

Audacious Disobedience

Scripture: John 21:1–14

Code: 43-115

John, chapter 21. We have finally come to the last chapter, and it's going to be a brief time in this chapter, because it's a rather simple and straightforward narrative. The body of this great epistle concluded at the end of chapter 20 with verses 30 and 31; this is the epilogue, as chapter 1, verses 1 to 18 was the prologue. Chapter 1, 1 to 18, the prologue was the place where the Holy Spirit set forth what Christ was before He came from the Father to do His redemptive work. The epilogue in chapter 21 shows what Christ is after His redemptive work is done and as He prepares to return to the Father. So we have the before and after bracketing the life and ministry redemptive work of Christ in the middle.

There is, in this chapter, a clear testimony that Jesus is alive. In fact, at the end of the first section, which is verse 14, it says this is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples after He was raised from the dead. We'll get to that verse in a bit. But it reminds us that this is the focus of this chapter, that Jesus is alive from the dead, and it is manifestly Jesus and no other, and the details of the narrative make that crystal clear. This is the final proof, if you will, that John gives us, that Jesus came back to life after His death.

But there are more things going on here than just that. If John's gospel ended in chapter 20 with verse 31 we would have some unanswered questions, some very important unanswered questions. The first unanswered question would be this one: What as the relationship of the Lord Jesus to the disciples after His resurrection? What was it? And what do we know about it? What did we learn about it? And what did they learn about it? That's answered in the opening 14 verses, and we'll look at that this morning.

There's a second question that importantly is answered here: What happens to the coward Peter who denied and fled and then wondered about the resurrection? Can we tie up the loose end of Peter? That's in verses 15 to 17.

And then there is the question: What should the disciples expect in the future? What should they be anticipating? The answer to that comes in verses 18 and 19, and the answer is persecution, persecution.

And then there was a floating question just kind of apparently moving around that John would never die. It was a rumor that John would never die, but he would live until Jesus returned. That question is answered in verses 20 to 23.

And then another question is answered at the final two verses of this chapter: Why were not other things in Jesus' life recorded so that we have a full record? That's answered in verses 24 and 25. So John is tying up some loose ends to complete the story and answer all the remaining questions, and at the same time, he is showing us the risen Christ in some wonderful, wonderful positions and relations to His disciples.

Now for this morning we're going to look at verses 1 to 14, so take your Bible and begin to direct your eyes toward that section. This answers the question: What will be the Lord's relationship to the disciples after the resurrection? Prior to the resurrection, He was their everything. Prior to the resurrection, He provided all that they needed on every level. In the upper room the night before His death, He had promised them that He would continue to do that. He had promised them that whatever they asked He would provide, that all of heaven's resources would be made available to them.

They were fearful about it. They were doubting whether that was a reality. They were afraid that when He was leaving they would not know where He was or how to get there. They were very insecure about the relationship they would have with Him in the future. Obviously, that was compounded by the fact that they couldn't grasp that the Messiah was actually going to die. Now they know He died, and now they know He rose.

But the question still lingers: What can they expect from Him in the future? It can't be like it was when He was there every day providing everything they ever needed. Well the answer to that question comes in these 14 verses, and this little account here in verses 1 to 14 demonstrates that the Lord is still compassionate, sympathetic, tenderhearted, loving toward His disciples. Even after His resurrection, even after He is glorified, He still takes a very personal, very practical interest in meeting their needs, which gives us the illustration post-resurrection that we need for the promises that also extend through them to us.

We're going to look at this chapter in its historical character, particularly the opening fourteen verses. But I also see behind the scenes, there's an inescapable spiritual lesson going on in this opening part of the chapter. It's an inescapable lesson, because it's exactly what is recorded here. You don't have to dig very deeply to see the difference between what happens when you disobey the Lord and what happens when you obey Him, that is illustrated here. We have in the opening five verses disobedience. We have in the closing verses, from 6 to 14, obedience.

In the opening section we have disobedience that results in failure. And failure, that results in loss of fellowship. And then in the closing verses we have obedience, which results in success, which results in intimate fellowship with the Lord. These are inescapable realities that are right there for us to see in this wonderful account. So let's be looking at that as we listen to the story itself.

