

Saturday, August 5, 2023 • Read Acts 25–26

Questions from the Scripture text: Where does Festus go in v1? Who address him about what (v2–3)? Why? But how does he answer (v4–5)? How long does he take to go back (v6)? How soon does he act? What do the Jews do (v7)? What are they unable to do? Who answers for Paul (v8)? How? What does Festus request in v9? How does Paul's answer hint at the injustice of what's going on (v10)? What does he do in v11, and how does Festus reply (v12)? Who else come in v13? What does Festus eventually do (v14)? Whom does he say has done this (v15)? What difficulty does he present (v16–21, 26–27)? What does he imply about himself in v20 that he suggests Agrippa can help with? How does Agrippa respond (v22)? In what way does he arrive (v23)? How does Festus present the case in v24–25? Who assumes leadership of the proceeding (26:1)? How does Paul respond initially (v1–3)? How does he describe his early life (v4–5)? To what does he skip in v6–7? Upon what does he focus from his charges (v7–8)? When did the resurrection become not a theory but the most significant reality in his life (v8–18)? Whom was Paul obeying, and what was Paul doing (v19–20, 22–23)? And what did the Jews do (v21)? What does he emphasize about Christ in v22–23? What does Festus think about the first-risen from the dead and light to the nations (v24)? So upon whom does he now focus (v24–27)? What does he focus upon about Christ in the end of v26? To where does Paul point for interpretation of Christ's suffering and resurrection (v27)? How does Agrippa respond (v28)? What does Paul desire from Whom, for whom (v29)? How do Agrippa, Festus, and Bernice respond to this (v30–31)? And what is Agrippa's concluding counsel (v32)?

What is the most important reality in your life? Acts 25–26 looks forward to the morning sermon on the coming Lord's Day. In these fifty-nine verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **the most important reality in each one of our lives, whether we embrace or engage it or not, is the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ.**

An uncomfortable reality for Paul: the injustice of men. Several times throughout these two chapters, we read that Paul had done nothing to deserve death (25:11, 16–21, 24–27) or even chains (26:31–32). And yet, the Jews are still determined either to have him executed by Rome or to trick Festus into transporting Paul so that they could ambush him and kill him.

People aren't righteous; they aren't just; they aren't fair. This is an uncomfortable reality for all believers. If we are hoping that we will have, in this life, a situation where people and their kindness or justice don't let us down, then our false hope will let us down.

Thankfully, that was not Paul's hope! It was uncomfortable, or unpleasant, but it was not discouraging. Rather, because his hope was in something that would actually hold up (the resurrected Christ!), he was able to take his circumstances as an opportunity to fulfill his purpose (serve that resurrected Christ!).

The most important reality for Paul: the resurrected Christ. Whatever Paul had said during the hearing summarized briefly in 25:7–8, Festus had heard primarily as an affirmation that Jesus is alive (25:19). Then, when Paul answers for himself before Agrippa, he gives a one-sentence (!) summary of his upbringing and life as a Pharisee (26:5). Then, he takes several long sentences to summarize his predicament as being judged for the hope of the resurrection (26:6–8).

How did Paul come to have such a hope for that resurrection, which God had previously promised? He met the resurrected One! He had been diligently (26:9) and violently (v10) and persistently (v11) against Him and the testimony of Him. But then the resurrected One had met him (v12–15) and enlisted him (v16–18).

This resurrected Christ went from being an idea that Paul was living his life to destroy to the King of Light, Whom Paul now lived His life to serve. Either we are kicking against the goads—as Paul had done (26:14), and now Festus (v24) and Agrippa (v28, 30–31) also do—or we acknowledge that the Creator has become a Redeemer and is now a resurrected King.

The most important reality for All: the resurrected Christ that Paul preaches. But what is the King doing?

