TikTok Devotional Series Transcript:

August 2023

August 1, 2023 - Be Gracious to Me

Turn to me and be gracious to me; give your strength to your servant. (Psalm 86:16)

Grace is the constant plea of the praying psalmists. They pray for it again and again to meet every need. They give us a beautiful model of daily dependence on grace for every situation.

They cry out for grace when they need help: *"Hear, O Lord, and be merciful to me! O Lord, be my helper!" (Psalm 30:10).*

When they are weak: (Psalm 86:16).

When they need healing: *"Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am languishing; heal me, O Lord" (Psalm 6:2).*

When they are afflicted by enemies: *"Be gracious to me, O Lord! See my affliction from those who hate me" (Psalm 9:13).*

When they are lonely: *"Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted" (Psalm 25:16).*

When they are grieving: *"Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am in distress; my eye is wasted from grief" (Psalm 31:9).*

When they have sinned: *"O Lord, be gracious to me; heal me, for I have sinned against you!" (Psalm 41:4).*

When they long for God's name to be exalted among the nations: *"God be gracious to us and bless us . . . that your way may be known on earth" (Psalm 67:1–2).*

Prayer is the great link of faith between the soul of the saint and the promise of grace. If ministry was meant by God to be sustained by prayer, then ministry was meant to be sustained by faith in grace as God is gracious to us.

August 2, 2023 - God's Word Guides

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. Psalm 119:105

The last decade has seen the splintering of evangelicalism because of politics, the realities of so-called "same-sex marriage," the realities of so-called "gender transition," vaccination mandates, critical race theory and cancel culture. None of these things can be ignored.

If you live long enough, you will be confronted by issues and controversies that are so many and so diverse and sometimes so complex that you cannot possibly predict or specifically prepare for them. The best way to prepare for faithful, obedient, fruitful ministry in the next fifty years is to know your Bible deeply, thoroughly, confidently and joyfully.

Other studies are important, but the study of the Bible is essential. If you have gone deep with God by means of a rigorous and accurate understanding of his word, you'll always be relevant, and you'll never be speechless, as God's word guides you every step of the way.

August 3, 2023 - Glorified with Jesus

The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs — heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. Roman 8:16-17

If the Spirit dwells in you, by faith, then you are a child of God. And if you're a child of God, you will be glorified with God. Have you realized that? You will be like him. God will glorify "ordinary" people like you and me — to the glory of God.

We are miracles in the making. The oceans, mountains, and stars are lined up outside to get a glimpse of what we'll become. If you love and follow Jesus, that's true of you. And here's the critical turn: if the dull, uninteresting, ordinary persons you live with (or work with, or coach soccer with, or go to church with) love and follow Jesus, it'll be true of them too. If you could see what they will be in 150 years, you would see them differently. You would treat them differently.

Everything we can now see and hear, and touch, will pass away. When it does, you and everyone you know will be changed. Let us pray that we will be glorified with Jesus.

August 4, 2023 - Your Adversary the Devil

Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith. (1 Peter 5:8–9)

The two great enemies of our souls are sin and Satan and sin is the worst enemy, because the only way that Satan can destroy us is by getting us to sin and keeping us from repenting. The only thing that damns us is unforgiven sin. Not Satan.

God may give Satan leash enough to rough us up, the way he did Job, or even to kill us, the way he did the saints in Smyrna (Revelation 2:10); but Satan cannot condemn us or rob us of eternal life. The only way he can do us ultimate harm is by influencing us to sin and keep us from repentance. Which is exactly what he aims to do.

So, Satan's main business is to advocate, promote, assist and confirm our bent to sinning and to keep us from faith and repentance. His great focus is not primarily on how to scare Christians with weird phenomena (though there's plenty of that), but on how to corrupt Christians with worthless fads and evil thoughts.

Satan wants to catch us at a time when our faith is not firm, when it is vulnerable. It makes sense that the very thing Satan wants to destroy would also be the means of our resisting his efforts. The way to thwart your adversary the devil is to strengthen the very thing he is trying most to destroy — your faith.