Verse 1: "After these things Jesus manifested Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and He manifested Himself in this way." "After these things" indicates that this is supplemental, that this is, in fact, the epilogue. It's a break here. But exactly when, we don't know. Sometime between the eighth day when Jesus appeared to the apostles, and the fortieth day when He ascended into heaven, this third appearance occurred – third as it's designated in verse 14.

We know from Acts 1:3 that He was with them for forty days. It doesn't mean that He was with them all forty of those days, because there are only three times that He appeared to them up to this incident, and this incident happened in Galilee. They had to go from Judea to Galilee, which could be a journey that might take them some time. Before, they had seen Him in Judea in the upper room; now they're in Galilee. They've been waiting awhile for Him; finally He makes an appearance. So to say that He taught them the things concerning the kingdom throughout a period of forty days is not to

say that it was all forty days. Sometime between the eighth and fortieth day Jesus manifested Himself.

He uses that term twice in verse 1: manifested, manifested. You have to understand this: as a supernatural, sudden, startling appearance of Christ as if out of nowhere. In the same way, He appeared to those on the road to Emmaus, the same way He appeared to Mary Magdalene and the others, the same way He appeared to the apostles in the upper room, coming into the room and appearing instantaneously with the door shut and locked. He is now in His glorified resurrection form. He manifests Himself.

And I remind you that even though He could be seen because He was alive physically, He was not known, because His body was different. His glorified body was different. Mary Magdalene thought He was somebody else; she thought He was the gardener. The disciples on the road to Emmaus had no idea who He was, and not a glimpse, but rather a long drawn out conversation with Him in the daylight, and then in the house and around the table, and they still didn't know who He was.

And here, again, He appears, and they don't know who He is, because they couldn't know who He was in the glorified form, because the glorified form is so different. He has to therefore disclose Himself. He has to identify Himself, and He does that on this occasion. His body is so different. It is a body for eternity, not a body for time. It is a body for heaven, not a body for earth.

So this time He manifests Himself in Galilee by the Sea of Tiberias. Can I just comment on that? That is a lake 12 miles long, about 7 miles wide, 650 feet below sea level in the northern part of the land of Israel in Galilee, surrounded pretty much by mountains on the west, north, and east. It is familiar in the Old Testament. It's called Kinneret or Chinnereth or sometimes Gennesaret Lake. It is also the Sea of Galilee as we know it, because it is in the region of Galilee. The Romans renamed it to honor Tiberius Caesar and they called it the Sea of Tiberias as its Roman name.

Jesus had told the disciples to go to Galilee back in Matthew 28 after He had appeared to them from His resurrection. He said, "You need to leave for Galilee," – Matthew 28:10 – "and there you will see Me. You go to Galilee, you'll see me there."

Verse 16: "The eleven disciples proceeded to Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had designated." So they not only were told to go to Galilee, they were told to go to Galilee to a mountain, the very mountain Jesus designated. We don't know what it was, but perhaps it was what we know as the mountain where there was the Sermon on the Mount, and can't be certain about that. But that's one very near that slopes up from the sea to the north. The problem is when this narrative opens they aren't at the mountain, they're at the lake. So immediately were confronted with their disobedience. They are not in the place He told them to be. They shouldn't have been where they were.

Verse 2 introduces us to the disciples who are there: Simon Peter; Thomas called Didymus; Nathanael; and then the sons of Zebedee, James and John; and then the two others, most likely Philip and Andrew. So seven of them. I don't know where the other four are. There were eleven – with the absence of Judas now. I don't know where the other four are, but I'd like to think they were up in the mountain, and maybe they were the non-fishermen. As many of the disciples, as many as seven of them might have been fishermen.

It is interesting that this is a pretty familiar group, at least six of them are, and Thomas gets thrown in here. We're familiar with Peter and Nathanael, James and John, Philip and Andrew, kind of the inner circle. Thomas the doubter is thrown in to make the number seven. Why is Thomas with them? Because he wasn't with them once and he missed something really significant; he's not missing anything anymore. So wherever the leaders go he goes.

In fact, this is the group – the six of them minus Thomas – this is the group that Jesus first called as His disciples back in chapter 1. This is the group that discovered they have found the Messiah, so we know them very well. Only Thomas is a stranger to the original group, and I told you why. Interestingly enough, this doubting Thomas and this denying Peter are the first two named. They're given prominence in the list, and that's an illustration of grace: Simon Peter the denier and Thomas the doubter. Didymus mean he was a twin, he had a twin.

