

Nothing is Impossible

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[0 : 0 0] Well, thank you so much for having me here and Fiona and Zach. We're so blessed to be here. It's such a privilege to speak at Watermark. I've heard so many amazing things about your church and about your community and just being here this morning, it's already clear that all of those wonderful things are true.

It's always a real privilege as a speaker to speak with one of these headset mics. They used to be called Madonna mics, now they're called Brittany mics. And the first time I spoke on one of these, I was in Australia and I was speaking to the pastor of the inviting church and he had never met me before.

And he said, oh, we've got this Madonna mic, it's new, we've got a new sound system, it's going to be great. And I'm like, oh, that sounds good. And he said, yeah, it's really good. They won't even be able to tell you're wearing it, it's skin coloured.

And I said, that's awesome, man, but it's probably not skin coloured. And he said, no, no, no, it's skin coloured. And so this went on back and forth for a while. He must have thought I was crazy. Anyway, so I just left it and when he saw me, he got a bit surprised.

But anyway, it's great to be speaking with a skin coloured Brittany mic, even though you can see it. Let me just open briefly in prayer. Heavenly Father, we just commit this time to you, Lord.

[1 : 1 4] And I just pray that you would increase, that we would all decrease, and that you would speak to each of us into our minds and into our hearts. In Jesus' name, amen. Amen. How many of you have either read or watched the movie of The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe?

Okay, most people. For those of you that haven't, I'll give you a bit of context, but you don't really need the context to understand this part of the story. There's a part in the beginning of the story that's often forgotten.

So even those of you that are used to the story or know it well may well have forgotten this, where Edmund, one of the children, the four children, it's about a family of four children, and they've just come into Narnia.

And they've just basically been briefed by this family of beavers about the evil white witch, about a curse that's kind of over the entire land, and about this great lion, Aslan, who was kind of the creator of all of Narnia, and he's the good king, the rightful king, the rightful ruler of Narnia.

But everyone's waiting for him to come back and save all of the animals and the good people of Narnia. But Edmund, while this is happening, he escapes and he betrays his brother and his two sisters and all of the good people of Narnia, and he decides to go to the castle of the white witch.

[2 : 3 1] He's met the white witch before. He thinks she's a better bet than this lion Aslan that everyone's talking about. He's had an encounter with her. He sees her power. It's all winter. The whole place is covered with snow.

So he makes his way to the castle of the white witch. He makes a judgment based on his own perception and his own experience. And when he gets to the castle of the white witch, he sees a stone lion.

Now, this white witch can turn animals into stone. So he assumes that this lion is Aslan, is the great Aslan that the good Narnians have been talking about. And so he laughed and he kind of ridicules it and says, Ah, see, this great Aslan's already been defeated, already been turned into stone by the white witch.

Simple part of the story, easily forgettable, not particularly interesting or exciting. And yet when you look a little deeper at what Edmund did, and when you look at it in the context of what was just read, about the angel coming to the Virgin Mary, telling her about something impossible that was going to happen, we see some interesting parallels.

We see some interesting challenges. We see some interesting questions. Because Edmund, just like Mary, was presented with supernatural power, with something that seemed impossible, with something based on the circumstances that didn't seem could logically and reasonably happen.

[3 : 51] And yet he and Mary reacted and responded in different ways. And the two big mistakes that Edmund made in kind of rejecting Aslan and ignoring the possibility of what he considered impossible, was that he overestimated himself and he underestimated Aslan.

He overestimated himself and he underestimated Aslan. And that, at its simplest level, is what we are all at risk of doing as people living in the 21st century, when we are presented with the supernatural power of God, this God of the impossible, this God of things beyond our imagination and beyond our understanding.

And any time we either reject God entirely or we don't embrace him and submit to him entirely in the way that he deserves to be embraced and submitted to, we're doing one of those two things in some combination.

At some level, we are overestimating ourselves and at some level, we're underestimating him. And his power. So those are the two things I want to speak about this morning. Overestimating ourselves and underestimating God.

And what flows from that? What are the consequences? What are the implications? And how reasonable is it to be doing that when we actually look more closely at the evidence, at ourselves, at the human heart, at our circumstances?

[5 : 10] So overestimating ourselves. It's interesting that Mary never overestimated herself. She didn't make this mistake that Edmund made. In fact, she was kind of confused and troubled as to why an angel would come to her.

