



## AUTO-SERMON TRANSCRIPT

*What do we try to cover up that we ought to wash out?*

> Priests & Kings, 3 of 3, March 24th, 2024

"Jesus alone can make us perfect because He does not negotiate with death."

Hebrews 7:11-28 by Michael Lockstampfor (@miklocks)

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[Music]

Good morning church. Welcome to our neighbors. My name is Michael. I'm glad to be together with you. We're going through a series and we'll get to that in just a couple of minutes.

Have you ever inherited a problem that you did not create? but it is definitely now your problem to solve? A lot,

okay cool. I was not sure how that question was gonna be received 'cause I was kind of scrambling. So I thought about kids, and as a father of six children, my default like illustration mode is like to talk about parenting and thinking about the times where something has broken again and now has caused injury.

and it's not a problem that I created but now it is definitely my problem to fix and take children to the ER. I could tell stories and stories and stories about that. But it also happens I think pretty regularly in work,

right? Like you go to your workplace and either you get hired to replace the person who did a really bad job. And so you inherit all these expectations of all the ways that you're probably gonna fail.

And really, you gotta overcome those expectations that you didn't even know because you didn't cause those problems. Or somebody in a different department has made promises that now no one is actually able to deliver on.

And it's your job to either deliver on them or to reset expectations with the customer, right? Like this is not a problem I created. I did not tell you this is what we're gonna do. But now you're looking at me and I'm the problem.

who has to answer. I have to deal with a problem that I did not create. Is that, were we familiar with that principle? Okay, we're gonna dig deep into one specific example of people who had to deal with a problem that they definitely did not create.

And there's no escape. There's literally no way around the problem. I can remember, I don't remember. which child it was, but at one point Jesse was pregnant and we were getting close to the end,

I don't think it was right. Getting close to the end of the pregnancy were eight, nine months, and Jesse kind of looks at me, he says, "I don't want to deliver this baby." And I was like, "Honey,

there are no options." (audience laughs) This is something we have to do now. There's no way around it, we can't bypass this one way or another.

The baby's gonna come out and I'm sorry, but this is what we're gonna have to deal with. And we're gonna look at another example of somebody who one didn't create the problem, but now absolutely cannot skirt around it and has to deal with it.

So I think we're gonna need Jesus to help us with this. So let's pause together and we'll pray. It's our habit as we begin to pray together the disciples' prayer. And so I'd invite you to pray with me.

The words are on the screen if you'd like. like to pray out loud. I'd love that, but at the very least let's bow our hearts together and let's go to the Lord. Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread in heaven.

forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.

Amen. I'm going to invite you to turn your Bibles to Hebrews chapter 7. Oh, and I'm in definitely the wrong place. Hebrews chapter 7. And it's on page 1247 in the Blue Bibles.

If you'd like to follow along in the Blue Bibles. And you got it. We're going to navigate to Hebrews chapter seven. We've been in a series that has slowly worked through the book of Hebrews in a couple of different chunks.

And the chunk that we're looking at is highlighting that Jesus is greater than kings and nation makers and greater than than priests and so we introduced last week or we talked about last week how God's steadfast purpose anchors us to a diligent hope in Jesus that God has a plan and he's working it out and the fact that he has a plan and he's been working it out for generations like should give us hope that he's

not done with us yet and it should anchor our hope in Jesus. Jesus. Because Jesus became human, like he was God and became human, and so he knows what it's like to wake up on the wrong side of the bed.

He knows what it's like to be up and down three and four times in the night, and to wake up just more exhausted having tried to sleep than if you'd have just stayed up. He knows what it's like to talk to people who just won't listen.

No matter what you say, no matter how you say it, they just don't get it. Like he is. is able to sympathize with our weakness because he has been completely human and Jesus's gentle sympathy grows our faith so that we can enrich our neighbors.

So it's not just so that we can benefit but also so that the community around us can benefit. So we're gonna zoom in one more time on the priesthood as as in Hebrews chapter seven,

verse 11. And when we begin reading, it's gonna, you're gonna get a little bit of whiplash, but we'll regroup. I'm gonna read Hebrews chapter seven, verses 11 through 14.

And then we'll start to unpack it together. Oh, I gotta turn a page. There it is. All right. (clears throat) Excuse me. Now, if perfection is perfect,

had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood for under it, the people received the law, what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek rather than the one named after the order of Aaron?

