

Gideon: Warts and All

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- [0 : 0 0] Good morning, Watermark. My name's Graham, and I'm one of the elders here. My wife and I, we serve in the Sunday school class teaching the surf kids, and those are kids between age 9 and 11.
- And that can be challenging and quite fun at times. And it's fun because they ask a lot of questions, and they seem to ask me two questions rather regularly.
- And the first one is, why did your parents call you gray ham? Why not blue ham or pink ham? And I've tried to explain to them, you know, it's not actually gray ham, it's Graham.
- But they said, no, no, it's there in black and white. We can see the ham. They don't seem to have any problem with the ham. It's just the color that really disturbs them. And no matter how much I try to explain to them, I think I will be always known as the weird colored ham in their eyes.
- Another question that they ask me is, how old are you? Now, they're very clever because they never ask my wife that question. Only me.
- [1 : 1 0] And so I decided today I'm going to tell you how old I am, but I'm going to do it indirectly by mentioning a TV show that I kind of grew up watching. Now, if you know this TV show, you will have a good idea of how old I am.
- And the TV show was called This Is Your Life. Has anyone heard of that show? Okay, that's very discouraging. Okay. All right, I've just got to clarify one thing here for the two people that did put up their hand.
- The show originally ran in the 1950s. I'm not referring to then. It also ran a little bit more recently. Now, the premise of the show was that they would sneak up on a celebrity, grab them, and say, this is your life, and take them into the studio.
- And there they would have a whole lot of friends waiting for them, maybe a kindergarten teacher, and maybe an old report card. And they would kind of talk about their life, you know, mainly a lot of the good things that they had done and some of the funny things.
- But my favorite episode would be when they got an ordinary person, not a celebrity. They would sneak up on them and say, this is your life, and then take them into the studio and have people waiting for them.
- [2 : 2 3] And they intentionally picked people who had done a lot of good with their life. And I think that's great, right? Let's give the ordinary people some recognition. So usually they would just talk about all the good things they had done.
- But one thing that the investigators of the show found out was there was actually a whole lot of stuff in each and every person's life that wasn't so good to share.
- And they had to kind of hide it from everyone. And, you know, I kind of think, what happens if they were secretly investigating my life? What are the things that they would find out about me that they would have to hide from the show?
- But really, they were creating an image. You know, these are good people and they're bad people, right? But let's just focus on the good people. Maybe a modern example would be something like Facebook, okay?

I have to include myself in this, right? But generally, when people put a post on Facebook, it is to make themselves look good, okay? An example would be, these are my amazing kids.

[3 : 30] Look what they can do, right? And another one, this is probably very common at the moment, is, I'm on holiday. You know, you're not. You're still at work. But look at my amazing holiday.

They're great. We're sitting at the beach. We're drinking a pina colada. And you're still at work. But Facebook, essentially, it creates an image we want to portray.

It's usually a good image, right? I've yet to see a comment that says something like, I was a real jerk today, you know? I was really short with my kids.

I lost patience. I was quite rude to my wife. Have you seen any of those comments? Yeah, they're not all that common, right? All right. Oliver Cromwell was an English politician in about the mid-1600s.

So the youth will be totally shocked at this, but there were no cameras back then, right? So you couldn't take a photo of them. You actually had to get an artist to do their portrait.

[4 : 31] So there was an artist brought in called John Lilley, and he had to do the portrait of Oliver Cromwell. And John Lilley's getting ready to paint, and he looks over at Oliver Cromwell, and he's a little bit hesitant.

You see, because Oliver Cromwell wasn't that good looking. In fact, he was rather ugly, and he had a whole lot of warts all over his face.

And John Lilley said, how would you like me to do this? And Oliver Cromwell said, don't hide anything. Paint me warts and all.

Don't hide anything. Paint me as I really am, with all my physical imperfections. So if you've ever heard of the phrase warts and all, that's where it comes from.

And that's exactly what the Bible does, right? It's not a Facebook. It's not a this is your life. It's as we really are. So we're going to look at a character today called Gideon.

[5 : 29] Now, when I was in Sunday school, Gideon was a hero, right? He was a guy who led an army. Very cool. But we're going to take another look at him, warts and all.

Now, when we first meet Gideon, an angel comes to him, and he is threshing wheat. Okay, now in those days, the threshing floor was dug out, so it couldn't be seen.