In this obscure village, in this obscure town, this kind of unknown, single, engaged woman. She didn't have that sense of herself, that sense of her own status, that aggrandized view of herself.

So when the angel came to her, she was in a much better place to listen and absorb and to process what the angel was saying, purely in the context of the value of what was being said.

Whereas Edmund took what was said about Aslan, and he put it in the context of his sense of self, about how much he thought of himself, about his self-esteem and his ego. And that's why it kind of shot through.

It didn't get processed in the right way. So there were some things that Mary was stressed about and concerned about. And we can see that, in a sense, that was reasonable. She was stressed about the cultural consequences and the kind of logistical significance of what this angel was saying.

[6 : 20] She's a virgin. She's engaged to someone. And now she's going to be pregnant. Clearly, this is going to cause problems at that time. And so while she doesn't reject straight out what the angel is saying, she's got serious concerns and she's anxious.

So when presented with the supernatural power of God, when presented with something impossible, Mary's not putting herself above that. She's not rejecting it because of who she is. But she's understandably, in my view, concerned and is perceiving it in the context in which she is.

Surely that's something that we can all be okay with doing. When God presents us with challenges, when God presents us with opportunities, when God presents us with his supernatural power that he wants to deploy in our lives, while we shouldn't be subverting it to our own ego and our own sense of who we are and our power, it's okay for us to understand it and process it in the context of our circumstances, just like Mary did.

The problem that Edmund had was he made a judgment about Aslan and chose to reject Aslan based on what he thought was possible.

And this is an interesting thing about the word impossible, isn't it? We say it as an objective statement. When someone says something's impossible, they're saying that something cannot happen, full stop.

[7 : 39] But really, when we look at it linguistically, what they're only qualified to say is that I'm of the view that this cannot happen based on the information I have, under the circumstances I am in, based on the perception that I have.

As a lawyer, that's how you would take apart a claim of a witness that said, this is impossible. And so whenever we think that things are impossible, when our hearts tell us they're impossible, when our colleagues tell us they're impossible, when our circumstances tell us they're impossible, we should remember that it's only based on our perception, it's only based on the information that we have.

And we do this, I think, both individually, whether we're Christians or we're not, wherever you are with God today, whether you've been a member of this church since the day it was planted, whether you're here for the first time, whether you've been walking with Jesus, whether you're thinking about it, whether you've been dragged along here for some other reason, I think this can speak to all of us in a very similar way, because we all have that instinct to rely on ourselves and our own perception and our own understanding, and then put God in a box in accordance with that.

And this is kind of the story of humankind, how we've deified human progress and human achievement. Increasingly, we build kind of monuments to ourselves. We invent new things.

We, you know, the technology and the advancement, and we improve our quality of life, and our smartphones got smaller and smaller and smaller and smaller, and then the screens got bigger and bigger and bigger and bigger, and then it all got more and more and more powerful.

[9 : 07] And all of these achievements of humankind are impressive on any measure. When we look at what we've done over the last X thousand years, it is impressive. You know, there's a law that was coined, it's actually just an observation, coined by one of the former CEOs of the Intel Corporation called Moore's Law.

Many of you will have heard of this, which kind of summarises human progress in a pretty accurate way. Moore's Law just was simply the observation that the number of transistors on an integrated computer circuit, generally speaking, tend to double every two years.

Technology enables the number of transistors on an integrated circuit to double every two years. And when you model that, it's an exponential increase, because you're doubling on doubling.

It's compounding. And we see that. We see from just over a hundred years ago, where so many people, in fact, the vast majority of humankind was saying that flight for human beings is impossible.

Human beings will never fly to the point now where people are flying to another country to have breakfast and then flying back. 117 years later.

[10:14] So there's something in Moore's Law, and there's something in human progress and achievement. The problem is we take all of that, and we try to draw and build our identity, our sense of self, on all of those things.

We see the great progress. We see the great advancement. And we think because of that, we are all there is. We are all that matters. And we look inside ourselves for what's important. We look inside ourselves for fulfillment.

We look inside ourselves for identity. The psychologists call it self-actualization. The sociologists might call it self-sufficiency or self-aggrandizement.