Well, they're up in the mountain for awhile; we don't know how long, we don't have time indicators here. "Simon Peter said to them, 'I'm going fishing.'" And in the form of the original language that's a final statement: "I'm going back to my old career. I'm going fishing."

We know he was impetuous. We know he didn't have real patience for anything. He's not demonstrated as a man of patience. He's a man of action, and I know he was loaded with self-doubt because of his failures, which were epic, around the trial of Jesus. He was the one who kept denying, kept denying, kept denying on three different occasions, six times at least. He doesn't have any confidence in himself. It was to him that Jesus said, "Get behind Me, Satan." He was the apostle with the foot-shaped mouth. He had inserted it so many occasions that he had to have a familiarity with his own history. And I think as he's sitting there – and remember now, they had been commissioned to be preachers.

Back in chapter 20, verse 21, "The Lord said to the disciples, 'Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you. I'm sending you. Sending you to do what? To be preachers, to be fishers of men.'"

But Peter has self-doubt. Peter doesn't know what the future's going to bring. He doesn't yet, and none of them have received the Holy Spirit; so that hasn't occurred to give them power. They're really unsure about what's going to happen. Peter proposes to go back to his career. When he says, "I'm going fishing," he means, "I'm going back to what I used to do." So he disobeys, and he's a leader; so like rubber ducks, they all line up behind him: "We will also come with you."

They went out, out of the mountain, got into the boat – not a boat, the boat. And we know they were boat owners, and we know Peter had a boat, because his boat is identified, and I'll show you that. I think he went back to his own boat and his own nets and his own paraphernalia saying something like this: "I don't know about this commission to fish for men. I do not know about this commission to go preach the gospel. I don't know about that. But one thing I can do, I can catch fish." They all said, "We can too, we're going with you." And that night they caught nothing. So much for self-confidence.

They had three years before been told that they were to drop their nets. Do you remember that? They were to drop their nets, stop fishing for fish and start fishing for men. Luke 5, listen: "Crowds pressing Jesus, He's on the edge of the lake. He saw two boats lying at the edge of the lake. The fishermen had gotten out of them, washing their nets. So He got into one of the boats, the boat was

Simon's boat. Got into Peter's boat and asked him to put out a little way from the land. He had to push off from the shore because the crowd was pressing Him, and He needed a little distance and the water's a pretty good conductor of voice. So when he had finished speaking from Peter's boat He said to Simon, 'Put out in the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.'

"Simon answered Him and said, 'Master, I need to inform you about fishing. We worked hard all night and caught nothing; this doesn't make sense. I know you're not a fisherman, but I'm telling You we've been there, done that; this is not a good time to fish. But' – he says – 'I will do as you say and let down the nets. I'm going to go prove my point that I know more about fishing that You do.'

"When they had done this, they enclosed a great quantity of fish, and their nets began to break; so they signaled to their partners in the other boat" – probably belonged to some of the other disciples – "for them to come and help them. And they came and filled both of the boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw that, he fell down at Jesus' feet, saying, 'Go away from me Lord, for I'm a sinful man!'" He knew who he was dealing with: Lord God, and he saw his own wretched sinfulness. He was so sinful in the attitude that he had conveyed to the Lord.

"Amazement had seized him and all his companions because of the catch of fish which they had taken, and they were James and John and Peter. And then Jesus says to them" – in verse 10 – 'Don't be afraid. From now on you will be catching men.' When they brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him." Now they're going to go catch men.

Fast-forward three years later. Peter's in the mountain, impatient: "Where's the Lord?" Self-doubt, he says, "I'm going back to fishing." It's really an amazing thing to say, given that Jesus was alive from the dead. But he went back to his own career. And verse 3 tells us at the end they caught nothing, absolutely nothing.

Over in verse 15 – we'll get to this next week – "Jesus says to Simon after breakfast," – which comes in a minute or so – 'Simon, son of John,' – Jonas – 'do you love me more than these?' – these what, these men? No, these nets, these boats, these fish, this paraphernalia. This is about who you love. 'Do you love Me more than these trappings that have been your life?'" Peter has to tell Him three times, "Lord, I love You. Lord, I love You." And, essentially, he's trying to convince the Lord that he loves Him when he hasn't demonstrated it, because his disobedience militates against it.