For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe from which no one has ever served at the altar.

For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. We'll pause there.

So opening up and he's having a conversation about priests. Now remember he's talking to folks who grew up in a Jewish mindset. And so they, the way that they worshiped was that they would come to the temple and offer sacrifices through a priesthood.

Now the priests inherited their office from their fathers. So the nation of Israel started off as one family. And that family had 12 sons.

And there was one son who grew up in a Jewish mindset. named Levi, and there was 11 other sons, and another son that was named Judah. And eventually Levi's sons, and even a subsection of Levi's sons,

'cause Levi actually had three sons, and not all the sons got to be priests. But one subsection of Levi's sons through Aaron got to be the priests. And so if you were born in that family,

then you had the opportunity to become a priest. And if you were-- were not, you were not allowed to do that. However, the author's pointing out that Jesus is descended from the line of Judah, that both his mother and father,

or both his earthly mother and earthly father, however you wanna trace that out, had connections to Judah. Now it's not to say that Jesus was born by an earthly father but that the inheritance would be passed down through Judah,

which is not to say that Jesus was born by an earthly father. a whole, I'm trying to skirt over some big issues if you'll track with me. So he's saying, the way that you've operated your whole life is through the Levitical priesthood through Aaron,

the priesthood that comes from Levi, the priesthood that is inherited by genealogy. However, Jesus isn't part of that family. He did not belong to that descendant. So we put our faith in him.

in Jesus, but Jesus shouldn't be a priest. There's actually like really big consequences if you act like a priest and you're not. So what's going on here? He's saying now if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood,

what further need would there have been for another priest to arrive? So he starts off by saying perfection was not possible for us. us or for any of the humans through the Levitical priesthood.

It could not make them perfect. And so some so what if that were not true then what need would there have been for somebody else to come up? That's kind of the question that he's raising.

When there is a change in the priesthood there's necessarily a change in the law as well which is a change in the law. to the fact that when the high priest,

the chief priest died, all of the debts in the country reset. Now, we'll dig into that a little bit earlier, but when there's a change in the priesthood,

when somebody who occupies the office of the high priesthood dies, all of the debts in the country, like because their sacrificial system and their tax system for the high priesthood nation were kind of tied together,

you actually got all of your debts all were canceled when the high priest had, or when the high priest died, which is kind of a cool deal. Like that, I think I'd buy into that system given the opportunity.

We don't work that way. I can't give you tax breaks when I die, but I would do my best if I were able to do that. Not that I'm a priest. Okay, I'm off track. Okay,

here's the deal. You guys are looking at me and I've talked about this for about five minutes or so and your eyes are glossed over. You're like, "Michael, it's clear that that's not my law,

and it's clear that even if it was my law, like, he's making the case that it's not actually helpful. If perfection were possible through that, which assumes that it's not perfection,

so why are we even talking about this?" Right? Anybody else? have that question? Okay, you can be honest with me, I'm real, this is fine. So the old law is no longer binding.

So he's talking about an old law that now has a new addition of it. That old law is no longer binding, but it's useful for understanding history and it's useful for understanding the relationship.

Because when we talk about law, particularly the law in real life, to Israel, they are the only country in the world who received their constitution from the voice of God.

Like we had some really smart guys, they got together in a room, they came up and they wrote a constitution, it's been really helpful, I like it a lot actually, there's some great strengths to it. However, Israel is the only country in the whole entire planet that when they got a constitution to govern their nation,

it came from the lips of God himself. And it starts off with this, I am Yahweh, the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt, you shall have no other gods before me.

We think of them as the 10 commandments, but they're actually the preamble to the constitution for the country that God was getting ready to start there. And that's unique.

There are not many countries like this. are countries who will say we're founded on religious principles, but there are not many countries who would say we are created by our God, our nation exists by the command of our God.

And Israel gets to make that claim. So when we talk about an old law, we're not just talking about like old dusty books. Because we're talking about the nation of Israel, we're seeing how God wanted his people specifically to kind of-- of organize themselves.

And if he's the one who's giving those instructions, we can not only learn something about like how he worked in history, but we can also learn about how he relates to people. And that might be helpful to know,

don't you think? So the old law is not binding, but it's useful for understanding history and relationships. I think there's a value in understanding something about how the Levitical priesthood worked.

in and of itself because God is revealing how he wants to relate to people and, spoiler alert, he says, "All of these things that I gave you years ago,

they were incomplete, but I wanted them to point to something that would be complete. All of these images and methods that I had you go through were gonna point you to a hope that would be finally fulfilled in Jesus." So.