This question is answered by the substance of what Paul has been sent to declare (v18):

- He is turning people of all nations from the darkness of living in ignorance of Him (or opposition to Him) to the light of living in the knowledge of Him.
- He is turning people of all nations from being under the power of Satan (believing the lie that they can be independently powered or purposed) to God Himself (dependent upon our Creator not only for all resources but for purpose in life).
- He is bringing people out from under guilt and instead into forgiveness.
- He is bringing them out from being those who are unable to obtain anything lasting by their own power, into being those who are being given everything in heaven and earth as their inheritance in the Son.
- He is bringing people out from being those who are common and impure to those who are consecrated unto God through faith in Christ.

And all of this, the Lord Jesus does as “the first to rise from the dead” (v23).

He suffered in our place in order to be able to DO all of those things for us. And now, by His servants, the first-Risen DECLARES to us what He has done that we might believe in Him. How your life goes, now and forever, depends entirely upon how you respond to Him:

- You could be religious without Him, and meet the fate of the Jews.
- You could disregard all of this as ungrounded in reality, and meet the fate of Festus.
- You could be almost persuaded, and an almost-Christian, whose life is really just business as usual, and meet the fate of Agrippa.
- Or, you could meet the Resurrected One in His Word, by His Spirit Who gives you faith to know Him. And you could live in His service, with your whole life being a testimony that your Creator is your Resurrected Redeemer, and He gives your life all of its power and all of its purpose. And not just your life as a testimony, but also giving you opportunities to verbalize this testimony.

Paul wished that “All” would become like him in this. Won't you now be like him even in his desire that all would also be like you in the knowledge of Christ?

Or will you just shrug off another devotional, another sermon, and go back to business as usual in your ordinary (perhaps religiously flavored) life?

What was the most important thing in your day yesterday? What is the most important thing in your day today? What is the most important thing in this week? What are you most hoping for right now, in this season of your life? What do you spend most of your time doing? What do you see as your purpose in those activities? What do your honest answers to these questions indicate about which side of the last couple paragraphs you are actually on?

Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You that You have given light in Christ, freedom in Christ, forgiveness in Christ, inheritance in Christ, and consecration in Christ. Grant that, by Your Spirit, Christ would be all of our life, we ask in His Name, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP32AB “What Blessedness” or TPH238 “Lord, with Glowing Heart I'd Praise Thee”

For more Hopewell @Home devotionals, please visit hpwl.org/hah

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Acts chapters 25 and 26. These are God's words. Now, investors have come to the province after three days. He went up from cesarea to jerusalem. Then the high priest and the chief man of the Jews, informed him against all the petitioned him asking a favor against him. That he would summon him to jerusalem while they lay an ambush along the road to kill him.

Well, fastest answered the ball should be kept at caesarea. And that he himself was going there shortly. Therefore he said, but those who have authority among you go down with me and accuse this men to see if there is any fault in it. And when he had rain remained among them more than 10 days, he went down to caesarea.

And the next day, sitting on the judgment seat, he commanded paul to be brought. When he had come the Jews who had come down from jerusalem, stood about and laid many serious complaints against Paul, which they could not prove. Well, he answered for himself, neither against the law of the jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar have i offended anything at all.

But festus wanting to do the Jews a favor. Answered paul and said are you willing to go up to jerusalem? And there be judged before me concerning these things. So paul said, i stand at Caesar's judgment seat. We're out to be judged to the Jews. Have done, no wrong.

Was you very well know? For if i am an offender have committed, anything deserving of death, i do not object to dying. What if there is nothing in these things? In which these men accuse me, no one can deliver me to them. I appeal to Caesar. Then fastest, when he had conferred with the council answered, you have a bill to Caesar To caesar who shall go.

And after some days can you grip on Bernice came just as we had to greet festus? When they had been there, many days fastest laid paul's case before the king saying, there is a certain man about him, the chief priests, and the elders of the Jews and formed me when i was in Jerusalem, asking for a judgment against him.

To them. I answered, it is not the custom of the Romans to deliver any man to destruction before the accuser accused meets the accusers face to face. It has opportunity to answer for himself concerning the charge against him. Therefore, when they had come together without any delay, the next day, i sat on the judgment seat and commanded the man to be brought in.

