

Acts Chapter 16 v 16 - 34

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Date: 11 April 2015

Preacher: Peter Robinson

[0 : 00] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[2 : 30] Thank you.

And those of you who are family and friends, thank you for making the time to come along to share with them in this. Thank you.

And what they want to do is to publicly confess that they have faith in God's grace and what he's done for them while they've trusted in Jesus.

And Jesus gave the command to his disciples in Matthew that those who come to faith in Jesus, those who become disciples of Jesus are to be baptized.

He said, And they're going to baptize them.

[4 : 58] And they're going to be baptized in Jesus.

And they're going to be baptized in Jesus. And they're going to be baptized in this world, suffering for him if that needs to be the case as well. And thirdly, each one in being baptized is committing himself to be part of the church, the people of God, to worship and work in this fellowship and in the church of Jesus Christ.

and as a church we share in this by accepting them as brothers in Christ, as part of the body of Christ, as fellow believers. We welcome them into fellowship and we pray that God would make them a blessing to us and we also pray that God would make us a blessing to them as he works and takes them forward.

So that's what we're doing in this service this afternoon. So let's first of all pray. Let's ask for God's help in this time and particularly his help and blessing upon Paul and Elliot as well.

Let's pray together. Our most amazing and wonderful God, we thank you again that you are concerned with each and every individual person.

[6 : 30] We thank you that you are the God who has given each of us life. Each one of us is precious to you, important to you, special to you. Each one of us matters to you and Lord, you sent your son into the world that each one of us might be in relationship with you.

We thank you again that in the death, resurrection, the ascension of Jesus, in the ongoing life of Jesus, there is that way of life, that way of life which is everlasting life, eternal life which is stronger than death, but also there is that way of life in living with you, in communion with you, in fellowship with you.

And we thank you again that in being baptized this afternoon, these two men are saying, Lord, you've done this for me, you've made me yours and I want everybody to know about it and I want to live for you.

And we do pray again that you'd particularly bless Paul and Elliot, encourage them and help them. I pray that you would help them as they talk about what you've done in their lives briefly. We pray for ourselves as we think about you, our God, as we think about who you are and what you've done, as we think about the way in which you long to relate to us.

We pray that you'd give us ears to hear and give us minds to understand your word, your truth in the Bible. We pray that everything that's done here this afternoon may be a blessing to us, a strengthening of our faith, whether weak or small.

[8 : 01] And may our Lord bring great honor to your name because, again, we're here because of Jesus. Not firstly because of Paul and Elliot, but because of Jesus and who he is and because of who he is today.

So Lord, be with us then. Help us now. For we ask these things, our God, as we come in the name of Jesus Christ, your Son. Amen. We're going to sing a song together and it's going to come up on the screen behind me.

Come people of the risen King. We'll stand as we sing. Come people of the risen King. We'll stand as we sing. Come people of the risen King. We'll stand as we sing. We'll stand as we sing. The people of the risen king, who delighted to give him praise.

The whole of junior hearts to sing, to the morning star of grace. From the shifting shadows of the earth, we will lift our eyes to thee.

Where steady arms of mercy reach, to gather children in. Rejoice, rejoice, let every tongue rejoice.

[9 : 37] One heart, one voice, O Church of Christ, rejoice. From those who draw his morning sun, and those living through the night.

From those who tell of battle's run, and the snow we meet, they'll fight. For his perfect love will never change, but his blessings never cease.

The whole of us through all our days, through the certain hope of peace. Rejoice, rejoice, let every tongue rejoice.

One heart, one voice, O Church of Christ, rejoice. One heart, one voice, O Church of Christ, rejoice.

The young and old from every land, through the living of the three. The close we pull our empty hands, by the riches of his grace.

[11 : 05] Though for all the world give's people's will ever gain. Come the earth, O Church of Christ, he says, When you're Dad and God. And the joy that I believe in.

The choice, O Church of Christ, Board of inform concealing and custing your trust. With the ■-I- freaky in. Rejoice, rejoice, as every tongue rejoice, one heart, one voice, O Church of Christ, rejoice.

Rejoice, rejoice, as every tongue rejoice, one heart, one voice, O Church of Christ, rejoice.

Rejoice, rejoice, as every tongue rejoice, one heart, one voice, O Church of Christ, rejoice.

So I'm going to ask Paul to come and to say a few things about his journey so far. Okay, thanks Paul. Right, throughout my life I've always been taught to question, be sceptical, weigh up evidence and challenge.

[12 : 55] And this has sometimes made me appear a little bit rebellious. This is certainly true of my relationship with God. It began when I met Lucy, quite a few years ago now.

We were both in our late teens and at the time we enjoyed the high life. This was brought to an abrupt halt though, when Lucy was called by God.

Her priorities changed and so did our lives quite dramatically. I was sceptical of the change and I challenged Lucy. That I realised that then there was an ultimatum.