So that's a spoiler. I've already kind of been through this. By way of review, the priesthood for Israel was hereditary. They were through the descendants of Levi. I already talked through all that.

But there were dire consequences for acting as a priest when you were not a priest. So there's a story in 1 Samuel where the king of the country cannot wait for...

for the priest to show up. So the one who's acting as priest, his name is Samuel at this time, and the king, Saul, is going to battle, and he wants God to go with him into battle.

But I don't know, if you know anything about going to war, I don't know a ton, but I suspect you actually can't control when the invading army attacks, right? So Saul's up on the front lines,

and he's a little bit concerned that this battle is going to get going. before we can pray and get God on our side. So he panics a little bit and he makes a sacrifice as a priest and he's from the tribe of Benjamin.

He's not supposed to do that, he's not allowed to do that and as a result he is disqualified from being king because he tried to act as a priest. There were dire consequences for acting as a priest when you were not a priest.

God let's pray. leaves him, and his whole life is a nightmare after that. Really interesting story if you wanna track through that. God had made this system of priesthood in order for the people to interact with him.

Have you thought much about what a priest does? I've used the term a ton, and if I show you a picture of a priest, everybody kind of knows, oh I know what a priest is, but like what does a priest do?



I think probably the quickest way is to contrast them with a prophet. So a prophet is somebody who goes and spends time with God, here's a message from God and brings God's message back to the people,

right? So a prophet brings the words of God down to give to the people. A priest takes the prayers and the intercession and the sacrifices of the people and takes them to God.

And God created this system where these two offices actually are very distinct. It's very unusual for the same person to occupy both of those things. But God created this system so that people could interact with him.

But the system was not perfect. It wasn't a... it wasn't actually able to make anybody who's operating in the system perfect. It was just a way that we could have relationship with God.

And that's because it was a system of atonement. Can you say atonement? It's a church word, atonement. And what atonement does in the Levitical Priesthood system is it's like...

when you're when you're doing your house cleaning when you're finding stuff in your house to give to the yard sale and you're going through and you're cleaning everything up and You're like, oh, well, I've already pulled this stuff out Let me just sweep and so I sweep all the dust up and then atonement is Sweeping all of the dust from the room into the middle of the room and then just kind of lay in a carpet over

top. It's covered You can't see it anymore anymore, right? Because you could, under the Jewish Levitical system,

you could go on Yom Kippur on the day of Atonement. You could go on the day of Atonement and you could bring the lamb that you've raised for a year with you to be the sacrifice for your sins.

And you could go into the temple and you could slaughter the lamb that's going to be the one that's going to atone for your sins. And you can go home. having slaughtered a lamb for your sins on that very day and choose the one who you're going to kill next year because you need a year old lamb next year.

The system's perpetual. Atonement is a covering over. However, what Jesus offers is a cleansing.

cleansing. He offers a deep clean. He offers legitimate forgiveness. But what do we try to cover up that we ought to be washing out?

When we go through and we start to sort our lives out, when we start to think about the things that are kind of cluttering up our soul, what are the things that we just kind of, oh, I know that's a problem, but I'll just cover it.

And I'll get to it next year. The next New Year's resolution, I'll definitely nail it then. And I'm just gonna cover this up and kind of pretend it doesn't exist. And God has grace,

He has mercy, so it'll 100 % be okay. What are the things that we're trying to cover up that He says, I wanna wash it. I want this to be out of your life. I wanna cleanse you of the things that are holding you back and keeping you away from me.



from me. Because David later will write about, he's writing about some of the weaknesses of the priesthood and he says, "Israel had need of a king who also was a priest." Can I read it to you?

So David is going to be a thousand years or so after the Levitical priesthood is established. He's serving as a king in Israel. Israel. I gotta find it. It's Psalm 110.

I usually put bookmarks in, but now I gotta flip. And now you're all looking at me, so I gotta remember what order the books of the Bible go in.

Like this should be easy. Psalm 110. It's a short Psalm. It's a Psalm of David. He says, "The Lord, Yahweh, says to my Lord,

Lord." So David says, "The Lord, Yahweh says to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.' Yahweh sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter.