August 5, 2023 - The Love of Money

The love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. (1 Timothy 6:10)

What did Paul mean when he wrote this? He couldn't have meant that money is always on your mind when you sin. A lot of sin happens when we are not thinking about money. All the evils in the world come from a certain kind of heart, namely, the kind of heart that loves money.

To know what it means to love money, you have to ask, What is money? Money is simply a symbol that stands for human resources. Money stands for what you can get from man — other human beings — instead of God.

God deals in the currency of grace, not money: "Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat!" (Isaiah 55:1). Money is the currency of human resources. So, the heart that loves money is a heart that pins its hopes, and pursues its pleasures, and puts its trust in what human resources can offer. So, the love of money is virtually the same as faith in money — belief (trust, confidence, assurance) that money will meet your needs and make you happy.

Love of money is the alternative to faith in God's grace. It is faith in human resources — the kind of thing you can obtain or secure with money. Therefore the love of money, or trust in money, is unbelief in the promises of God. You can't trust in God and in money at the same time. A heart that loves money is not banking on all that God is for us in Jesus, that is the love of money.

August 6, 2023 - Wisdom and Persuasion

But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. James 3:17

If you can spot fool's wisdom by its rivalry, drama, and disorder, then how do you know when you're looking at the real thing? In answer, James gives us a sevenfold description of "the wisdom from above" it is: pure, peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere.

As soon as you begin to grasp what "open to reason" means, you also begin to see why it matters. It matters because the alternative is a kind of closed-minded stubbornness that not only makes us dumber but also destroys our relationships. Being ignorant and inexperienced is not the problem. We all start out this way. The problem is being unwilling to yield, hard to be entreated, and not open to reason.

This doesn't mean we should be doctrinally unstable. Some teachings in Scripture are foundational enough (and clear enough) that we ought not to budge on them. God wants us to be open to reason, but not "carried about by every wind of doctrine". While wisdom means yielding to solid arguments, it may also mean yielding to innocent requests, especially from friends and family. This is how to be wise and persuadable.

August 7, 2023 - Christian Leaders

Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. (Hebrews 13:7)

Christian leaders need to teach the dangers of unorthodox teaching and how important God's word is to life. Two convictions should grow in us: First, the most important goal in life should be to be like Jesus. And second, the most vicious battle in life is with our sinful nature which hinders us being like Jesus.

Christian leaders should help us come to see worship as something glorious introducing us to the great hymns of the faith, which celebrates the great doctrines of the faith. Hymns are bearers of truth, and truth is one of the happiest things in life. Preaching is such a great work, reflecting the honour of God and his word, it needs to be done well.

A Christian leader's values are not derived from this world. A pastor's calling is not to be famous; it is to tend the flock God has entrusted to him. In terms of qualification for service, a pastor needs to be Christlike

and to perform his duties conscientiously, to the best of his ability. This is what makes great Christian leaders.

August 8, 2023 - Given a White Robe

They were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been. (Revelation 6:11)

For almost three hundred years, Christianity grew in soil that was wet with the blood of the martyrs. Horror spread everywhere through the congregations; there was no lack, however, of such as remained firm, and suffered martyrdom rather than yielding; and, as the persecution grew wider and more intense, the enthusiasm of the Christians and their power of resistance grew stronger and stronger.

So, for three hundred years, to be a Christian was an act of immense risk to your life and possessions and family. It was a test of what you loved more. And at the extremity of that test was martyrdom. Above that martyrdom was a sovereign God who said there is an appointed number of martyrs. They have a special role to play in planting and empowering the church. They have a special role to play in shutting the mouth of Satan, who constantly says that the people of God serve him only because life goes better. That's the point of Job 1:9–11.

Martyrdom is not something accidental. It is not taking God off guard. It is not unexpected. It may look like defeat, but it is part of a plan in heaven that no human strategist would ever conceive or could ever design and this plan will triumph for all those who endure to the end by faith in God's all-sufficient grace and are given a white robe.

August 9, 2023 - Jesus Brings Stability

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. Hebrews 13:8

Recently, a high school graduate, Lydia Owens, shared her testimony in her graduation speech. She encouraged her classmates that no matter their accomplishments or failures, their value comes from being made in the image of God.