It was to continue to party on my own. Or be with Lucy and this God that she'd chosen. It was at that time that I resented God and I wanted to rebel against him for stopping my fun.

I made the effort for Lucy. I attended church with her. But the sermons seemed to fall on deaf ears. My mind was always elsewhere and I carried on that way for a long time.

[14 : 03] It wasn't until a few years later, in a real challenging period of my life, when Lucy had had a miscarriage. That I felt a stirring.

At that time, I didn't want to rebel against God anymore. I felt that I needed comfort from him. I then remembered a prayer that Roger Carswell had spoken at a September Bible school.

I then admitted that I was a sinner. I asked forgiveness and I handed over my life to him. There was no sudden change. No lightning bolt moment.

I didn't feel that I'd become a different person as such. But in that instant, I somehow felt lighter. I now look back and I'm amazed at how God has worked in my life since that point.

His influence decisions shaped me and my family. And has directed us down the right paths. Even back in our time of grief now, I can see that God was in control even before I prayed for forgiveness.

[15 : 08] So in hindsight, through the rebellion, friction, disagreement and despair when Lucy left me for God, I now see it as him preparing me.

So through all that despair, also came great blessing. We've got a beautiful family, two beautiful children. He'll be brought up in a Christian household with good Christian values.

I look back in amazement and I thank God and I praise him. That's great. We're going to sing a song that Paul has chosen as one of his favourites.

It's 493 in the book, 493. How deep the Father's love for us, how vast be on all measure. We're going to stand and sing that together, 493.

We're going to sing that together, 493.

[16 : 30] That he should give his only Son. To give the rich his treasure.

And break the pain of searing loss. For the Father turns his grace away.

As wounds which are a chosen Lord. Prepare the Son. Prepare the Son to glory. Behold the man upon a cross.

My sins upon his shoulders. The shade I hear thy knocking voice. All out among the stompers.

It was my sin that held him there. Until it was an accomplished. His dying breath has brought me life.

[17 : 46] I know that it is me. My will not boast in anything.

The peace of the Father is not the only Son. The peace of the Father is not the only Son. The time of the Lord is not the only Son. The peace of the Father is not the only Son.

The peace of the Father is not the only Son. The peace of the Father is not the only Son. By the mercy of the Father is not the only Son. I cannot fear an answer But this I know with all my words This truth has been my answer Do you want to stay here?

Can I just have a moment to grab my thoughts if that's alright? Because I haven't got it written down I'm not very good at public speaking at all From a young age I was always raised and taught about God I always believed in God very strongly From all the way up until I went to boarding school Which sort of shut me away from all the kind of people That I was raised with And it was hard for me And everyone at that school was very anti-religion So over the few years I had to sort of settle in with them And it sort of took me down a darker path To the point where I didn't I just sort of shut God out of my mind And just went along with the sheep And did things I wasn't proud of And instead of asking for forgiveness And sort of regretting anything I learned to sort of shut my conscience off

And just put it to a side and hide it all And I sort of went about that Right up until I was about 21 To be fair Exactly Because I went through my whole teen life Partying And just the best way to deal with all your problems Was to go out and have a little time And have a laugh And forget about everything And just put it away Until I started working at Cheever's Hairdresser place And I remember talking to Mel About religion And obviously When we got talking I realised I was I was really You know I considered myself a Christian And just thought that was it And that's how it was And I think she asked me to come to church one time I remember it was on my birthday And it was I went out that night And well I had a good time Got very drunk I remember coming into church a bit And I remember sitting down And listening And at first it was I'll admit At first I used to think Well I'm a load of rubbish And But the more I listened to actually

[20 : 59] What Peter was saying at the time The words slowly hit home One by one As I sort of related to them And as I started to believe That I was the furthest thing From a Christian you could probably be And It got me worried For a long time And I continued to come to church And the services sort of fell on Let's just say In deaf ears for a while Because as I started to feel everything Coming back All my mistakes I'd made I decided to shut them away again And Well it didn't really work For me very well And it was when I just We just met up with Peter To have a nice chat I was intending to just Chat away And The more we really discussed everything There was some I can't even remember the actual words Or anything in particular But it just hit me like a train That I really was Going down a dark path And it was getting worse And worse And deep down

On the outside I was quite happy Kid Always out When you're going Pretty Laugh it off But deep down I was very miserable And very sad And it was just Eating away at me For a long long time And I sort of sat there I remember me and Peter Sort of sitting there for a while And it just let it all sink in And I sort of asked him Where do I go from there?