Rule in the midst of your enemies, your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power and holy garments. From the womb of the morning, the dew of your youth will be yours. The Lord has said to my Lord,

"Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool." and will not change his mind. "You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. "The Lord is at your right hand. "He will shatter kings on the day of his wrath.

"He will execute judgment among the nations, "filling them with corpses. "He will shatter chiefs over the wide earth. "He will drink from the brook by the way, "therefore he will lift up his head." And I'm gonna try not to also preach this passage too.

but just to say that David writes that Israel had need of a king conquering foreign armies who also was a priest who led people in the pure worship of God and he says these two people are the same these two offices are gonna be found in the same person after the order of Melchizedek here's here should be our takeaway all of this and is our takeaway if you don't remember anything else You can remember this Jesus

alone can make us perfect because he does not negotiate with death Jesus alone can make us perfect because he does not negotiate with death There's a system for relating to God Which can help us to understand how God relates to us and what's needed,

but it is not actually able to make us perfect However, Jesus alone can make us perfect because he does not negotiate with death. We're gonna keep reading in Hebrews. Hebrews chapter seven,

I'm gonna begin in verse 15. I'll leave a bookmark in one, 10. We'll see if we go back there. All of this,

verse 15, this becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek who has become a priest not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent,

but by the power of an indestructible life. For it is witnessed of him, you are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. For on the one hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness,



for the law made nothing perfect. But on the other hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness, a better hope is introduced through which we draw near to God. And it was not without an oath for those who formerly became priests were made such without an oath.

But this one was made a priest with an oath by the one who said to him, "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind. You are a priest." priest forever." This makes Jesus the guaranteeer of a better covenant.

So there was a way to connect with God that existed. God gave them a way to relate to him, but there were several weaknesses. First, I think is probably one that we can identify quickly.

There were imperfect priests. The men that were appointed as priests did not always do a great job, and in fact, many of them became priests. corrupt and abused and manipulated the people that they were supposed to intercede for.

Like, that's a weakness of the system, would we agree? Yeah, okay. Additionally, you have the weakness of this system has to be transmitted through generations.

The one generation has to teach the younger generation how to do the same system because the older generation generation's not gonna be there. And so there's a difficulty, there's a weakness,

and transmitting this system from one generation to the next. In fact, Moses passes it on to Joshua, and Joshua forgets to pass it on to anybody in particular.

And so after Joshua, it all goes crazy. It all goes, hey, why? Everybody does whatever they think is right, and they've forgotten what God told them to do. It only took two generations. The law is important.

It's important to have something written down. It's important to have principles and rules and things written down, but the law is unable to enforce itself. Have you ever like come up with some rules for the house,

maybe? And man, you went haywire haywire and you even wrote them down maybe you made them pretty and printed them up on this nice sheet you had it laminated and you posted it in the kitchen they're beautiful they're important they reflect your heartbeat and the thing that you want for your family it's your desire however that piece of paper is not going to control your kids and it's not going to control you the law

is important but it cannot enforce itself itself. This is why, well, let me quote one of my favorite, one of my favorite lyricists, his name's Dustin Kinzer. He says,

"We can't medicate man to perfection again. "We can't legislate peace in our hearts. "We can't educate sin from our souls. "It's been there from the start." The legislation,

the law, is good and helpful, but it's not good enough. but unless it has a branch that can execute, that can enforce, it's worthless. And so, you've got the legislative branch that needs the executive branch in order for anything to happen.

Congress can pass whatever laws they want, but if the police officers that are pulling you over don't tell you what the law was, then it doesn't matter, right? And none of us actually wants to live in a world where there are speed limits.



somewhere, but there's never anybody who has to follow them. Because that sounds like a good idea until everybody's doing exactly what they want. And we've got enough problems,

like halfway enforcing the laws that we've got. But in God's economy, in God's economy, I'm going to quote out of the Gospel of John,

the biography of John, in God's economy. economy, the word, the legislation became flesh. The word became flesh. The law became a living body who came as an example for us.

There's so many ways that we could learn by God, but he finally in this era has communicated his character and his desire and his will and his love and his compassion through Jesus and says,

"Come to me through him." The word word became flesh. Yahweh appoints an indestructible priest who has the power to give a guaranteed hope.

Yahweh appoints an indestructible priest who has the power to give a guaranteed hope. And what would hope do?