Lydia described losing her mum, who had been her greatest inspiration, just two years earlier. "When everything else in my life felt uncertain, the only person that I could depend on to stay the same was Jesus," Lydia said.

Lydia told her classmates they need not worry about success "because God promises that His grace is sufficient for us, and that His power is made perfect in our weaknesses." The crowd's reaction demonstrated that they had been deeply touched by Lydia's faith and courage. Her speech has now gone viral. Lydia's faith makes it clear that students should never be forced to leave their faith out of the classroom as Jesus brings stability.

August 10, 2023 - Grace Through Suffering

"They have no root in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away." (Mark 4:17)

The faith of some is broken instead of built by suffering. Jesus knew this and described it here in the parable of the four soils. Some people who hear the word receive it at first with gladness, but then suffering makes them fall away.

So, affliction does not always make faith stronger. Sometimes it crushes faith. Then comes true the paradoxical words of Jesus, *"The one who has not, even what he has will be taken" (Mark 4:25).* This is a call for us to endure suffering with firm faith in grace, so that our faith might grow stronger and not be proved vain (1 Corinthians 15:2). *"To the one who has, more will be given" (Mark 4:25).* Knowing God's design in suffering is one of the main means of growing in grace through suffering.

If you think your suffering is pointless, or that God is not in control, or that he is whimsical or cruel, then your suffering will drive you from God, instead of driving you from everything but God — as it should. It is crucial that faith in God's grace includes the faith that he gives grace through suffering.

August 11, 2023 - Who is more Political?

For in Him, we live and move and have our being. Acts 17:28

According to political scientist Ryan Burge, the group of people in society most likely to be highly engaged in political action are not evangelicals, as we've been led to believe. They are in fact atheists. "Let me put it plainly," Burge wrote, "atheists are the most politically active group in politics today, and we ignore them at their own peril."

In a slew of indicators—from actions as simple as putting up a yard sign, to the more proactive of attending a protest march—atheists not only outdid their evangelical neighbours but, in most cases, were the most likely group to put money and time toward partisan activities.

Whenever an atheist expresses a passion for justice, they are making a tacit admission that there must be more to life than what their worldview allows. We can remind them that the human dignity upon which they insist, is rooted in Christian convictions about the image of God. We can offer an explanation for the presence of evil in the world, not as an illusion or fabrication or mere inconvenience, but as a real aspect of life after the fall.

We as Christians also have reason for hope that goes beyond mere wishful thinking for circumstances to change and for good to triumph over evil. We look for the restoration of all good things by the work of Jesus Christ, according to the will of the loving God Who created all things, including atheists.

August 12, 2023 - Faith in God's Grace

"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." (2 Corinthians 12:9)

God's design for suffering is that it should magnify Christ's worth and power. This is grace, because the greatest joy of Christians is to experience Christ magnified in our lives.

When Paul was told by the Lord Jesus that his "thorn in the flesh" would not be taken away, he supported Paul's faith by explaining why. God ordains that Paul be weak so that Christ might be seen as strong on Paul's behalf.

If we feel and look self-sufficient, we will get the glory, not Christ. So, Christ chooses the weak things of the world "so that no human being might boast in the presence of God" (1 Corinthians 1:29). And sometimes he makes seemingly strong people weaker so that the divine power will be the more evident.

We know that Paul experienced this as grace because he rejoiced in it: *"Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Corinthians 12:9–10).*

Living by faith in God's grace means being satisfied with all that God is for us in Jesus. Therefore, faith will not shrink back from what reveals and magnifies all that God is for us in Jesus.

August 13, 2023 - Fear of Death

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. (Hebrews 2:14–15)

How does Christ deliver us from the fear of death and set us free to live with the kind of loving abandon that can "*let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also"? The Son of God, who existed before the incarnation as the eternal Word (John 1:1),* took on flesh and blood, and clothed his deity with humanity. He became fully man and remained fully God.