It's basically just people trying to get by on their own. And that's what the world out there is doing. It's trying to get by on its own. It's what the world teaches. In fact, even the other world views, whether it's atheism or Buddhism or Hinduism or Islam or anything else, it all requires you to do something.

To self-actualize, to bring about something through what you can do. Self-empowerment. The entire self-help industry. It's worth something like \$11 billion a year globally with books like *The Present and Eat, Pray, Love* and the movies and all of this stuff.

[11:26] It's all about digging deep inside yourself. Right from *The Wizard of Oz* all those years ago. The whole thing is about looking inside yourself for what you need to be fulfilled. Look inside yourself for what you need to be happy.

And so when we look at all of these different systems of thinking and ways of thinking, it's almost as if all of humankind and life is like a jungle.

And we're all trying to negotiate our way through this jungle. We're trying to punch our way through it. And different people are offering different ways through the jungle. Some people are saying, you don't need to cut anything, you just swing and you work on your agility and you stretch and you bend and you get fit enough to negotiate through the jungle.

Other people are like, no, no, just get a chainsaw and hack your way through the jungle. Some people are like, look, we don't have chainsaws but we've got machetes to get through the jungle. And then different people are teaching different ways of cutting and different ways of using the chainsaws and the machetes.

Some people just want to bring forklifts and boulders and just barnstorm their way through the jungle. But everyone's trying to negotiate their way through the jungle using their own strength, using their own systems.

[12:27] And it all comes down to an overestimation of ourselves and what we are capable of. Because when we look at the stats, humankind is more educated, is more wealthy, is more technologically advanced, is more knowledgeable, is supposed to be more politically and philosophically enlightened than we've ever been before.

And yet all of the statistics tell a different story. Mental illness at an all-time high. Homicide rates at an all-time high. Suicide rates at an all-time high.

Divorce rates at an all-time high. Humankind is out there more advanced than ever. Broken minds, broken bodies, broken spirits. All because we're overestimating ourselves.

So that's one problem. The other problem or the other challenge, and certainly for us, regardless of where we are with God, the other risk is underestimating God.

And this can be just as bad. And Edmund clearly did this. He underestimated Aslan and went to the White Witch. But even Mary at first, there's some evidence in the Scripture to suggest that she had a little double take on what the angel was saying.

[13 : 38] And again, we can forgive her for that. It kind of seems reasonable because the angel said she's going to be pregnant and she's like, but I'm a virgin. And based on the information she had, virgins don't get pregnant. Based on the information we still have, virgins don't get pregnant.

That's a reasonable response. And so at first, even she questions what the angel is saying. She questions it based on what she thought was possible.

Today, when we are presented with the supernatural power of God, when we are presented with situations that seem impossible, and then we're presented with what Christians call a God of the impossible to overcome those situations, the reason we reject the supernatural power of God, or the reason we reject God at all on any level, whether we're Christians or we're not, generally comes down to one of two categories of error, or two reactions that we have to this claim that God is capable of the supernatural, or that God can do the impossible.

The first is, for some, and as an apologist, I see a lot of this out there, is quite simply that people think that this God that we speak of seems impossible to believe in in the first place.

This all seems impossible. This supernatural God, all of these miracles, it all seems unbelievable. You want us to throw out the laws of science, you want us to throw out the laws of nature, you want us to throw out the principles of logic, and they mash it all together and say, this just can't be, it's impossible, it can't happen.

[15 : 16] It's interesting, though, because those kind of reactions and those kinds of summarial statements, they work fine if you just say them quickly like that. But once you get them in, at least notionally, a courtroom of the mind, or a courtroom of debate, or a courtroom of dialogue, and you look deeper into what people who reject the existence of God, or the truth of the Christian message, or the gospel of Jesus Christ, or the reliability of the scriptures, when you start taking things apart more carefully, we see holes start to appear in these critiques very, very quickly.

And this is a sermon I'm giving on a particular passage, so unfortunately I don't have time to go into all of those arguments. Many of you will know them, there are books out there on them, and I'm sure many of you have prayed on these and thought on these before.

But just one example, on the virgin birth alone, a lot of the new atheists ridicule and mock the entire Christian faith, and they centre it, they centre their disbelief on the impossibility of the virgin birth.