Now, the reason Gideon is hiding away is because it says this, and it comes again and again in the book of Judges. It says, they did what they thought was right in their own eyes.

Not in the Lord's eyes, but in their own eyes. You know, we get to make the rules. What's right for you is right for you. What's wrong for you is wrong for you. There was no absolute truth. And when there's no absolute truth, it very quickly leads to idolatry.

And idolatry is essentially a wrong view of God. And when we have a wrong view of God, it very quickly leads to a wrong view of people.

[6 : 32] We begin to treat people as something we can use or an object. And when that happens, it very quickly leads to immorality. And that is exactly where Israel finds themselves.

But God loves them far too much to leave them there, so he sends something bad. In this case, it's the Midianites. Now, the Midianites were particularly cunning because they would wait until Israel had started planting their crops, and they were just starting to die, and then they would invade the land, and they would wipe out all the agriculture, all the livestock, and essentially leaving the Israelites to starve so they would have to hide away and grow their food in secret, which is what Gideon was doing.

So God sends an angel to talk to Gideon, and the most amazing conversation between them takes place. Now, when he finds Gideon, he is threshing wheat.

He's not lifting iron. He's not even a soldier in the army. He's not even a star on a sports team. He is threshing wheat. Now, have you ever seen someone thresh wheat?

It looks like this. It's not really that impressive, right? Nobody gets to work on a Monday morning and says, did you see the National Wheat Threshing Championship yesterday?

[7 : 54] It was just amazing. Did you see how that guy did that the whole time? It's not that impressive. But this is where God comes, and he meets Gideon, threshing wheat. And the angel says to him, the Lord is with you, mighty warrior.

Now, just between you and me, that would be pretty cool, right? You're threshing wheat, and the angel says, you're a mighty warrior. But Gideon's reaction is, pardon me, but you got it wrong.

And he uses the moment to essentially blame God. He says, listen, you know, really, God can't be with us because this bad stuff wouldn't be happening.

And actually, it's a lot worse. God has just flat out abandoned us. Now, Gideon has conveniently forgotten that God had sent a prophet to tell them exactly why they were in the mess that they were in.

And the prophet reminded them that he had saved them out of Egypt with miraculous signs and wonders. And he said, I'm going to give you a land flowing with milk and honey. I just don't want you to worship foreign gods because it will destroy you, and it will destroy the people around you.

[9 : 09] Gideon's forgotten that, right? And actually, Gideon knew a little bit more than that because his own family was involved with worshipping Baal.

But behind it, what Gideon is really saying is that, God, I don't think you should be acting that way. Simply, I know better.

You know, what you should be doing is just blessing us. You know, never be just. Just only do good to us and just turn a blind eye to the bad stuff that you don't really like.

And the sad thing is, nothing has changed in 3,000 years. We still think God should do it our way. We have a better idea of how to do things with God.

We have this crazy idea sometimes when things suddenly go bad in our life that God has forgotten it. We kind of love it when things are going well.

[10 : 08] But soon as we hit a bump in the road, that's it. God has abandoned us. Here's a question. Could it be that God is intentionally using something we don't like happening in our lives to get our attention, to focus on Him, so that He can use that to refine us and change us?

It says, right, this was what it says in the passage. It says, Midian so impoverished the Israelites that they cried out to the Lord for help. Now, reading between the lines, if they hadn't so impoverished the Israelites, they would have just carried on doing what they were doing.

And they would have essentially hurt everyone around them. Because one of the reasons that God chose the Israelites and said, I'm going to make you a holy nation, was to show the nations around them what God was like.

So if He had left them as they are, they would have continued to hurt themselves, hurt each other, and ultimately hurt the nations around them by giving them a wrong picture of what God was like.

Now, God is incredibly patient and kind with Gideon. He listens to Gideon have this little moan. And then He says to him, Gideon, all right, all right, just go in the strength you have.

[11 : 41] Trust me with the little that you do, and you're going to save Israel out of Midian's hands. And then Gideon opens his mouth again.

Pardon me. Now, I am convinced that Chris Thornton is a descendant of Gideon. Because he is so polite. He's very British. Pardon me.

Okay, you know, if it had been a South African, we would have just gone, huh? Or, you know, if you're a Canadian, it would have gone, hey. But he didn't. Pardon me. And then, actually, he's just using it to start with the excuses.