The reason Christ became human was to die. As preincarnate God, he could not die for sinners. But united to flesh and blood, he could. His aim was to die. Therefore, he had to be born human, mortal. In dying, Christ defanged the devil. How? By covering all our sin (Hebrews 10:12). This means that Satan has no legitimate grounds to accuse us before God. *"Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies" (Romans 8:33).* On what grounds does he justify? Through the blood of Jesus (Hebrews 9:14; Romans 5:9).

Satan's ultimate weapon against us is our own sin. If the death of Jesus takes it away, the chief weapon the devil has is taken out of his hand. In that sense, he is rendered powerless. So, we are free from the fear of death. God has justified us.

August 14, 2023 -Glorify God in your Body

For you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body. (1 Corinthians 6:20)

God did not create the physical-material universe willy-nilly. He had a purpose, namely, to add to the ways his glory is externalised and made manifest. "*The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork" (Psalm 19:1).*

Our bodies fit into that same category of physical things that God created for this reason. He is not going to back out on his plan to glorify himself through human beings and human bodies.

Why does God go to all the trouble to dirty his hands, as it were, with our decaying, sin-stained flesh, in order to reestablish it as a resurrection body and clothe it with glory and immortality? Answer: Because his Son paid the price of death so that the Father's purpose for the material universe would be fulfilled, namely, that he would be glorified in it, including in our bodies, forever and ever.

God will not disregard or dishonour the work of his Son. God will honour the work of his Son by raising our bodies from the dead, and we will use our bodies to glorify him forever and ever. That is why you have a body now and that is why it will be raised to be like Christ's glorious body so that you can glorify God in your body.

August 15, 2023 - Disastrous Miscalculation

That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Colossians 2:2-3

The wonder of mathematics lies precisely in its objectivity, as Melissa Travis describes in Thinking God's Thoughts, in the miraculous way that maths corresponds to and describes the world around us. In her book, Travis chronicles how the beauty and objectivity of numbers led 16th-century German astronomer Johannes Kepler to discover the three laws of planetary motion and to correctly describe the structure of our solar system. Kepler, as much a student of God as he was a scientist, believed that the truths of numbers were eternal, existing eternally in the mind of God and structuring all of reality. Our minds—as beings made in God's image—are uniquely suited to unlock those mysteries.

Students who are taught that answers to algebra problems depend on the colour of their skin and that calculus professors are oppressors are not only not going to unlock the mysteries of the universe, but they will also believe what is not true about who they are and the world in which they live. Woke educators may hope to liberate students but by depriving them of objective truths they are subjugating them to bad ideas. It's a tragically ironic and disastrous miscalculation.

August 16, 2023 - God Is Faithful

Those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. (Romans 8:30)

Between eternity past in God's predestination, and eternity future in God's glorification, none is lost. No one who is predestined for sonship fails to be called and no one who is called fails to be justified and no one who is justified fails to be glorified. This is an unbreakable chain of divine covenant faithfulness.

And so Paul says, And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:6)

[He] will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. (1 Corinthians 1:8–9)

These are the promises of our God who cannot lie. Those who are born again are as secure as God is faithful.

August 17, 2023 - Citizenship in Heaven

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself. Philippians 3:20-21

Our Society used to openly embrace the Christian traditions and values that shaped our Country. In that culture, it was easy for a Christian to be a patriot. Perhaps too easy. Vibrant, biblical faith could degenerate into a civil religion where the country's wellbeing and the expansion of God's Kingdom seemed to be synonymous.

But today, many have rejected the Christian values that informed our society. What is true Christian patriotism? We mustn't deify our country. We don't wrap the flag around the cross. Our citizenship is in heaven, and that's where our ultimate allegiance is.

We can't love mankind in the abstract. We can only really love people in the particular, concrete relationships God has placed us in—our family, our church, our community, and our nation. Thank God for calling us into His Kingdom and allowing us to live in—and yes, love—our country but still recognise that our citizenship is in heaven as we eagerly wait for the appearing of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

August 18, 2023 - This is My Name

God also said to Moses, "Say this to the people of Israel: 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations." (Exodus 3:15)

God's name is almost always translated LORD (all caps) in the English Bible. But the Hebrew would be pronounced something like "Yahweh," and is built on the word for "I am."