They make the reasonable claim that virgins don't get pregnant, and they say, therefore, all of Christianity is false. Interestingly, though, when you talk about the origins of life, because if you reject Christianity outright, and that's everyone's right and prerogative, if you choose to reject Christianity outright, you still have to explain a lot of things that any worldview has to explain.

The origins of life, the source of meaning, the source of human dignity, the categories of purpose, destiny, morality, and so forth. And so if you reject the virgin birth outright, you still have to explain somehow the origins of human life, if you're rejecting the virgin birth and through that Christianity and creation.

[16 : 55] And here's how it's explained. This is actually the best explanation from new atheism that I could find. This guy's at least honest about how it happened.

Peter Singer, he says, First they claim, of course, that there's just nothing but a primeval soup, so there's no life out there, there's just kind of random molecules and compounds.

And then Peter Singer says this, We can assume that somehow in the primeval soup, we got collections of molecules that became self-replicating. And I don't think we need any miraculous or mysterious explanation beyond that.

I'll read the first line again. We can assume that somehow in the primeval soup, we got collections of molecules that became self-replicating. Now, I'm from the subcontinent.

It's an Eastern culture. I have a lot of cousins. And I'm from an Eastern culture. We've been very blessed. Almost half of my cousins are doctors. I was the failure that became a lawyer.

[18:00] And then became an apologist and just confused the whole system. But they tell me, reliably, when I ask them, when Fiona became pregnant, and we were early in the pregnancy with Zach, and I asked them, How does this even work?

How does a new life grow inside someone? And the miraculous aspect of it aside, what they tell me, my cousins, and medical science, is that basically, that's how it starts.

It's when cells self-replicate. So what Peter Singer is effectively arguing for is a virgin birth. To support atheism.

So in the end, and this is just one tiny example in one category of critique that we see of belief in God and the Christian faith, all Christians and all atheists out there are believing in a virgin birth of some type.

The question is, which virgin birth are you believing in? This is just one example that I chose because I'm speaking from this passage. There are countless, countless others for every critique you could possibly think of.

[19:07] The only way you can reasonably say, using the principles of logic and philosophy and law and evidence, the only way you can reasonably argue that miracles, that the virgin birth and other miracles, are impossible, is to prove, deductively, that God is impossible or God does not exist.

That's the only way because if God exists, then miracles are really no big deal at all. No big deal at all. If God exists, then it's like saying banana trees exist, therefore the existence of bananas is not really a big surprise.

If God exists, the virgin birth is barely a miracle. It's just a flick of the wrist if God exists. The only way of saying that miracles are impossible or the virgin birth was impossible is to prove that there's no God.

Now here's an interesting thing with proving a negative assertion, proving that there is no God. You actually need complete knowledge to do it. You need to have knowledge of everything across the universe to know that there is no God.

If you want to tell me that bananas don't exist, you have to show me all of the fruit in the universe and show me that there are no bananas there. It's a very difficult thing to do to deductively prove a negative.

[20:19] That's why even the honest and smart new atheists and atheists, they will say it's very unlikely God exists or he probably doesn't exist or we don't have enough evidence that he exists.

It takes a very bad philosopher to say that God definitely does not exist. They can't disprove it. Now Yuri Gagarin was the first human being in space, Russian cosmonaut earlier in the 20th century.

He got up there and obviously a known atheist and probably running some propaganda for the government that sent him there too and he said, I've been up to the heavens, I've been out into space and I can assure everyone on earth that God does not exist.

I've been up to the heavens and I had a look and God does not exist. And C.S. Lewis responded by saying, for Yuri Gagarin to go into space and claim that God does not exist because he couldn't find him there is as ridiculous as Hamlet or Macbeth going into their attic and claiming that William Shakespeare doesn't exist because they couldn't find him in their attic.

We see the ridiculousness of this, right? The only way that Hamlet would know that William Shakespeare existed is if William Shakespeare wrote himself into the story, Hamlet.

[21 : 40] The only way Hamlet would know about William Shakespeare, would be able to meet him, would be able to even know of his existence, is if Shakespeare wrote himself into the story. Isn't it interesting that's exactly what this God did?

Wrote himself into the story. Gave people a way of not only knowing that he existed, but of knowing him personally, up close and personal, as a person.

So for some people this God just seems too impossible to believe in and we've already seen the difficulties with that. For other people it's just an unwillingness to trust in God and that's often where more of us are as Christians because we go through difficulties with him.

