want to tell you that's what we were thinking." That's fine. It's understandable.

But in this case, the Lord Jesus, He knows what they're thinking. And so He has a two-part question to them. He says, "Which would be easier, to say that your sins are forgiven to this man, or to say, 'Arise, take up your bed and walk'—which would be easier?" So we have to think through that. Because He's asking them, and they think through it. Say, "Well, obviously if it was us, what would be easier for us to say?" Well, of course it would be easier for us to say to a paralyzed man, "Your sins be forgiven you." Why? Would it be easier for us? Because you could never tell if it really worked or not. It's all internal. If I said to him, "Rise, take up your bed and walk," you know what you would find out? Because I have no authority. I have no power. So they have to think through this. They're like... they knew they had no power to heal paralyzed men.

And so they don't want to answer. But, you know, one of the things that is going on is that it's all internal. And so we know what they were thinking because the Lord Jesus tells us what they were thinking. We know what the four friends were thinking because the Lord Jesus commends them for their faith. So they were thinking of getting their friend into the presence of the Lord Jesus. I think we know what he was thinking because of the words of the Lord Jesus, "Son, don't be afraid." So he was fearful. And then, "Your sins be forgiven you." He was concerned about the burden of his sin.

But what about what was Jesus thinking? When He asks the question to them, "Which would be easier, to say your sins are forgiven or to say take up your bed and walk," which would be easier for Him? Well, actually the latter. You know that the Bible says that He spoke the world into existence. The word of His mouth.

You know, sometimes as we reflect on the blasphemies and the atrocities that go on in the world, we think about judgment and justice. Not like the Lord does, obviously, because He's merciful and longsuffering, not willing that anyone would perish. But we're not, unfortunately, sadly, like Him very much when it comes to that. So we do think about, when will justice be served? And so we have this vision, I guess, or this idea, maybe this concept, that someday the Christians will, with the Lord Jesus at our head, will make everything right. Justice will be served.

Actually, that's not how the story goes in the Revelation. We'll be with Him, but His enemies won't be destroyed by us. They'll be destroyed, the blasphemers will be destroyed, by the word of His tongue, the sword of His mouth. And so, He doesn't need our help.

And so when we think of His authority, His power, and Him asking the question, "Which would be easier?" Well, we know it's not the healing. He spoke, and that happened. But what about the forgiveness of sin? Like He forgave the man of his sin. What was He thinking about when He did that? You say, "You don't know." I say, "I do know. I know exactly what He was thinking about."

In Hebrews it says:

[Hebrews 9:22 NKJV]

And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.

So when the Lord Jesus looked into this man's eyes and said, "Son, don't be afraid. Son, your sins be forgiven you," the Lord Jesus was thinking about Calvary. He was thinking about dying on the cross and shedding His blood, giving His life for that man's sin. Not for his sin alone, but for the sin of the world. That's what He was thinking about.

Then He goes on to say, "But that you... you..." He says, "might know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"—He said to the paralytic, "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house."

The Healing and the Aftermath

So he gets up off his bed. He rolls it up, puts it on his shoulder, and he walks straight out the back door. I can't imagine he's not smiling. I can't imagine he's not actually probably leaping for joy. I assume his friends are leaping for joy. I mean, this is the best-case scenario. I mean, they were hoping that the Lord Jesus could help their friend. Well, He did far more than that for them.

And so, no doubt, they... Thank you... met him at the back, and he started to tell everybody what had happened. Maybe go home to the family. "I'll just go home to the family right away."

I hope you ever listen to Southern Gospel. The Booth brothers have a song about this whole scenario, some of the miracles of the Lord Jesus done in Capernaum. And there's all sorts of

things going on in the song. It's pretty amazing. But the highlight to me was in the chorus. It says at the end, "If you don't believe me," they said, "ask the blind man. He saw it all." And I think, wow, that is remarkable. Because the blind man did see it all. He had his vision given, and he saw it all. And so this is the idea of going to... well, that's what this would have been.

So they, no doubt, went home and told family, friends, what the Lord Jesus had done for them. And then you have the house, the roof. You say, "I wonder who fixed the roof." I'm not sure. People say, "Well, it doesn't say." Well, that's true, it doesn't say. But we know this, that in Nazareth for maybe eighteen years, every roof got fixed, every door got rehinged, every table that was built, probably built by the Lord Jesus Himself. And so if He didn't fix this roof, He had fixed many roofs in His life, His earthly life. And certainly, if He didn't fix the roof, He certainly fixed the home.

A God Who Repairs Homes

And He's still in the business of fixing homes. Because, you know, a house is not a home. Right?