Every time we hear the word Yahweh, or every time you see LORD in the English Bible, we should think: this is a proper name (like Peter or John) built out of the word for "I am" and reminding us each time that God absolutely is.

There are at least 10 things the name Yahweh, "I AM," says about God: We will look at 5 today and the other 5 tomorrow.

1. He never had a beginning. Every child asks, "Who made God?" And every wise parent says, "Nobody made God. God simply is. And always was. No beginning."

2. God will never end. If he did not come into being he cannot go out of being, because he is being.

3. God is absolute reality. There is no reality before him. There is no reality outside of him unless he wills it and makes it. He is all that was eternally.

4. God is utterly independent. He depends on nothing to bring him into being or support him or counsel him or make him what he is.

5. Everything that is not God depends totally on God. The entire universe is utterly secondary. It came into being by God and stays in being moment by moment on God's decision to keep it in being.

August 19, 2023 - God's Name Part 2

The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous run into it and are safe. Proverbs 18:10

Following on from yesterday here are the other 5 things the name Yahweh, "I AM," says about God.

6. All the universe is by comparison to God as nothing. Contingent, dependent reality is to absolute, independent reality as a shadow to substance. As an echo to a thunderclap. All that we are amazed by in the world and in the galaxies is, compared to God, as nothing.

7. God is constant. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He cannot be improved. He is not becoming anything. He is who he is.

8. God is the absolute standard of truth and goodness and beauty. There is no law-book to which he looks to know what is right. No almanac to establish facts. No guild to determine what is excellent or beautiful. He himself is the standard of what is right, what is true, what is beautiful.

9. God does whatever he pleases and it is always right and always beautiful and always in accord with truth. All reality that is outside of him he created and designed and governs as the absolute reality. So he is utterly free from any constraints that don't originate from the counsel of his own will.

10. God is the most important and most valuable reality and person in the universe. He is more worthy of interest and attention and admiration and enjoyment than all other realities, including the entire universe.

August 20, 2023 - Shake The Heavens

At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens. Hebrews 12:26

The "coming" of the Lord, the "day of the Lord," or "that day" are frequent themes in the prophets. They do not refer to the end of history but a time of judgment when God causes a "full stop" to man's pretentions. Such a "day of the Lord" had occurred when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians.

The growth of Christian faith and practice in the past is part of the flow of "living waters". The present-day church is in the midst of that enlarging flow, and the future which is beyond our view will see its growth in breadth and depth.

The hypocritical face of humanism has been exposed; its failures have produced its death-throes that we now see. The judgment of God is removing those things that must be shaken out so that those things which cannot be shaken might remain (Heb. 12:26-27). After judgment, life will flourish. We should be encouraged then, even in a time of terrifying judgment.

Evil is not prevailing. It is desperately forcing its bluff, a move that is doomed to fail. The future belongs to the Kingdom of God and its King Jesus, and because we are His, we will share in the victory ashe shakes both earth and heaven.

August 21, 2023 - All Things New

And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Revelation 21:5

Recently, the FDA approved a brain implanted computer chip, developed by Elon Musk's company Neuralink, for human trials. The chip, called the Link, embeds on the brain's surface and sends electrical signals to an external computer. Musk says he hopes the invention will enable patients to control computer actions like using a mouse, a keyboard, or even texting with their thoughts.

Musk believes his new technology will be especially helpful for individuals with disabilities like paralysis or even allowing the blind to see or the mute to communicate.

As "mind-blowing" as technology can be, it should also remind us of the tension and the temptations of living in the "already not yet" place between redemption and restoration. Technology, when rightly used, is restorative. It helps us overcome some effects of the Fall. However, even our best technologies cannot save the world, fix the human condition, or usher in a utopian age. We must always be careful that humans, made in God's image, are not turned into machines in an effort to make all things new.

August 22, 2023 - Eternity in the Human Heart

He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end. Ecclesiastes 3:11

The great challenge to Christianity is materialism, the idea that everything is just matter and energy. We should respond to this by tracing out the implications of that view and showing its utter implausibility. Scientists "observe the behaviour of things within the universe. They cannot make statements about things beyond the universe." Any time a scientist does that, for example by proclaiming that matter and energy are all that exist, he is no longer doing science.