How would hope reshape our attitude? If we woke up on a Tuesday morning with some hope, how would we be able to approach the day?

If we got the report card back on Thursday, but we had a little bit of hope, how might that change the conversation? How does hope reshape our attitude?

the way that we approach our lives? But here's the thing, nobody's perfect. Like you're not any more perfect. Like this is the difficulty of parenting is I'm not any more perfect than I want for my kids to be.

However Jesus alone can make us perfect because he does not negotiate with death. Let's read this last section here.

beginning in verse 23, "The former priests were many in number because they were prevented by death from continuing in the office.

But he, Jesus, holds his priesthood permanently because he continues forever. Consequently, he is able to see. save to the uttermost. Those who draw near to God through him since he always lives to make intercession for them.

For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens.

He has no need, like those priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for his own sins. for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered himself.

For the law appoints men in their weaknesses, High Priest, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a son who has been made perfect forever.

The priests inherited a problem that was theirs to negotiate, is theirs to solve. solve. All of the priests who served at the altar of God had a limited time span to do that.

They would start at 30 years old. You could not serve as a priest until you're 30 years old. But when life expectancy is like 45 -50, you've got a real small window to make any kind of difference.

Right? right? Priests, they did not create the problem of death. Like that was something they inherited. I don't know if you thought about that.

But death runs in the family. Death runs in the family, all of us, all of us. Ever since our first parents were evicted from the garden,

death runs in our family. Memento Mori. anybody familiar with this phrase? It's a Latin phrase. Just means remember you'll die. Remember you are mortal.

Don't forget, death is coming. If you live long enough, you die. If you live long enough, you die. And this is true for every human regardless of their occupation,

whether you're the president or whether you're a priest, whether you're a pastor or whether you're a priest, whether you're a pastor, whether you're a priest, whether you're a pastor, whether you're a pastor, whether you're a pastor, whether you're a pastor, whether you're a pastor, whether you're a pastor, whether you're a pastor, whether you're a beggar, whether whether you

are a good person doing good work in the world or whether you're an evil person who is only out to serve yourself, everybody has to negotiate death, except Jesus.

Jesus is the one who looked it in the eye and said you can sit down now. Jesus is the one who walked into it and said give me your best, shot and then walked out.

That's the hope that we have is that Jesus can walk straight into death and walk out. He doesn't shy away from it. He doesn't do what we do and pretend that it doesn't exist.

He doesn't try to soften the blow. He doesn't try to pretend like everything ultimately is going to work out okay. He says you don't need to worry about it because I've been there. I've done that. I've done that. I've robbed it of its power and if you're with me so can you.

Jesus has conquered death. He continues forever and and that would be that would be cool if it were anybody else. But the good news about having an eternal Jesus and not having an eternal me is that I'm jacked up.

like if you were to make me eternal the way I am right now everybody would be real sad because because I'm not that great I'm not perfect however however however it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest holy and innocent unstained and separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens we can rejoice the Jesus is eternal because he is worth being preserved.

All of us know our weaknesses. We don't have to pretend like we've got it all together. And Jesus comes and says, I will take death and you can come with me because I am worthy of being followed. I'm worthy of actually existing for longer than a limited amount of time.

And I can make you as I am if you will come with me. me. Jesus alone can make us perfect because he does not negotiate with death. If Jesus were to sit down at the table and to begin to negotiate,

okay well here's the deal, I gave him 80 years and I want to give him 500 so I'm gonna take this and you take that and like Jesus, he doesn't negotiate with death.

Death invited him to the table and he squabbles. squashed it with the table. He's not an equal with death. It's got no right to call him up because he has tried death and found it is insufficient to hold him.

He's tasted it. He's drunk it all the way down. He does not negotiate with death, which is cool. He's taking it all the way and he says None of this sin stuff none of this death stuff has any weight for me I've lifted it.

I've tossed it. You come with me and I will make you perfect. I Can I can restore? The relationship with God I gave you a system.

I gave you a picture. I gave you a way to have the conversation, but Realistically none of y'all did a very good job with that Like your priests weren't very good and you didn't hold them accountable either. So like this system wasn't broken.

So I've come to finally make it right if you'll come with me. Jesus's death was once for all. He's got no need to negotiate with death. So are we trusting Jesus to draw near to God?

Remember that you're gonna die Like maybe maybe close your eyes for a minute and instead of being in church for Sunday service. What if we're here for a funeral? We don't like to do that.