I mean, they tell us that, you know, there's a homeless problem in Vancouver. These people are houseless and maybe homeless too. But I'm telling you what, I saw a guy yesterday. We went up to the Okanagan, and I saw a homeless guy. Sidney and I, we saw him. We turned off the side road in West Kelowna, and he was running across to his cart. His shopping cart, I saw it over there. Well, not running, but moving quickly out of the way. And he had a coffee. And you know what he had under his other arm? I'm like, he had a Bible in a Bible case. Like, that guy might be homeless, or he might be houseless, but there's a possibility he has a home. Maybe a home in heaven. I mean, I don't see a lot of homeless people carrying... so-called homeless people carrying a Bible around. I'm assuming it's because he knows the Lord. I don't know why he would be doing it. A coffee and his Bible.

And so, if the Lord Jesus didn't repair the roof, certainly He repaired the home. You know, that's our personal testimony. You know, the day my mom met the Lord Jesus, her home was coming apart. She was trying to divorce my dad, and her dad wouldn't let her. You know, he would say things like, "It's an embarrassment to the family," and "You made your bed, you need to sleep in it. You're not living here, a divorced woman with four kids. You've got to get back. You've got to make that work." Her dad wasn't even a born-again Christian. And so that was the environment. That was where our family was at. That was what my mom's life looked like the day she met the Lord Jesus.

In fact, she came to a meeting that was in a little school room in Salmon Arm, British Columbia, out at Carlin Elementary. It's twenty-four kilometers this side of Salmon Arm.

Straight up the hill, it's a school on the left. She came in, sat through a meeting on baptism. The brother preached on baptism, and she understood nothing. After it was over, she recognized a lady from the community who played hockey, or she was a hockey mom like my mom. And so she said to my mom, "How are you doing?" She said, "Fine." And she said, "In the start of Christ, actually, my life's a disaster." So she says to my mom, "You should talk to Harold." He's helped me and my husband in our marriage.

So my mom did. Mabel looked after us kids, and my mom talked to Harold for a couple of hours. Told him how wicked a man my dad was. Not all true. And so she pours her heart out to Harold. And he says, "Dixie, where is it at with you and the Lord?" She didn't hear anything about that. She said, "Well, you know, I believe God helps those who help themselves." That's a catchy saying. The problem is it's not true. God helps those who can't help themselves.

And so Harold explained to my mom for the first time in her life, she said, the gospel of Jesus Christ, that:

[1 Timothy 1:15 NKJV]

This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

And that:

[1 Corinthians 15:3-4 NKJV]

³ For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,

So she heard the good news of the forgiveness of sin, and she says to him, "I gotta get out of here." So she really... she got out. She wanted to get to her car in the parking lot and receive Jesus as her Savior. She did that. Well, I could never... the same. My dad was saved six months later in jail in Calgary. I don't know, thirty, forty in the family. So the Lord Jesus may not have fixed the roof on this place, but He does repair homes and He fixes lives.

Man's greatest need: forgiveness of sin. It would be a tragedy to come here to this building where people have invested because they believe this message. They have faith in what the

Lord is able to do. And so they've created an environment where people can come in and hear a message about the Lord Jesus and the forgiveness of sin. And so they can potentially come in with a burden of sin, hear how Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, pay the penalty or of salvation—free access. People have free access to that message. And then the tragedy would be that they left in exactly the same way they came.

Salvation is not a process. That's what we find here. When the Lord Jesus spoke to the man, it says he immediately got up. Your destiny can immediately be changed. It's a transaction of the heart. It's found in Christ. That's why He came into the world. That's why He went to Calvary. That's why He died, was buried, and raised again.

The Longsuffering of God

That's why He hasn't come back. Do you ever wonder about that? We look at the state of affairs, why the Lord Jesus hasn't come back.

Some years ago, I was preaching at the Union Gospel Mission in Mission, B.C. And, you know, I would ask rhetorical questions and never, you know, not expecting an answer. I'm not expecting you to answer. And so I said, "Have you ever wondered why the Lord Jesus hasn't come back?" And a guy yells in the background, "Yeah, I've been thinking about that. I was wondering that." I'm like, "Oh, hey, okay, what was it?" I said, "Well, you know, there's a lot of hard questions in the Bible, things that would be impossible... I couldn't answer. But that one is actually easy. Peter answers it because it's what the doubters would say. 'Oh, where's the promise of His coming? He promised He's coming.'" And Peter says, "Hey, don't make that mistake." The Lord Jesus, he says, is not slack concerning His promise:

[2 Peter 3:9 NKJV]

The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

That's why He hasn't come back. He's still saving people. Praise God for that. And if that's you, then we pray for you that the Spirit of God would take the message from the Word of God concerning the person of Christ to make it real in your lives.

Let's go to the Lord.

Closing Prayer

Father, we're grateful for your Word. Thankful for the crosswork of the Lord Jesus. We're thankful for your Spirit, who is working in the world—in our own hearts, in the world—convicting of sin, of righteousness, of judgment to come. Father, we thank you for so great salvation, so available, so free, so full, so available. Father, we just pray for your richest blessing in each family that's represented here. We pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.