Even more, if materialism is true, there is no reason to trust the scientist doing science. After all, if the materialist view is true, our minds must in reality be merely chance arrangements of atoms in skulls. We never think a thought because it is true, only because blind Nature forces us to think it. We never do an act because it is right, only because blind Nature forces us to do it.

This argument is a powerful response to atheism. If atheism is true, any foundation for trusting science or human reason is undermined, yet we know that God has made everything beautiful and has set eternity in the human heart.

August 23, 2023 - By My Spirit

Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts. Zechariah 4:6

God guides history to move us qualitatively closer to the ultimate target. Everyone grants that there is an intrinsic discontinuity between history and the eternal state, but we don't want the eternal state to upend history entirely, as opposed to revealing itself as history's intended capstone. If the curse is slowly being reversed in history, then history is moving forward by the Great Commission and an omnipotent Holy Spirit.

The redeemed, the people of the resurrection, must first perform a great task: the conquest of all men, nations, and things for Jesus Christ, bringing them under His law and into His Kingdom. Christ's victory is indeed also our victory, but His battle, His holy warfare against sin and death is also our battle. With our triumph in Christ, or, sometime thereafter, comes the end of history in the endless and eternal reign of Jesus Christ. We do our part in faith and in dependence on the Holy Spirit.

August 24, 2023 - Wisdom and Knowledge

Attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Colossians 2:2-3

After Richard Dawkins complained on Twitter about New Zealand elevating traditional Maori stories to the same level as Western science, Jordan Peterson retorted, "Welcome to the world of post-humanism, sir. A world which you sadly helped birth. … [I]t wouldn't surprise me at all if the woke polytheistic neo paganists destroy science faster than they destroy Christianity."

On one hand, Dawkins is right that the whole genius of "Western" science is that it isn't just Western. But, as Peterson not so gently noted, Dawkins has spent his career tearing down the Christian foundations upon which Western science is built. Without God and all that His existence implies, there is no solid ground for saying that any knowledge, scientific or otherwise, is true for everyone for in Jesus are hidden all the treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge.

August 25, 2023 - Grow up to Maturity

Until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and grow up to maturity, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Ephesians 4:13

There is a growing cultural stigma against boredom. Research shows that parents across cultural and economic lines believe it's their job to fend off their children's boredom with activities.

Doing so implicitly teaches children that boredom is bad for them, and entertainment is a right. This plays well in an age that treats any discomfort as dangerous, and that having fun, or at least avoiding suffering, is the meaning of life.

This understanding of life robs children of finding the joy, the meaning, and the truth of self-sacrifice, service to others, and devotion to things bigger than self. It's also cruel, to teach children who live in a fallen world that suffering and discomfort can be avoided and that you can't truly be happy if you fail to avoid it. Allowing children to be bored and uncomfortable, on the other hand, teaches them that they can handle tough things as they grow up to Maturity.

August 26, 2023 - They may not turn from Me

"This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood." (Luke 22:20)

The new covenant, promised most explicitly in Jeremiah 31 and 32, was secured and sealed by the blood of Jesus. The new covenant comes true for God's people who trust the Messiah, Jesus, because Jesus died to establish it. And what does the new covenant secure for all who belong to Christ? Perseverance in faith to the end.

Jeremiah 32:40 says, "I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me."

The everlasting covenant — the new covenant — includes this unbreakable promise, They may not, They will not turn from God, Christ sealed this covenant with his blood. He purchased your perseverance if you are in Jesus Christ through faith.

If you are persevering in faith today, you owe it to the blood of Jesus. The Holy Spirit, who is working in you to preserve your faith, is honouring the purchase of Jesus. God the Spirit works in us what God the Son obtained for us. The Father planned it. Jesus bought it. The Spirit applies it — all of them infallibly ensuring we will not turn from God.

August 27, 2023 - The Universe

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. (Genesis 1:27)

God made humans in his image so that the world would be filled with reflectors of God. Images of God. Seven billion statues of God. So that nobody would miss the point of creation.