So here's the picture: if you step away from the calling has placed on your life and go in the opposite direction, if you go the path of self-will and self-effort, you may think you can accomplish a lot, but you might end up a failure. Disobedience leads to failure, it's just a simple principle. When God calls you and gifts you and prepares you and places you into ministry in His kingdom, whether it's professionally or as a lay person, when you look at ministry opportunity and you turn your back and walk away from it and it fits your gifts and your opportunity, you will fail at what you do; and that's exactly what happened here. The Lord does not reward disobedience.

So we come to verse 4: "Day was breaking now" – which means Peter's been trying to prove that he could catch fish all night; kept going until daybreak – "Jesus stood on the beach," – out of nowhere He appears – "yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus." And that fits every post-resurrection initial appearance of Jesus. They didn't know it was Jesus, because it was an unfamiliar form.

So this is so interesting: “Jesus said to them,” – this is from *pais*, best translation – ‘Guys,’ – children in the broadest generic sense, indiscriminately; not, ‘Little children,’ like John 13, not brothers like John 20 – ‘Guys.’”

So what has happened here is their disobedience has led to failure, and it has affected the relationship. He’s now talking to them in less than endearing terms. He’s talking to them in almost strange terms as if they were strangers to Him and He to them. He might say if you were in England, “Lads.” Not a term of endearment, not intimate; and here’s the pattern that you see: disobedience leads to failure and a breach in the relationship; loss of the fullness of fellowship, intimacy.

Back in John 14 our Lord had said a couple of times in that chapter, verses 21 and 23, “He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me.” Verse 23: “If anyone loves Me, he’ll keep My word.” That’s why it gets to love eventually in the chapter. “If you love Me, you obey Me. Don’t say you love Me and don’t obey Me. If you love Me, you obey Me. If you obey Me, then I empower you and you’re successful, and you enjoy My presence and fullness of joy in that relationship.” But if you are in a pattern of disobedience, you’re going to fail and you’re going to lose that communion.

“So Jesus says to them, ‘Guys, you do not have any fish, do you?’” This is like rubbing it in after all night; what an irritating comment. And that’s the best rendering of the Greek. He then rivets their attention to the fact that they have been disobedient and they have failed. And by the way, He had to speak fairly loudly from the shore, because the boat is a hundred yards away. So He’s actually shouting at them, “You do not have any fish, do you?” They answered Him, “No.”

You know, I think it’s good before the Lord provides graciously that we be made conscious of our failure, right, and articulate it, and confess it, and acknowledge it. He wants to hear them say, “No, we have failed. This is where our impatience, our self-doubt, and our disobedience has led us. It has led us to failure, and we acknowledge it.” It’s a pretty simple question, “You don’t have any fish?” They don’t have any fish, no.

So this is their situation, failure, and they have to admit it. They don’t know who He is, and He talks to them as if they were just another group of guys fishing. Life can go this way pretty commonly. So the disciples of Jesus even today, even in this congregation, you have been gifted, you have been called, you’ve been given spiritual opportunity; but instead of doing it, instead of following obediently what the Lord has laid before you to do, you turn away from it, you go back to other things. The Lord isn’t going to bless that, there’s going to be a measure of failure, and you’re going to lose that intimacy with Christ.

As you step into the kingdom and the work of the kingdom and the things that He puts before you to do, whatever service that might be within His kingdom, whatever it might involve, as you do that, you find that He empowers and provides for your success, and you enjoy the sweet intimacy of fellowship. You might be wasting all of your energies on things that pass away that are temporal, that are earthly, that have no eternal use at all. If that’s the case, it’s time for you to get involved in the business of fishing for men, kingdom business, whatever it is.

Maybe you found yourself too busy to teach a Sunday school class, too busy to be a part of Sundays, morning and night, at the church, too busy to pray, too busy to share in other people’s

lives, too busy to use your spiritual gifts. You're going to find yourself going down a path of failure and losing the joy of your intimacy with the Lord. So let's turn to the second part of the story then. They are failures and they acknowledge it. Peter thought he could do one thing for sure and that's fish, and he can't. He can't anymore, because the Lord won't let the fish go near his net.