When the accuser stood up. They brought no accusation against him, such things as i suppose. But had some questions against him about their own religion. And about a certain jesus. We had died. Him, paul affirmed to be alive. Because i was uncertain of such questions. I asked whether he was willing to go to jerusalem and there we judged concerning these matters.

When paul appealed to be reserved for the decision of augustus, I commanded him to be kept till i could send him to caesar. Then a grip, i said to Festus. I also would like to hear them and myself. Tomorrow, he said usually hear him. So the next day, when a grip and Bernice had come with great palm Entered the auditorium with the commanders and the prominent men of the city.

That fastest system and paul was brought in and festus said king agrippa and all the men who are here present with us You see this man about him. The whole assembly of the Jews. Partitioned me both at jerusalem and here crying out, that he was not fit to live any longer.

But when i found that he had committed nothing to serving of death, And that he himself had appealed to augustus, I decided to send him I have nothing certain to write to my lord concerning it. Therefore, i have brought him in before you and especially before you came a grandma.

So that after the examination has taken place, i may have something to write. For it seems to me unreasonable to send a prisoner. And not to specify the charges against him. And a grippa, said to paul, you were permitted to speak for yourself? Suppose stretched out his hand answered for himself.

I think myself happy king a grippa. Because today i shall answer for myself before you concerning all things at which i'm accused by the jesus especially because you are expert and all customs and questions which have to do with the Jews. Therefore, i beg you to hear me patiently.

My manner of life from my youth, which was spent from the beginning among my own nation of jerusalem. All the jews know. They knew me from the first, if they were willing to testify that according to the strictest sect of our religion, i lived Pharisee And now i stand and i'm judged for the hope of the promise made by god to our fathers.

To this promos, r12 tribes earnestly, serving god night and day, hope to attain. For this hope's sake, king of grip on accused by the Jews. Why should it be thought incredible by you that god raises the dead? Indeed, i myself thought i must do many things. Contrary to the name of jesus of Nazareth, This, i also did.

In jerusalem and many of the saints i shut up in prison. Having received authority from the chief priests And when they were put to death, i cast my vote against them. And i punished them often in every synagogue in compelled them to blaspheme and being exceedingly enraged against them.

I persecuted them even to foreign cities. While, thus occupied. I was as i journey to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests. At midday o king along the road i saw light from heaven, brighter than the sun shining around me and those who journeyed with me. And in all had fallen to the ground.

I heard a voice speaking. To me and saying, in the hebrew language, saul saul, why are you persecuting me? It is hard for you to kick against the goats. So i said, who are you? Lord. Than he said, i am jesus. Whom you are persecuting. But rise, stand on your feet.

For, i have appeared to you for this purpose. To make you a minister and a witness. Both things which you have seen. And of the things, which i will yet reveal to you. I will deliver you from the jewish people as well as from the gentiles. To whom i now send you.

To open their eyes. In order to turn them from darkness to light. And from the power of satan to god, That they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance. Among those who are sanctified by faith in me. Therefore can you grip? I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision.

But declared first to those in Damascus and in jerusalem and throughout all the region of Judea. And then to the Gentiles that they should repent, turn to god and do works befitting repentance. For these reasons, the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me. Therefore having obtained help from god to this day.

I stand witnessing both. The small and great saying, no other things than those, which the prophets. And Moses said, what? Come That the christ would suffer. It would be the first to rise from the dead. And wood, proclaim light to the jewish people and to the gentiles. Now, is he thus made his defense festus said with a loud voice?

Paul, you are beside yourself. Much learning is driving you mad. But he said, i am not mad most noble festus. But speaking the words of truth and reason, For the king before whom i also speak freely. Knows these things. From convinced that none of these things, escapes his attention since this thing was not done in a corner.