What do I do? And obviously We've met up for like Little Bible studies And discussed things And it has been Probably The hardest thing I've ever had to deal with Because there's still A very strong side of me That's very You know Just shut it all away There's a load of rubbish Just go out and do what you want to do And I've had to deal with that Every single day And I've slowly Over time I've sort of come to a point Where I believe in everything I mean I've never not believed in God It was just Putting my faith Back and trust Back into God And owning up to everything And Believing again And following his rules So it's taken me a long time And Yeah I feel like I'm at that place Where I'm ready to To move forward Thank you very much For somebody not used to public speaking Can you go on a long time I find No you didn't Well done Excellent And can I just remind you Of course as well That both Paul and Elliot Need your prayers One of the reasons

We're doing this together As a church And not We're out of the way Is because In one sense We're recognising That this is Just a step along the way In the Christian life And those of us Who by God's grace Have been going A few years more than them Know that We really need The Lord's help Don't we And It's a big Big Big thing So please do pray For them both And that the Lord Would continue To make this a blessing But that they would Continue to grow And to develop And mature And be kept as well Now Elliot Did have a favourite hymn But he couldn't remember Exactly what it was So we're going to sing His second favourite hymn Which is 509 Which is one of my favourites Anyway And can it be That I should gain An interest In the Saviour's blood Died he for me Who caused his pain 509 Let's stand and sing This wonderful hymn For me

And can it be That I should gain And he entrusted The Saviour's blood Died he for me Who caused his pain For me To live To death To shoot How amazing love How proud it feels That the heart My God Should sign for me The amazing love How proud it feels How proud it feels How proud it feels How proud it feels

[25 : 26] Shall a sky for me This mystery home Where water dies In the valley storm This strange desire He made the best Of several tries To sound the best Of all divine Is it If my Lord Let the■■■ The burning Are In the valley storm Let your hearts, let your hearts, let your hearts, let your hearts, they find no more.

He and his heart has grown above, so free, so live, by night his grace.

Let it excel for hope of love, and then for Adam's helpless grace.

Tis mercy on him, and his son-free, for all thy God, he found me.

Tis mercy on him, and his son-free, for all thy God, he found me.

[27 : 39] O my prayers and spirit may be, first found in sin and nature's night.

O my Titus■■■, who honored by his diese Feld-Cat, he credití, for all day his lap, he caddzys his affection, he called me.

The Lord has lost me, I do worship for us and follow thee.

I chase my voice, I follow thee, I do worship for us and follow thee.

The condemnation that I face, Jesus, the Lord, in his life.

[29 : 01] And I be blessed, my living rest, but for all thee righteousness divine.

O thy will cross, eternal throne, and bring the crown to Christ my own.

O thy will, thy will, eternal throne, and bring the crown to Christ my own.

O thy will, eternal throne, and bring the crown to Christ my own.

Can I just, while you're looking there, remind you that there are some refreshments, tea and coffee and I think a bit of cake afterwards. So please do stay for further fellowship if you're able to at the end of our service.

[30 : 33] So Acts 16 and verse 16. Once, when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit, but which she predicted the future.

She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune telling. This girl followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, These men are servants of the Most High God who are telling you the way to be saved.

She kept this up for many days. Finally, Paul became so troubled that he turned around and said to the spirit, In the name of Jesus Christ, I command you to come out of her.

At that moment, the spirit left her. When the owners of the slave girl realized that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities.

They brought them before the magistrates and said, These men are Jews and are throwing our city into an uproar by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice.

- [31 : 39] The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten. After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully.

Upon receiving such orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks. About midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God.

And the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly, there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once, all the prison doors flew open and everybody's chains came loose.

The jailer woke up. When he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted, Don't harm yourself.

We're all here. The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

- [32 : 45] They replied, Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved. You and your household. Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house.

At that hour of the night, the jailer took them and washed their wounds. Then immediately he and all his family were baptized. The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them.

He was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God, he and his whole family. Well, a baptism is one of those events in life that's to be celebrated.

It's an opportunity for us to enjoy and to rejoice together. It's a special occasion. A special occasion for the people themselves who are being baptized or perhaps for the Christian parents of a child.

It's an occasion to be remembered. But many of those who were first baptized when the church first began had very different occasion, very different circumstances at least.

- [33 : 47] Here in Acts 16, we have one of those early baptisms, those Christian baptisms. And it doesn't take place in a church building or in the open air or by a river, but in a prison.

Not very many baptisms, I should think, take place there. And it was certainly a time of celebration and joy because we're told there at the end that the jailer was filled with joy because he'd come to believe in God, he and his family.

But events earlier that day had filled him with terror, filled him with dread as a tremendous earthquake had struck the prison and the surrounding buildings there in verse 26.

Now, we don't have many earthquakes. Thankfully, in the UK, occasionally one or two very minor ones will take place and a chimney pot may fall off or a slate may be moved.

But in certain parts of the world, particularly where the fault lines are, there are regular occurrences of earthquakes. And throughout history, earthquakes have brought terrible loss and terrible loss of life and damage to many parts of the world.