We see things that are difficult in our lives or that are happening to people we love or there might have been people in our lives that have hurt us. There might have been people in your history or in your life that might have been Christian or called themselves Christian and might have not acted like it and might have really hurt you or someone else and for that reason you say, is this God trustworthy if people can follow him and claim to believe in him and then behave like this?

One of the most common objections we get as apologists is how can you claim that this is true when the evidence of it amongst Christians, we have so much evidence of Christians not behaving like the Christ that they claim to follow?

[23 : 03] And that's fair. I think that's a fair question. That's something we should, we're all going to have to answer for them. That's why we have to all continue working and building communities, loving communities. But let me tell you something about why that's an incorrect and erroneous way of judging this God and of making a decision about this God.

If you think of a beautiful piece of music, I just Googled because I'm nowhere near cultured enough to know this. What's the most famous piece of music that Beethoven ever composed?

According to Google, which means it has to be true, it turns out that it's Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. A beautiful piece of music like Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, it doesn't matter how much I practiced on the piano, and I'm not a pianist at all, I would never be able to play that in the way that Beethoven played it.

Even the pianists in the room, if you're honest with yourselves, you would know you would never be able to play it the way he played it. That symphony was composed by Beethoven for Beethoven.

He's the only one capable of playing it perfectly. Every other person that tries to play it is an imperfect representation. Some people might get close, lots of people might, but it's still an imperfect representation.

[24 : 17] The Christian life has only ever been played, the song has only ever been played, by one person perfectly, the person of Jesus Christ.

That's the person for us to look at to make a decision in relation to our own life about whether or not to accept or reject this God, this God of the impossible. If that's what's holding you back, that someone has done something, or you look at Christians and you're not impressed, it's irrelevant as to whether or not you're impressed by them.

Look at the person of Jesus. So when we look at these sources of doubt that people use for underestimating God or that people fall to for underestimating God, just a philosophical struggle to accept that the supernatural can happen or a personal struggle to trust in God because of other people that might have hurt them or experiences they might have had, the answer to both of those doubts is to look at the person of Jesus Christ.

It all comes back to the person of Jesus Christ. He's the person that God came into the world as, God's Son. the most perfect human representation of God possible in our world.

The most perfect human representation of God that was possible in our world is Jesus Christ. So what this all comes back to is what is our response to Jesus Christ?

[25 : 37] The whole thing comes down to that. What is my response and your response to the person of Jesus Christ? Well, when it comes to the virgin birth, there's lots of things we can see about him, about how he came into the world through this virgin birth that already distinguish him from other people in human history that have asked us to follow them or follow their principles or follow their philosophies.

The most interesting and most powerful, I think, gets back to the Shakespeare thing. It's when you look at all of these other religions, they're always conducted, religions or worldviews, either entirely in the supernatural or entirely in the natural.

The Hinduism example, which is, of course, most prevalent in the part of the world where I'm from, it's all mythological. It's all in the supernatural realm. Those gods never interacted.

Nothing ever happened here. You just have to trust that it happened in another supernatural place. In many senses, the same with the Greek and the Roman gods. Other religions, like Islam, for example, happened entirely in the natural.

God never came here. He never directly interacted. He never, you know, made presence with the world he created. He just dictated something to someone and then that was the rules and regulations from which we should all be responding to and living by.

[27 : 02] This God, this God of the impossible, is the only one of any worldview, of any religion or philosophy in human history, that brings together the supernatural with the natural.

A supernatural God coming into the world as a baby, as a person. That's unique in and of itself. One of the other things I find interesting with the virgin birth is if we were trying to fool people, if they, if the authors of the Gospels were trying to make something up, you wouldn't bring the person you call God, bring the Son of God into the world through an illegitimate birth.

That just creates more work for apologists. It just makes it less credible. It just makes it less respectable. It just makes it less proper. It automatically puts the whole system of belief on the back foot when you were trying to get the word out to people.

You just wouldn't make that up. It's unhelpful to make it up. Another of the many reasons why we see the uniqueness of Jesus Christ is because of his ongoing involvement with the world through his spirit.

And this is the kicker, really, because this is the answer that the angel gave to Mary when she said, hey, virgins don't get pregnant. He said, yes, but the Holy Spirit will make it possible.