We don't go to any funerals that we're not invited to have you ever thought about that There's some parties we'll invite ourselves to but probably not to a funeral There's nobody that wants to spend time in the funeral. It doesn't have to be there But remember,

remember, you will die. Live long enough it'll happen. Unless the Lord and His mercy takes you home first. And you can't get around it.

The baby's coming. and it's not a problem you created you inherited it from your parents But it's your problem to deal with it's a friend's in the face of death.

I ask you will we are we? trusting Jesus For us to draw near to God In the face of death,

what's going to make things right between you and God? Well, I went to church a bunch. I didn't go every Sunday, but I went a lot. And I even stayed awake most of the time. I found a place where the preachers yell and all the time,

so I had no problem staying awake. Is that enough? For death? Well, I was really generous.

Every every time somebody somebody asked me for money I gave them money and I gave them twice as much as I thought I ought to give them like I was I was really generous all the time but death Jesus's death was once for all So are we trusting Jesus to draw near to God?

If you've never started that, if you've never even crossed your mind that you should trust Jesus in the face of death, like start, like have the conversation.

Say, Jesus, I don't understand all the economy of this. I can't put it on a spreadsheet, but all I know is that left to my own devices in the face of death, I've got nothing that I can throw against it.

That'll stick. But you say you've resurrected, you've flipped it over, you've ended the negotiations and so I wanna be with you. Will you take me?

Can I be with you? Will you make me like you? Start that conversation. If you've had that conversation with Jesus, it can be real easy to start there with hope and full dependence and then slowly just start to like,

oh yeah, but I go all the time, I might in this record. really good all right I did you see how I didn't like ever lose my ever-loving mind when they were being stupid Jesus that's got to count for something right are we trust in Jesus to draw us near to God I'd like to close this morning by reading a passage out of Romans chapter 8 and we read the first half of it it.

Oh we read the first part of it. I'm gonna read the whole thing. I didn't mean to but I will. I consider, I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

The creation waits with with eager long for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility not willingly but because of him who subjected it in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

For we know. We feel it in our bones. We know that the whole creation has been groaning together in in the pains of childbirth until now and not Only the creation, but we ourselves Who have the first fruits of the Spirit grown inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons the redemption of our bodies For in this hope we were saved Now hope that is seen is not hope For who hopes for what he sees,

but if we hope for what? we do not see, we wait for it with patience. Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know what to pray for as we opt, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words,

and He who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that for those who love God,

all things work together for good, for those who are... called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his son in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

And those whom he predestined, he also called. And those who he called, he also justified. And those who he justified, he also glorified. As good as done. What then shall we say,

because we know that for those who love God, all things work together for good, for those who love God. of these things? What shall be our conclusion? If God is for us, who can be against us?

He who did not spare his own son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect?

Is it God? it is God who justifies. Who is to condemn Christ Jesus, the one who died. More than that, the one who was raised, who is at the right hand of God,

who is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword as it is written for your sins.

sake we are being killed all the day long we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered no in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us for I am sure that neither death nor life nor angels nor rulers nor things present nor things to come nor powers nor height nor depth nor anything else in all of creation will be able to set us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord Jesus alone

can make us perfect because he does not negotiate with death Let's praise him together Lord Jesus. We thank you. We thank you for your mastery Over restoring the relationship between broken people people and the one who made them,

you in the mystery of your wisdom have given us a choice to walk with you or to reject you,

to live for ourselves and make ourselves the God of our own universe. And in your kindness,

you occasionally will let us feel the weight of death. So that we might know in our spirit that we are powerless against it.

and for all the anxiety that that induces for all the concern for for all of the the frustration that that causes we surrender these things back to you who have conquered death once and for all we look to you and anchor our hope on on you.

If you do not do it, we've got no shot. And you have said that we are invited, that you have chosen to love us. us and I don't understand but God today I'm thankful nothing's hidden from you you know my weaknesses you know my failure you know my sin still you invite me to life with you and there is nothing that we have done that could keep us keep you away from us.

So Lord I ask that you would overcome the the questions, the "yeah buts," the hesitations that we might throw in your way and say,

"You could save me if I were just..." "Oh Jesus, I pray that you would wash those excuses away and say, "I will forgive you.

You come to me." And I pray that you would give us your life. Jesus, it's in your name that we pray. Amen.

[Music]