He says, listen, you've actually, you've got the wrong guy. Again, it's Gideon thinking, I know better than you, God. Because, actually, I come from a little, it's a small tribe.

It's not a really important tribe. And even in my family, I'm pretty much a nobody. And he's actually in pretty good company. Because Moses did the same thing. God asked Moses to do something.

[12 : 42] Moses, hey, I've got the wrong guy. And what they're doing it out of is a sense of fear. They are afraid. And let's be honest, right? If we were choosing someone to lead a battle, we'd probably also choose someone who's strong, brave, well-known.

You know, maybe he's got an Oxford or Yale degree. At least he's got some good financial connections, has a good family background. But God doesn't choose that way.

It says, I choose the weak things of this world to shame the strong. And I choose the foolish things of this world to shame the wise. You see, God knows what he's doing.

And he says, Gideon, listen. You're not listening. You're only hearing the second part of the sentence. Which is, you will strike down the Midians.

And that is scaring the pants off you. You're not listening to the first part of the sentence. Which says, the Lord will be with you.

[13 : 49] The Lord will be with you. The Lord will be with you. We do the same thing, right?

Maybe God says the same thing to us. The Lord will be with you. And I want you to be a witness for me in the workplace. The Lord will be with you.

And I want you to teach Sunday school. The Lord will be with you. And I want you to be a lawyer. The Lord will be with you. And I want you to plant a church.

You see, we need to get this. Because if we only focus on the second part of the sentence, one of two things will happen. One is that we'll either start trusting in ourselves, in our own ability, thinking, I'm actually pretty special that God chose me.

And God is actually pretty lucky to get me. Or we'll be so scared that we'll run away like Gideon. See, God does not require you to do anything without Him there.

[14 : 58] I've mentioned this before, but I went to an all-boys school in South Africa. And it was quite a tough rugby school. And there was a story in our school about a young guy who just started high school.

He was 13. And he got home, and his mom saw him. He was looking a little bit flustered and irritated, more than usual for a teenager. And she walked up to him, and she noticed his shirt had been ripped.

And she asked him what happened, and then it all came out. One of the bigger boys at school had been bullying him and had finished with holding him up by the shirt against the wall and had ripped his shirt.

And anyway, his mother was comforting him. And she says, you know, you need to stand up to bullies. And he's like, I can't, Mom. This guy's huge. He's big. But he had an older brother.

And his older brother was in the bedroom listening to this conversation. And the older brother was actually a member of the first team rugby. And he came into the room, and he said, you are going to go to that guy tomorrow, and you are going to give him your shirt and tell him he needs to repair it.

[16 : 05] He said, no way. He just says to him one thing. I will be with you. Okay. So the next day, he proudly goes there, walks up to this guy with his brother behind him, taps him on the shoulder.

Guy turns around quite smugly, sees him, sees his older brother. His face drops. He hands him the shirt. You need to get this repaired and have it back to me by tomorrow. Who does that little guy have his confidence in?

Is it in himself? Would he have done that without his brother there? No, right? He's got confidence in because of who is with him. It's not about you.

It's about who is with you. Okay. Now Gideon hears this again, and Gideon opens his mouth, and he says, okay, it sounds great, but can I get a sign about this whole thing just to make sure it's really you?

And I just can't imagine God looking down. Okay, Gideon, what do you want me to do? So Gideon runs off. He gets a little sacrifice, brings it back. God burns it up in a flame, and Gideon finally gets it.

[17 : 16] But he freaks out, totally freaks out, right? And he does what Christians never do. He just over-exaggerates. I'm going to die. But the angel says, listen, relax, relax.

You're not going to die. I've just told you God wants to use you to deliver you out of the Midians. Why would he kill you? Okay. You see, Gideon, at the heart of it, still doesn't really believe that God is with him.

And he doesn't believe that God is good and that God can be trusted. God says to him, okay, Gideon, there's one thing I do want you to do. I want you to go and remove the idols from your own family.

Because Gideon's family had gotten mixed up with idol worship as well. And the culture had convinced them that in order to succeed in life, you needed to offer sacrifices to Baal and Asherah.

And, you know, a similar thing has happened in our world. You know, we might not physically have an altar that we go and offer sacrifices to, but we do have our gods.

[18 : 27] They're just a little bit more subtle. And maybe they are the gods of consumerism and wealth, the gods of pleasure and ease, the god of self-interest and status.