[28 : 22] The Holy Spirit, many of us often forget this, he's not some abstract team member of the Trinity that's like running drinks for them. He's the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ.

He's the Holy Spirit of God the Father. He's those two persons of the Trinity in spirit, as a spirit. And he's still with us.

He's inside everyone that's accepted Jesus into their lives. He still works miracles. He still has the capacity of the Holy Spirit that resulted in Mary's pregnancy. That supernatural capacity is still accessible to all of us.

So all of this evidence that points to the truth, not just the possibility, but the truth of the virgin birth, the truth of the existence of this God, is quite overwhelming when you start looking through it.

And I could keep going. I don't have time to keep going. But what's interesting about all of this, I've been talking about evidence, I've been talking like a lawyer, all of this evidence might point to something's existence or someone's existence, even the miracles.

[29 : 29] And there's so many others, right, turning water into wine and healing people and even raising, you know, friends of his from the dead that Jesus performed. But none of them have a response imperative. In a sense, without wanting to diminish their power, it's kind of like fire twirling these miracles.

Because yeah, they're great, but then what am I meant to do with all of this? That's great for them. Great that they got free wine. Particularly living in Singapore, it's really great that they got free wine.

But what about what does that have to do with me? What's the point of all of this? Where is the response imperative? And so, my point to you is that the virgin birth in and of itself is proof that God exists.

The fact that God came into the world as a person is proof that he exists. But there's no response imperative if that's the end of the story. It just proves that he exists and that's it. That's the end of the story. We might as well just get on with it.

So powerfully and so importantly though, that's not the end of the story. Because this virgin birth and even all of the miracles that Jesus performed after he was born and grew up was just a preface to the main event.

[30 : 38] This supernatural power that we see through the virgin birth, the supernatural power we see through the miracles, they were just a glimpse. They weren't even the trailer or the previews in the movie when you go to see the movie.

They were barely the popcorn smell that you smell when you get to the theater. That's how unimportant they were in relation to what came next.

What makes something relevant for you and me? Something wonderful on a screen or something wonderful in a book, however true, doesn't in and of itself make it relevant for you and me. All of these miracles are just miracles.

But what if there was a miracle? What if God performed a miracle that was especially for you, that was about you, that was because of you and that was for you? And here's the thing.

God didn't just send Jesus into the world. He didn't come into the world as a person just to prove that he was God, just to show off that he could do the impossible. God had a dilemma.

[31 : 37] This might be difficult to stomach. It was difficult for me to understand and I'd been a Christian for five years when this was clearly explained to me. God had a dilemma. His dilemma was that he's a God of perfect justice and a God of perfect mercy.

And so he wanted relationship with us. That's why he created us, for relationship with him. And yet we are imperfect and we know deep down that we are. Alexander Solzhenitsyn, the Nobel laureate in literature, very famously said, the line that divides good and evil cuts through the heart of every man and woman.

The line that divides good and evil cuts through the heart of every man and woman. Now I agree, when I look around the world it cuts through the heart in different places for different people, but it definitely cuts through my heart and I'm sure if we look inside ourselves we can see that.

So God has an impossible situation. What's he going to do about the evil inside people, the fact that people are imperfect and he's perfect and you can't have imperfect and perfect coming together.

It's like oil and water. It's like a chemical reaction. It's an aversion. But he still wants relationship. And so some people say, well he should have just forgiven. He's always asking us to forgive.

[32 : 45] Why didn't he just forgive? The problem with that is he would have honoured his character as a God of mercy and a God of relationship but he would have violated his character as a God of justice.

So he's a God of justice. He can't leave all of this imperfection unpunished and undealt with but he's also a God of mercy. He wants relationship. He doesn't cast us away. He ceases to be loving and merciful.

He can't punish us in the way that we deserve to be punished. Then he ceases, he can't avoid punishing us sorry, he ceases to be a God of justice. So what does he do? This is what leads to the greatest miracle in human history.

The greatest miracle of all time. The greatest display of overcoming the impossible. Because God's situation seems impossible. He's in an impossible situation. He comes into the world as a person, Jesus Christ, and sacrifices himself to take on all of our imperfection, all of our sin as we Christians sometimes call it, onto himself to deal with all of that.

In dealing with the sin, in atoning for it, in paying for it, in paying the cost of it, he honours his character as a God of justice because he's dealing with this justly.