Can you grip it? Do you believe the prophets? I know that you do believe. Then it rippa said to paul, you almost persuade me. Took a comic christian. From paul said, i would to god that not only you But also all, who hear me today. Might become both almost and altogether such as i am.

Except for these chains. When he had said these things, the king stood up as well as the governor and Bernice and those who sat with them, And when they had gone aside, they talked among themselves saying This man is doing nothing deserving of death or chains. Then i dripper said to festus, this man might have been set free.

If he had not appealed, To Caesar. So far the reading of god's inspired. And inherent word.

We live in an age in which people are unjust. Even the best of them are. Plagued by their own remaining. Fleshliness. Even the converted r. Often. Do not act fully according to how they should have towards us. Whether from themselves or even, increased injustice toward us by outside pressure.

Festus obviously is not converted, but he does seem to be Trying to follow the rules to some extent. And he at least has a sense of order and Just following the Rule that if a citizen appeals to Caesar and a capital case, Has the right to appear before Caesars following the rule.

That. A man has a right to Face his accusers and forked. And not have. Is kind of anonymous trials. He wants to do things in an orderly manner. But even in describing wanting to do things in an orderly manner, he reveals that he's being an unjust. Because if he sends Paul to Caesar and doesn't have even A list of demonstrable charges.

Then he reveals that. Uh, he himself doesn't believe. That paul has done anything. Deserving death. Or enough even to charge him. And not in case. In fact, is the case. All the way through and it's the conclusion. Of these two chapters as a unit. That's what ties them together at the beginning of the two chapter unit.

Festus. Trying to figure out. What the charges are against paul. Something that Felix wasn't able to do in two years. And at the end, Not only is he is not just trying to figure out, he's concluded. That there are not charges against paul that are legitimate and that he could have been set free.

If he had not appealed to Caesar, So, there's The injustice of men, of course, other men's. Injustice. Isn't always. Uh, just out of weakness. Or.

Or. Passive. Well, sometimes it's very aggressive. Like the injustice of The jews, the chief priests. The high priest and achievement of the Jews. Rather As a verse 2 of chapter 25, Who are still? I'm trying to kill paul. You're still try to get. Was still try to get pet festus to bring Paul up to jerusalem.

So that they can ambush along the way. And murder him.

People are not righteous, they aren't just. They aren't fair. This is the uncomfortable reality of this world. You live in a family in which The people love one another but the people are sinners. And all of you have experienced. Well, maybe every day of your life frequently. The things are not always as they should be and often are very much not as they should be.

That is the reality of this life. It's an uncomfortable. Reality, if we are hoping. Then, in this life, we will have a situation. More people will not let us down. They're kindness, will not let us down, they're justice. Will not let us down, then our false hope. Itself will let us down.

Because that is not the life of the world that we live in. Thankfully, this was not paul's hope. Paul was not hoping. For justice from Uh, festus or A grippa or Even rome. Perhaps. Uh, perhaps he desired it. But that was not the thing that he was short of.

The thing that he put his hope in, Rather his hope was in the resurrected christ. That he had met on the road to Damascus. His hope was in. The one who had saved him. From the power of sin. And turned him. To the light of the knowledge of god and enlisted him as a minister and a witness And would take him.

As the lord, jesus had personally promised him. To jerusalem. So, paul was not discovered discouraged.

So paul was not discouraged by what was going on with his trial, rather. Because his hope was in the resurrected christ and his hope was in something that would actually hold up. He was able to take his circumstances. As an opportunity to fulfill this purpose. To serve the lord jesus.

So you do Yes, it is right for you to desire, that people would be kind to you, and people would be just to you. And especially in a situation where you live in a christian family, You follow what? The lord? Jesus says, when people sin against you, you follow the procedure of the lord, jesus has given you.

But what your hope is in. Is in the resurrected lords to whom you belong. And if that's what your hope is in, Then when others are not treating you, as well as they ought to. You don't need to be discouraged. Because you hadn't put your hope in others, treating you.