And culture still is trying to convince us that we need these things in order to be a success. And, you know, we can get caught up in this as well.

And we can pursue these things as well. So it really wouldn't hurt sometimes for us to look at our own home situation before we go off pointing fingers at anyone else.

Okay, now Gideon actually once just shuts up and he does the right thing. He does what he's told, but he does it at night because he's scared of the people.

Now, I can relate to Gideon at this point. Back in South Africa, we used to have community group Bible study on a Thursday night.

[19 : 38] So every Thursday night, I would pick up two girls. Okay, that doesn't sound right. Let me just say that. Honey, I didn't pick up two girls.

What I meant to say was that every Thursday night, there were two girls, and they were first-year students at university, and I had a car and I would give them a lift.

I didn't pick them up. I just gave them a lift to community group. And they were two lovely girls, really strong in their faith. And one of the girls, her name was Jenny, gets in the car one night and she says, I'm in love.

I've met the guy of my dreams. He's wonderful, right? And she goes on and on about how amazing this guy is. And anyway, we get to community group and she does the same story again.

And eventually, someone asks her, well, does he share your faith? Is he a Christian too? And she says, no. Oh, but he's so close. So close.

[20 : 35] You know, the classic deception in our mind, flirt and convert or date to save, as they say it. She had started thinking about it. And, you know, he would come to community group with her, but soon as she went away on holiday, he would disappear.

And you know when you can see that it's just not right? Okay, there's just something wrong, and you know you need to say something? I think in Kento you say, I'm key. Okay, you got that right?

I was practicing that this morning. Okay, they're just not clicking. And I knew I had to say something, but I just thought, well, somebody else will say it.

Not me, right? Somebody else will say it. So I kept quiet. And the more I look, it's just, it's really something's odd there. And I came up with this great idea. You know what I'm going to do?

I'm going to prepare a Bible study on dating. Okay? There's 10 people in the community group. Only one of them's dating. I'm going to prepare a Bible study on it. Now, by the way, that's a really dumb move.

[21 : 41] Okay? It's not the way to deal with the situation. But the saddest part is, actually, I never got to deliver that Bible study at all, because she fell pregnant in her first year as an occupational therapist.

And she faced a lot of tough years as a single mom, trying to finish university, deal with the social stigma of being a mom at 19.

And I don't know if I had said something, if it would have changed anything. And God is more than able to redeem any situation. But I know, essentially, what held me back is fear.

I did it because I was afraid, right? Afraid to spoil her fun. Afraid to think that I would be the bad guy. Okay, now, we have to think back to Gideon.

Why would God even ask Gideon to do this? Isn't this just simply wasting time, right? Gideon, I want you to save the nation of Israel. That's the big battle.

[22 : 44] That's the big job. But, you know, we'll go and deal with your family first, right? Isn't it just wasting time to deal with the small matters? But actually, God is teaching him something very profound.

He's teaching Gideon that when he acts, God will bring him success. And when he acts, he will actually inspire others. If you look at Gideon's father's reaction, this was a guy who was guilty of offering sacrifices to Baal.

Suddenly, he's defending his son, and he is cursing Baal. It inspires others. And he's showing Gideon, listen, you're not alone. There are others who care about serving God.

But essentially, he's teaching him something. Be faithful. Be full of integrity in the small things. And then you will be ready, and I will give you the big things.

So Gideon's faith and his courage grow, right? It's the same with us. The more we trust God with a little thing, he does it, our faith grows, right?

[23 : 52] But the sad thing is Gideon's brave action that he does is very soon undone, and his faith fails him, and he needs a sign. Again.

And he says, okay, God, listen, what I'm going to do is I'm going to put out a fleece, which is essentially a sheepskin, right? And one day, I want you to make the sheepskin wet and the ground dry, and then God does it.

And he says, okay, do it again, but switch it around. And, you know, I've heard a lot of people come up and say, oh, we've put out a fleece as a way of kind of determining God's will.

You know, there must be a lot of naked sheep out there because there's a lot of fleeces being put out. But actually, it's not really the best thing to be saying because it really ignores the facts of the situation.

I'm going to give you three reasons why I don't think it's such a good idea. Number one is that it's a one-off event. It's the only time you see it in the Bible. So to make a model out of gardens from a one-off event is probably not the best idea.

[24 : 59] The second one is this happened under the old covenant, right? Before Pentecost, before the Holy Spirit. And Jesus promised us, he said, the Holy Spirit will lead you into all wisdom and truth.