Nobody unless they are blind could miss the point of humanity, namely, God — knowing, loving, showing God. The angels cry in Isaiah 6:3, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!" It is full of billions of human image-bearers. Not only humans. Also nature! Why such a breathtaking world for us to live in? Why such a vast universe?

There are more stars in the universe than there are words and sounds that all humans of all time have ever spoken. Why are there so many? So large? So bright? At such unimaginable distances? The Bible is crystal clear about this: *"The heavens declare the glory of God" (Psalm 19:1).*

If someone asks, "If earth is the only inhabited planet and man the only rational inhabitant among the stars, why such a large and empty universe?" The answer is: It's not about us. It's about God. And it's an understatement. He is more glorious. Greater in power. Greater in scope. Greater brightness, than all the galaxies combined. The universe is like a peanut that God carries around in his pocket. God created us to know him and love him and show him. And then he gave us a hint of what he is like: the universe.

August 28, 2023 - This Moment & Hope

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. 1 Peter 1:3

In the year 64 AD, the Great Fire of Rome broke out, for which Emperor Nero would blame a new religious sect, the Christians. The first Epistle of the Apostle Peter was written to those who experienced the persecution unleashed by Nero.

I Peter is best summarized as "the Book of Hope," but the hope he described is counter cultural. It does not anticipate a "good outcome," at least not in the here and now. Instead, Peter understands true hope as rooted in the certainty of something that has already happened: the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, which defines all of history.

Christ, the risen, sovereign ruler of the world, promises to make all things new (Revelation 21:5), and He is working in every time and place through His people. He has placed us in this cultural moment according to His redemptive plan. So, as Peter encouraged the first Christians who faced cultural hostility, take hope in the risen Lord Jesus.

August 29, 2023 - All have Sinned

All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23

The doctrine of selective depravity, favoured by humanism, stipulates that certain people are inherently evil, creating conflict by targeting specific groups instead of addressing universal sin.

This perspective distorts the biblical concept of salvation, replacing Christ's role with a self-identified "righteous" segment of society. The doctrine fuels conflicts, as witnessed in the 20th century, and enables politicians to manipulate public sentiment by demonizing specific groups. Marxism effectively exploits this doctrine.

Deeply ingrained in modern socio-political structures and education, the doctrine of selective depravity impedes genuine solutions, intensifying the problems with each "remedy." We must understand that all have sinned, and all are in need of the only Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

August 30, 2023 - Every Decision

Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may find grace to help in time of The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord. (Proverbs 16:33)

In modern language we would say, "*The dice are rolled on the table, and every play is decided by God.*" There are no events so small that God does not rule them for his purposes. *"Are not two sparrows sold for a penny?" Jesus said. "And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered" (Matthew 10:29–30).*

Every roll of the dice in Las Vegas, every tiny bird that falls dead in a thousand forests — all of this is God's command. In the book of Jonah, God commands a fish to swallow a man (1:17), he commands a plant to grow for shade (4:6), and he commands a worm to kill it (4:7). Far above the life of fish and worms, the stars take their place and hold their place at God's command.

Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these? He who brings out their host by number, calling them all by name; by the greatness of his might, and because he is strong in power, not one is missing. (Isaiah 40:26) How much more, then, the natural events of this world — from weather to disasters to disease to disability to death.

Let us therefore stand in awe and be at peace, knowing that no natural event is outside of God's wise and good purposes, and he perfectly controls every decision.

August 31, 2023 - Enjoyment of God

Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. (Romans 5:9–11)

What do we need to be saved from? The wrath of God. But is that the highest, best, fullest, most satisfying prize of the gospel? No. Verse 10 says "much more . . . shall we be saved by his life." Then verse 11 takes it all the way up to the ultimate end and goal of the gospel: "more than that, we also rejoice in God."

That is the final and highest good of the good news. There is not another "more than that" after that. The end of the gospel is "we rejoice in God." The highest, fullest, deepest, sweetest good of the gospel is God himself, enjoyed by his redeemed people. The gospel is the good news that God bought for us the everlasting enjoyment of God.