As well as they ought to. Instead, you're free. By your continued confidence in christ and knowledge that he is doing you good. To serve him. And whatever unkindness comes, whatever injustice comes. Whatever more whatever discomfort or pain comes with a more. Ordinary providence, less personal some, i'm not failing you or doing something against you.

You take everything that comes in the providence of the lord as an opportunity to serve him. This will be quite. Liberating it for you. From anxiety for you from bitterness. For you from obsessing about what others are doing or what's going on in your situation. He just start responding to everything's an opportunity to serve christ.

Paul is the least bound person. That these two chapters even though he's the one in the chains. Because he knows the resurrected lord. And he's taking his situation as an opportunity to serve, His resurrected lord, even what he testifies. That jesus said that he would do on the road to Damascus when jesus was saving, him is the exact thing he's getting to do.

To the high priest and the chief men of the Jews. And fastest and a grippa. And Bernice and the rest of the council who are with them.

So that's the first thing. Uncomfortable. Reality for paul the injustice of men. But then, of course the most important reality for paul, The resurrected christ. There were many things that the Jews had accused him of Many things that he had defended himself against. That. He had not done anything against the jewish law and he hadn't done anything.

Against. The temple. And he hadn't done anything against Caesar. Get it done anything. Against anybody verse 8? So, Uh, you get a flavor of the three types of accusations that were made. None of them of course with any proof or any merit. But whatever it happened and all of that interaction.

Festus earned summary of it. Was that there were some questions that against him about their own religion. Questions that were not. Um, evidently on the side of the priest, or the achievement of the Jews. But paul not only answered their questions, of course, he's better. A jewish theology than they are.

He's better at Old Testament than they are. But it seems like when paul answered for himself, it kept coming back to this. Jesus. Who the Jews said was dead, but paul said was alive. And for paul, then, As you look at verse. 18 to 19 and chapter 25. For paul.

As far as fastest could observe the great reality. Is that jesus is risen from the dead and that changes everything. Because the promised one had done. And resurrection life had come, and this hope for life, that was greater than this world for a country. That abraham could inherit even if he died Uh, moses could enter even after he died, he didn't get to enter in his life.

All of the stuff that hebrews 11 talks about. With a faith, the hope of the fathers. All of the stuff had come true in the lord jesus christ. Of course, that's just gobbly

good to festus. So that's how paul had been answering in his trial, says, because i was uncertain of such questions.

I asked whether he was willing to go to jerusalem. Just a lie. He wanted to do the Jews of favors, so he asked him whether he was willing to go to jerusalem. But, The most important reality for paul evidently To festus already in chapter 25 is the resurrected christ and then in chapter 26, paul explains out that it happened.

Because at one point in his life, The most important thing for Paul. Was to destroy the name of jesus of nazareth and whoever believed in it, or spoken it. And he was going. Um,

He was going to. Foreign countries and cities even To shut saints up in prison. And cast a vote against them when they were being put to death and punished them in every synagogue and try to get them to blaspheme the name of jesus. And he was exceedingly enraged against them and so forth.

But in one afternoon, He went from the most important thing in his life to Being to oppose the name of jesus. To the most important thing in his life to proclaim the name of jesus. Why? Because he met, The resurrected jesus. And he met him as the one. Whose glory shines brighter than the sun at noonday.

The most important reality for paul became. The resurrected christ. He met his creator. He was so jesus went from Being an idea. That paul was living his life to destroy a dangerous idea. To a reality. And the only great reality that mattered. Because jesus, he met as the king of light, From paul would now live his life to serve.

So, paul goes from kicking against the gods. Verse 14. We all know the In our hearts, the truth about the creator. And paul knew even the truth about the lord jesus. But of course, as flesh resistant, And boy, did his flesh resist. Now, the goods are those spiky. Things that came out of A chariot behind.

Horse. That was supposed to carry it. In the horse would learn not to buck. Because if it bocked backward, it would it would smash itself on the spike. And the lord jesus was explaining the ball what he was doing with his life. He was bucking against the spike.