Well we come from that to verse 6, we go from sort of self-effort to divine provision. "He said to them, 'Cast the net on the right-hand side of the boat and you'll find a catch.'" Now your first reaction's going to be, "That is a really ridiculous command. Does he think we haven't tried both sides? Does he think the boat is stuck in one spot and it's not moving around? Does he think the fish know the difference?" But I will say this; the command was as compelling to them as it was to the fish: "Cast the net on the right side of the boat and you'll find a catch."

You would say, "What fool on the shore a hundred yards away would know that? No one would know that. But for some inexplicable reason, namely the authority of the Lord, verse 6 says, "So they cast, and then they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish." Again, it's like the Luke 5 situation. So here, against what seemed, perhaps, rational to them, they are compelled to obey the Lord and there's immediate success. In fact, the success is super-abundant.

And, again, I just remind you – and this is just a simple illustration of the fact that when you obey the Lord, the Lord empowers the success. The Lord blesses, supplies, enriches. "So they cast out the net."

And by the way, I want to make a comment here. The Lord didn't say, "Okay, all you fish jump in the boat." No, the Lord doesn't do that. God does His work by His power but through His people. It's like the sword of the Lord in Gideon. The Lord's involved, but so are we. He always chooses means. God supplies our needs, but He also does it through our faithful work.

Well, they got so many fish that it was shocking; and, of course, this had happened three years earlier, so they knew who He was immediately. So now you know that this is the same Christ, risen from the dead, performing a miracle very much like at the beginning of His relationship with them. "Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved" – which is how John identifies himself – "said to Peter, 'It is the Lord. It is the Lord.'"

He's the one who commands the fish, and this is the one post-resurrection miracle, apart from walking through walls, which is simply the supernatural body of Christ and its capability. This is an actual miracle of controlling fish, "And John says, 'It is the Lord.'"

So when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put his outer garment on (for he was stripped for work)" – that means they wore just something around their midsection while they were working and he threw on his normal tunic – "and" – it says that – "he threw himself into the sea." It's just this is just such an interesting personality. I mean there's very little thought about anything, he just says whatever comes to his head, and he just does whatever impulse drives him to do; just throws on his thing and catapults himself into the water and leaves the other guys there with all this load of fish to figure out what to do.

But there's something wonderful about Peter's eagerness to be near the Lord; it was like he was glad to be found out. He's in the water and he's swimming with his tunic on, and then he's wading to the

shore. He did love the Lord. He knew his own weakness, he knew his own frailty, and he couldn't get back to the Lord fast enough. He wanted forgiveness, he wanted restoration, and he gets it – we'll see that next time.

“The others” – verse 8 – “come in the little boat, for they were not far from the land, about a hundred yards away, dragging the net full of fish.” So they're trying to get the boat into the shore, and they're dragging this net full of fish. Peter's long gone. He couldn't care less about what happened when they were disobedient. He couldn't care less about anything but being with the Lord and being restored, and convincing the Lord that he loved Him, being with Him.

“But the others bring the boat;” – verse 8 – “so when they got out on the land they saw a charcoal fire already laid and fish placed on it, and bread.” Jesus had made breakfast. You know how Jesus makes breakfast? “Breakfast.”

That was a good breakfast, like the loaves and the fish in John 6. And here, the first question that I posed at the beginning is answered: What's going to be the relationship of Jesus post-resurrection to His disciples? He's going to be there to provide. He's going to be there to meet their needs. Even the simplest needs of their hunger, He's going to care for them; that's not going to change. Even though it's after the resurrection, even though He's in a glorified form, He will have the same compassion and care, and make the same provisions for them that they've known Him to make.

They get to shore after fishing all night, they have to be famished. He's made a reasonable and incredibly wonderful breakfast for them, creating it out of nothing, as He appeared out of nowhere. “And then Jesus said to them” – in verse 10 – ‘Bring some of the fish which you have now caught, because I know you're hungry and you're going to need more than is here. So you bring some of your fish and we'll also make them a part of this breakfast.’”

And, again, this is how the Lord works, isn't it? There are things that He does, there are things that we do, that's why I read that Philippians passage where it says, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is the Lord who works within you to will and to do of His own good pleasure.” It's the Lord working in us, and it's us working the work of God in us out. Beautiful picture. He had made breakfast, but they were going to participate with what they had as well. The Lord will meet our needs, even our physical needs.