And thirdly, and this is probably the most important point, is actually the fleece wasn't a way of determining God's will at all. See, Gideon already knew what God wanted him to do.

He wasn't putting it out to find out what God wanted him to do. He already knew. What he was doing it for is because he wanted reassurance that God would really do what he said.

So in fact, by saying, I'm going to put out a fleece, it is a sign of the weakness of his faith. You know, the very fact that God actually does what he's asked to is more a credit to God that God can be so patient and kind with him.

And he's patient and kind with us too. God goes on to teach Gideon amazing things, just how good he is and about his power.

[26 : 09] Because he reduces Gideon's army that he assembles down to 300. With 300 men, Gideon is able to overcome the Midianites and he rescues Israel.

So he finally achieves what the Lord told him he wanted to do. He rescues Israel. And after the battle, all the celebrations are going on.

Gideon does one really good thing and then he immediately undoes it with a couple of really dumb things. Now the good thing he did was the people came to him and they said, Gideon, you saved us.

You're amazing. We want you to be our king. They had the same problem as Gideon. They were focusing on the second part of the sentence. You saved us from the Midianites. And Gideon actually does the right thing.

He points them and he says, actually, it's not me. It was God. He used me, but it was God. He is your king. He's the one who deserves the glory. So I'm not going to be your king.

[27 : 12] But then the people, I guess, maybe were a little bit disappointed by that. So Gideon looks out at them. He says, okay, but I'll tell you one thing. How about we all throw in a little bit of the jewelry we got from the Midianites and he puts it all together.

And he makes an idol. The very thing God asked him to not do, the very thing that got them into the mess in the first place, Gideon takes them back there.

Has anyone been to the central ferry piers? Have you seen they put up this big Ferris wheel? Has anyone been on the Ferris wheel?

No. I'd love to go one day. It looks great. But with a Ferris wheel, you get on and then you go up, up, up, up, up, and you get to the top. And I can imagine on a clear day like today, it must be beautiful.

You get the stunning view of Hong Kong. And then you go down, down, down, down, down, and you get off exactly the same place you got on. It feels like you should have gone somewhere, right?

[28 : 17] You spent all that time, but in fact, you just went around in a circle. And that's exactly like Gideon's life. He got off exactly the same place he got on.

Israel started with idolatry, and they finished with idolatry. The second thing Gideon does that's really not the brightest thing is that he names his son, one of his sons, Abimelech.

Now, Abimelech means son of the king. He has a guy who's just told everyone, I don't want to be king. I'm not your king.

And then the very next thing he does, son of the king. Pride had crept into his heart, and he wanted a little bit of that glory for himself.

You know, the saddest part is the effect it had on Israel. You know, Israel went right back as well to where it started.

[29 : 21] Now, Gideon had taken them to the heights of 40 years of peace, but he brought them back to the same point that he had found them. And to be honest, there are many people where we can have that effect, right?

We sin, we mess up, we get into a mess, we ask for forgiveness, we get forgiven, we sin, we get into a mess, we ask for forgiveness, and the pattern just goes round and round.

I like to read biographies or autobiographies. And I read one about a few years back, maybe three years ago, by a British Bible teacher called David Pawson.

And he entitled his biography, Not as Bad as the Truth. Now, that seems a bit of a strange title, but the reason he did that was because at some point in his ministry, rumors were being spread about him.

And they were talking about things that he did, which he didn't do, and things that he taught, which he didn't talk, and he was really quite hurt and upset by it. So he went to God in prayer over it, and he felt God say, David, the worst that they can possibly say about you is not as bad as the truth.

[30 : 40] And David, he writes in the book, he actually says when he got that, he laughed, right? Because he realized it's true. And then God went on to add, he said, but I know the worst about you, and I still love you, and I still use you.

You see, that's also true for us as well, right? We are essentially a lot worse than we think we are. We just tend to have an upward comparison financially and usually a downward comparison morally, right?

That's how we justify it. But we are essentially a lot worse than we think we are. But God is a lot better than we think he is.

You see, because we are incomplete, Gideon was incomplete. The people of Israel were incomplete. Only Jesus is complete, and only he could be, because he was the only one who was perfect and sinless.

It says, he who knew no sin became sin for us. Only in Jesus can that pattern be broken.