It was smashing, it wounding himself. So you're attacking me but i'm unattackable. Can't you see? I'm the king of glory. I'm ascended and seated at the right hand of majesty even as you attack. Those were united to me. What can you do? Except injure yourself And thus, all do who persecute Christians?

Christians are thereby enabled to have compassion on their persecuted justice. Jesus has compassion on both here as paul kicks against the goats, But then, jesus gives him. Words of command he doesn't ask him to make a decision. It wasn't ask him if he understands. Oh, jesus saves people. By the exertion of his own power.

When he does it especially by his work. So he just says, I am jesus, whom you are persecuting, but rise and stand on your feet forever here to you for this purpose, to make you a minister. Well, doesn't have any choice in the matter. The king of light. Has made him a minister.

This is the most important reality then. For paul. The resurrected christ. And so, i wonder. Which of the two you are on. Which of the two situations you are in. Either. Jesus. The king of light is the most important reality in your life and you are living to serve Him.

In whatever place he's given you in life, you are living to serve him. And your life is all about obeying christ or You are kicking against the goats. Not everyone kicks is hard as paul. But everyone who is doing anything other than serving king jesus with his life. This will help us.

Many times when Slouching into living for And finding our Purpose in or our pleasure, in or our power in Anything other than Christ. Would ask us. Am i living? For ask ourselves or my living for christ as the king of light. Is serving him. What i am doing in this situation.

Because either we're doing that or we're kicking against the goats, So, which is the most important reality in our life. And for paul, That wasn't just something. That was about what he is doing. It's about what christ is doing. And so he said, so the lord jesus gives him instruction.

About what he is going to do. In verse 18. And the jesus that he proclaims in verse 18, Summarizes. Um, Uh, what he himself is doing, what the lord jesus is doing. In verse 23. And that will. Bring us into the passage even more. So, what paul was supposed to do is As jesus's servant.

He was he was to go to the people unto the nations. First to open their eyes. The lord jesus. By his servants turns people from all nations of all nations from the darkness. Of living in ignorance of him. To the light of living in the knowledge of him, from the Eyes closed blindness.

Of not knowing jesus as their creator. Redeemer and king. To the eyes opened. Knowledge light. Of living, in the knowledge of christ is creator. Christ is redeemer. And crisis, king. Second verse 15 to From the power of satan. Unto God. Certain, of course being the one who says you can be like god.

And so the world is full of people who are under the power of certainly think that we can live independently. Of god. All right, that we can be independently powered by ourselves or independently purposed to give ourselves our purpose. Purpose. Or independently principled, living living, not according to god's law.

But according to write and wrong that we come up with, That's the lie of satan, you can be like, god, And either you are living for christ as king or you are under the power of satan. There's only those two options. We live for ourselves. Or according to our own rules.

And many, who profess the name of christ to do this. Just using the name of jesus, doesn't mean you're living for the lord. Jesus. We should think about how we are living every day. But either you are. Um, Living for christ, and according to his rules. Or you are still under the power of satan, so he's to open their eyes in order to turn them from darkness to light.

And from the power of satan to god, Then that they may receive forgiveness of sins. The lord jesus is bringing people. Out from Being guilty. To being forgiven. See, forgiveness of sins and an inheritance. So not just out from under guilt and into forgiveness. But out from Pursuing things that are not going to last.

One of the things that the lord jesus sends Paul to do. Chapter 26, verse 18. As to. To give them to receive an inheritance. Something that is infinitely more valuable than whatever else people pursue and that will actually last will survive. And also, An inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in me.

Is bringing them out from being common and impure. To be in those who are consecrated unto God. Through faith in christ. And so there are all these things that the proclamation of the risen christ. Is designed to do. And this indeed is what jesus is doing. When paul says, a few verses later, Having obtained help from God.

To this day, i stand witnessing both, the small and great saying, no other things. Than those, which the prophets and Moses said would come. That the christian suffer. That he would be the first to rise from the dead. So there is in christ is The great reality in paul's life.