“Simon Peter then” – verse 11 – “went up and drew the net to land.” This is where he gets the term “the big fisherman.” Years ago there was even a book and a movie when I was a little kid called *The Big Fisherman*, and I used to ask, “Why does everybody think Peter is big?” This is it right here, because six guys have been dragging this thing in, the other disciples in verse 8.

But in verse 11 it says, “Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land, full of large fish, large fish.” A large fish in the Sea of Galilee, I've eaten those fish; some of you have been there. They're now called St. Peter's fish; they weren't then, but they are now, obvious reason. They can get as big as two pounds plus.

The number is fascinating to me. This is something Scripture does very frequently to let you know the reality of it. This isn't mystical, this is actually 153 fish, times two pounds, you're looking at three hundred pounds of fish in wet nets and paraphernalia; and this is where Peter gets the name “big

fisherman,” because he pulls it ashore by himself. He’s a formidable guy. So he drags in 153 fish, and even though there were so many, too many for the nets to hold, the net was not torn – which is another part of the miracle.

So they finally arrived, they’re all on the beach, the fish have all been pulled up. Jesus said to them, “Come and have breakfast.” It’s just something so normal about that. He doesn’t say, “Come and let Me explain My supernatural body.” He doesn’t say, “Let Me tell you how I telegraph Myself through space. Hey, let’s have breakfast.” It’s just something so normal about that, which is to say that the Lord cares that we have breakfast, that He’s going to be there to meet our needs.

They’re sitting a breakfast with Him and He’s eating again, which tells us His body has that capability. We already saw that earlier in the first day He appeared. “None of the disciples ventured to question Him, ‘Who are You?’ knowing it was the Lord.” They all knew. They all knew.

And then this is so amazing, verse 13: “Jesus came and took the bread, gave it to them, and the fish likewise.” He was their waiter. They’re sitting down eating and He’s waiting on them. You want to know what His relationship is going to be to His disciples in the future? He’s going to provide everything they need and serve them. He’s going to be the one who waits on them.

Yeah, we have plain proof of the risen Christ, but the risen Christ is not some detached ethereal being. The risen Christ can sit down and have breakfast with His disciples; and more importantly, He’s not all of a sudden disinterested in them, because He’s back in His heavenly mode and they don’t matter anymore. He makes sure they have breakfast and He serves it to them.

So when somebody asks you, “What is the current relationship of the Lord to His people?” here it is. So verse 14 wraps it up by saying, “This is the third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples, after He was raised from the dead.”

Third time to the inner circle. First five times that He appeared happened on the first day, resurrection day. He appeared to Mary Magdalene, the other women, Simon Peter, the two on the road to Emmaus, and that evening the ten apostles. A week later, ten plus Thomas; that’s the second appearance. Day one, day eight, and then this one sometime in that forty-day period.

And what did they learn this time? Obey, God provides, and you have intimate fellowship with Him. Do you see that? That’s the model here. When they obeyed, they were successful, and they communed with Christ in a personal way, the most blessed breakfast I’m sure they could ever have had.

You can live your life either way – disobedience, failure, and loss of fellowship; or obedience, success, and the richness of fellowship. Our Lord will meet all your needs if you’re faithful to obey His Word, and you’ll enjoy the fellowship with Him.

Father, we thank You again this morning for the opportunity we have had to glimpse our blessed Savior again in His glory. We acknowledge, again, that we wander off in our own direction. We who have been called to be fishers of men, as we all have, the Great Commission comes to all of us, can become so preoccupied with things in the world that we fail to acknowledge the command that You give us.

Lord, help us to be obedient, and in our obedience to enjoy Your power and Your provision and Your presence; that is our desire. Lord, I pray now for those who have no relationship with You, those who have turned their back on You, those who have rejected the gospel, those who have denied Your lordship, those who have chosen to be enemies of God, those who have been consequently sentenced to eternal punishment and judgment; I pray, Lord, that You will awaken their minds to the truth, that You will show them the glory of Christ, that they will come to Him as the only Savior, the only Redeemer, the only one who can rescue them from judgment.

I pray, Lord, that many who hear this message here this very day will confess that Jesus is the risen Lord, believe in their heart that You raised Him from the dead, and receive the gift of salvation. We know that's what You promise. Do that work, we pray for Your glory. Amen.

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