[34 : 02] And in dealing with the sin, he honours his character as a God of perfect love and perfect mercy because he's being merciful to us. He's not making us pay the price for it. That's the cross of Jesus Christ.

When we look deep inside our own hearts, we see a need, whether we're Christian or we're not, there is a need for mercy and justice and compassion. And there is a desire for love and relationship.

Isn't it so incredible, then, that the greatest miracle in history, the cross of Jesus Christ, brings perfect mercy and perfect justice and perfect compassion together and in doing so, it anchors it in supernatural love for the purpose of relationship.

All the components we find in our heart, it brings them all together in an incredible and an amazing way. And you and I have been called into up close and personal relationship with this God of the impossible.

And if you've already accepted that call, then today, you're being called deeper into that relationship. We are called into an up close and personal relationship.

[35 : 12] You know, one of the most powerful things about the cross that is just completely mind and heart blowing is that if you, and God says this to you, not you collectively as a group, but to you, He's speaking to you now, if you were the only person in the world, He still would have come for you and died on the cross.

If you were the only one, He still would have come and died for you on the cross so He could be in loving relationship with you. That's how amazing the cross of Jesus Christ is.

That's the supernatural, impossible nature of the love of Jesus Christ. Even the word love, in my view, is just the best expression we can give it with the English language. You can't even express what that meant and what He did and why He did it and what it means for you and me.

We do the best we can with words. So the question is, what's our response to all of this? We've seen the differences between Mary and Edmund when they were presented with the supernatural.

We see how Mary trusted, Mary accepted what the angel was saying and in the end, Mary embraced her position as one who was chosen and favoured by God.

[36 : 27] The question for you and I is are we willing to accept wholeheartedly in full submission the reality that we have been chosen and favoured by God and called into relationship? What's our response to that?

I said that the world was like a jungle and all of the other world views were giving us ways to get through the jungle. It's only the cross of Jesus Christ that understands that we are incapable of getting through that jungle ourselves and it comes in with a helicopter and it drops a ladder and it rescues us out of the jungle.

Every other world view out there will be based on either a system of philosophy or a set of rules or a set of principles or a way of thinking or a culture or a set of behaviours and rituals.

It's only at the feet of Jesus Christ. It's only the Christian world view that is a rescue mission. It's not a religion. It's not a set of philosophies.

It's a rescue mission because it's about a relationship with an individual. It just so happens that individual happens to be the God of the universe. Not about rules. Not even about responsibilities but about relationship.

[37 : 38] So wherever you are with him in that relationship whether you haven't entered it yet whether you entered it in the past and you might have drifted from it or you've gone lukewarm on it or whether you entered it some time ago or you entered it recently and you are on fire for it I encourage you to go deeper to take more time and more heart and more of your mind to spend time with Jesus to spend time in the scriptures.

If you need to do business with God today don't let this day go by without you doing business with him. Just whenever you get home or even while we're finishing up here take some time. If you need to talk to someone and ask questions if you need if you have a particular question that I didn't cover there are so many of them that you need responded to.

If the gospel of Jesus Christ was true and I believe from the bottom of my heart to the bottom of my brain that it is true because I've been in relationship with him if it's true it should stand up to any and every question that we could possibly think of.

The truth can stand up to questioning. The truth can stand up to questions. And so I encourage you in your search for truth that as you're searching for it and as you find it remember the world will give you lots of answers and ideas and theories but it's only in the scriptures it's only in the Christian faith that you can be assured that the truth is not an idea it's not an abstraction it's not a set of philosophies the truth is a person a person that loves you more than anyone else has ever loved you.

He knows you to your depths even your darkest depths and he loves you quite literally to the heavens. This God of the impossible who wants to walk with you so that together you can do impossible things things that you might think right now based on what you know and based on your perception can't happen.

[39 : 19] He wants to make them happen with you and for you and wants to walk with you. Let's pray. Heavenly Father I pray for everyone in here wherever they are with you I just pray that your love would shroud them that that sense of comfort and strength and hope that can only be made full in human hearts when it comes through you would be renewed in every heart here.

I pray that those who are searching for you would find you and would submit to you and I pray that everyone here would go deeper in their knowledge of you and their relationship with you today and from here on.

In Jesus name. Amen.