But now here's what the risen christ does that he would be the first to rise from the dead and would proclaim light. To the people into the gentiles. To the people into the nations. And so what Paul is saying is that this wasn't just for me this was for everyone.

This is for me and the jews. This was for me and the nations. There's a risen christ. Who proclaims by his servants. All of the things that we just considered. From verse 18. And so the question is, How are we going to respond? To the idea. That the creator became a man suffered died rose again.

And is sitting at the right hand of the majesty on high, Occurred to me, even as we were singing at beginning of worship. I think so. We're singing. Psalm 96 in particular and its connection. To this, this passage about the lord jesus. Reigning and judging and soon returning and the the whole creation being made new and those who are his orswing in him.

Um, If we really believe that. With what joy? And comfort. And strength. We ought to sing. You know, the joy over it, taking comfort and strength from it. Things like psalm 90s, like things like psalm 34. Or we could be like festus. Think of it as just fairy tales.

Festus problem, wasn't that there was a religion. That held to all these things. Fastest problem. Was that the lord that paul was living like this? Lord, jesus was real. Paul was untroubled. That he was before a Roman tribunal here. He was on a trial that could lead to his execution.

He was on a trial that could lead to his execution and he was full of joy and pleading with them and evangelizing, then Is that paul? You've, you've gone mad, you've lost touch with reality. Theological religious ideas are okay in their place. But you've lost your mind. And so there are those even in the churches.

Who are like, The. The. Chief priest. And The high priest and the chief. Uh, chief leaders of the juice. Who had religion, but they didn't have christ. And there are those who don't think religion touches the life at all, like festus. And then there's a gripa. A grippa who apparently, Was from what paul said, had some sort of Religious instruction and conviction to some extent.

So, don't you believe the prophets? I know that you do. And a grip is response, actually kind of Affirms will pull it said, you. Almost persuade me. To be a question. And how many have sat in family worships? Or. In churches. Where the dead and resurrected and reigning and returning price.

This preached. And they're almost persuaded. You can see the logic of it, they nod their heads. Can see all these religious ideas. Our pleasant and would be true. That all makes sense. They're in the habit of attending. But they never come to the place. Where the resurrected jesus. Was the most important reality in their lives.

There have been forgiven of their sins and our shore. Of an inheritance and They don't have their hope in. Anything in their situation, they have all of their hope and the rism lord. Everything that happens, then comes An opportunity to take advantage of to serve him. They're almost Christians.

And sadly almost christian's parish in the last day. Outstanding church members parish from the last day. Those who have religion without christ. Perish in the last day. Those who Think that living this way is. A little bit mad, a little bit crazy. To have these be the great realities of your life.

Those who Really. Saw. How all of this? Uh, would be true and good and we're almost persuaded like a gripper. The perish. Last. Into the question for each of us is have i met the resurrected one? Not on the road to Damascus, but even here, Paul describes. The other way that people come to meet the resurrected one.

By those who jesus has called a servants. Proclaiming. Christ to them. Proclaiming christ as light to them. Have i met the resurrected one in his word? As a spirit, given me faith to know him. Have i been persuaded? Is the most, the most important reality. In my life. So that my life.

Is a testimony. That my creator is now my resurrected redeemer. He has given me my purpose. He is all my power, all my help, all my strength. And whatever i have opportunity people ask. I take the opportunity to tell them. The creator has become. My redeemer. Polished, that all would become like him in this.

Are you like him in this? Will you be like him and this? Will you live in the knowledge of the resurrected jesus? Or will we just shrug off another devotional today? Then shrug off another sermon tomorrow. Keep going in business, as usual. In an ordinary, maybe even religiously flavored life.

Let's pray.

Lord jesus. We thank you. Your spirit. Gives the light of the knowledge of the glory of god in your face. And we pray. That you would give to each of us to meet you. By the work of your spirit to meet you in your word. To know you. As the great reality of our life.

Granted we ask in your own name. Amen.