[31 : 59] You see, Jesus was everything Gideon wasn't. Gideon was afraid of people. He needed to please people. Jesus was only interested in pleasing his father.

Gideon doubted. He was confused. Jesus trusted always in his father. Gideon wanted to seek some of the glory for himself. Jesus only wanted to glorify the father.

Gideon got distracted from his purpose and his mission. And Jesus was never distracted from his purpose and mission. You see, the whole point of the book of Judges is it is pointing us to the fact that we need a perfect Savior.

Otherwise, we just get wrapped up in a pattern of incomplete Saviors. Let's just say you're single, right? When I meet Mr. Right or Mrs. Right, then my life will be perfect, right?

Then my life will have purpose and meaning and I will be happy and content. And when we get that, yeah, no, it doesn't. Or maybe we think, okay, I need that education.

[33 : 13] When I graduate from the top university and I get my master's and my PhD, then my life will have meaning, purpose, and status. And then we get it and no, it doesn't. Or maybe what I really need is the perfect job.

I really need a good job, good status. And I get it and then, no, it doesn't. Because when the gloss wears off, it's just a short-term Savior.

And we need something else to keep filling it up with. But listen to Jesus. He says, I am the Alpha and the Omega. I'm the beginning and the end.

I'm a complete Savior. I'm not going to fade. You know, one thing I do know is that we don't like to think about this too often, but one day my life will end.

And one day everyone in this room, your life will end. We don't know who will be next, but that's what we do know. And we will stand before God.

[34 : 21] And I'm sure a book's going to be open, and it's going to be called, This Is Your Life. And it's not going to be just all the nice bits. It's going to be everything you've ever thought, done, or said.

And you're not going to have any family or friends there to put in a good word for you. You're going to stand before a holy and just God. And that, quite frankly, is scary, right?

And if that's where it ended, that would be really bad for me. But there is another book, right? It's a book called The Book of Life.

And in The Book of Life, it will just be a book with names in it. And it will be the names of people who have put their trust and their hope in Jesus Christ to redeem them, save them, and change them.

It will be people who realize they cannot make themselves righteous. Because, you see, the harder we try to be righteous, and the closer we get to it, what it really does is fill us with self-righteousness and pride and contempt for others who maybe don't look as righteous as we are.

[35 : 43] But essentially, it leaves us incomplete. No matter how close we get there, we never quite get to where as good as we want to be.

I've yet to meet anyone when you ask them the question, are you as good as you want to be, that have said yes. I think deep down in the human heart, all of us want to be better than we are.

Jesus offers that. It's also going to be filled with names of people who have said, hey, I can't do this.

You know, I'm just going to do what's right in my own eyes. I can never be 100% righteous, so I'm just going to give up. The good news is, is that Jesus can be.

And Jesus says this to us. He says, give me your sin and I will give you my righteousness. What a deal. What a deal, right?

[36 : 42] Now, if you explain that to any businessman, they would say you're crazy because that kind of deal only suits one party.

But love is not a business deal. There's a lovely verse in Romans 8. It says something like this. It says, if God is for us, who can stand against us?

And honestly, it's a question. And the answer is quite simple. The answer is nobody. Nothing. And if that is true and we really believe it, then that's the reason we don't need to trust in incomplete saviors.

That's the reason we don't need to be afraid of people or what they think of us. My preparing this, I just thought, how would I close?

But really what I want us to do is think about, is that true in our lives? Do we really believe that God is with us and that he's good and he wants the best for you and he plans to use you?

[38 : 12] Can we stand and pray? Lord Jesus, we come before you and we offer you thanksgiving and praise.

We thank you for your mercy and your grace. We thank you that you know everything about us and yet you loved us while we were still sinners.

Lord, I pray that you will remind me and that you will remind all of us here that you are good and that you care about people and you care about our lives and you want to change us.

But you don't ask us ever to walk alone. You do it with us, with you by our sides. And we thank you for that. Lord, I pray that you forgive us where we stumble and fall and we blow it.

We thank you that your grace and mercy is enough and that you do not leave us there. You desire to change us. I pray that as we go out from here and we go to our families and our workplaces or our holidays, that you will be with us and that you will remind us what it is you want to do with our lives.

[39 : 38] Lord, I thank you that you are the only one worthy of praise because by worshiping you, we only get to be more like you and we will not be destroyed.

We do not give our souls to another but to you. We love you. In Jesus' name, amen.