- [34 : 55] Just 18 months ago, there was that terrible earthquake in the Philippines, filled the news for many days in which many were killed. Most famous earthquake, of course, was that of San Francisco in 1906 when thousands of people died as that city was shaken and destroyed.

In that sense, at least, this earthquake is very different, isn't it? Because though we're told that the prison building shook and the foundation shook and the doors flew open and burst open, nobody was killed.

Nobody was injured. No loss of life was sustained. In fact, it's quite possible for us to see that something opposite had the effect. Rather than people being lost, we might say people were saved through this earthquake.

Instead of doing harm to those in its path, the earthquake was instrumental in doing a great deal of good to those around about them. Back in the 70s, the Queen wrote a song which had the line in it, into every life, a little rain must fall.

We all know something of that saying. Its meaning is quite clear. We all experience sadness in life. Tears at some time. It can't all be easy sailing.

[36 : 10] However, I think it's fair to say that into every life, an earthquake will take place from time to time. Each one of us knows disturbances in our lives, times where we feel in a place of disaster or doom or danger or upset, like the rain that falls into our lives.

Earthquakes are a metaphor for trouble and distress. We could call them lifequakes when they have that effect upon us which shakes us to the core.

And we can see in this man, the jailer, that the earthquake has this effect upon him. First of all, we find that lifequakes and earthquakes in our lives shake us up.

We're all shook up, not as in Elvis all shook up, but rather like the prison in which Paul found himself. The foundations of life are shaken.

They make us uncertain. We face a trouble or a difficulty. We find that we're filled with doubts. Our beliefs are being challenged. We're unsettled. We may even feel very unsteady about what the future will hold.

[37 : 19] We may even feel ourselves close to collapse because of those earthquakes, those lifequakes. And they can come to us in varying intensities and in varying forms.

They can be caused by the bereavement. Someone very close to us or dear to us is lost and we're shaken with sorrow or with grief. It can be the news that we are very ill or unwell or that our health suddenly turns bad.

We're shaken about our hope for the future. We're brought to realize our own mortality. It can of course be that in other ways we have a lifequake. We're made redundant or lose our job or there's a relationship breakdown between us and somebody close.

Financial problems come in and we find ourselves in debt. So many things and all different to each one of us but they all have the same common factor.

They shake us. They shake our lives. They shake the foundation. They make us uncertain about what to do, where to go, how to respond. Now this jailer was clearly very, very shaken by the earthquake.

[38 : 32] Felt himself rocked to the very core so much so that his immediate reaction to this earthquake, this life shake in his life was that he tried to end his life, to take his life.

We see there verse 27, the jailer woke up. When he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword about to kill himself. Now if you were listening to the story, you'll notice that earlier on when Paul and Silas were handed over to the jailer, the jailer was given a very strong command.

He was told to guard them carefully and we're told upon receiving such orders, he put them in the inner cell faster than their feet in the stocks. In other words, there were several stages of prison, if I can put it that way.

There was a general sort of an area of prison which had a bit of bars at the windows and so on. Then there was the inner cell that was right down in the deepest dungeon with no light and no bars at the windows.

There was no windows at all and there was the stocks. Perhaps you've seen them in some of the villages but these are the ones in their feet. Remember Paul and Silas had been flogged severely as well. Very uncomfortable and unpleasant place to be but the jailer had put them in that place because he did not want them to escape but now he's afraid they have escaped.

[39 : 47] The doors are open. Clearly he's been asleep. Verse 27, the jailer woke up having a bit of a doze as you would do. Everybody's safely locked away and tucked up in bed in the prison but now he wakes up, the doors are open.

Oh no, they've gone. There's only one way out. The horror of how the escaping of these prisoners would impact himself and his family meant that he only saw one way for himself to kill himself.

So he told he drew his sword and was about to fall on his sword to kill himself, commit, as the Japanese would say, harikiri. How tragic it is when people feel so desperate that they can see no way out apart from suicide.

how desperately sad our society is that young and old people are attempting to commit suicide and some succeed and commit suicide almost every day.

What an awful thing. Perhaps you know something of it. I don't know. Perhaps you felt just even for a moment or for a little while something of that sense of it would be better if I was dead, better if I wasn't here.

[40 : 59] My life is so shaken that life itself seems unbearable. Death is better than going on living with the consequences of what this life quake has brought.

I wonder if you've ever felt that way. Well certainly here's a man who did. Here's a man who did feel that way and the truth is that we often feel very lonely when we have a life quake.

We feel very isolated. We feel that nobody can understand what we're going through but whatever it is there are those who've been through it before. We're not alone. There are many others who've experienced such things.

Not just people like this jailer but other people too. But earthquakes not only shake us but also of course earthquakes change the way we view things.

They change the landscape of our lives. Of course when there's been an earthquake and you've seen it on the TV you see that their houses are decimated. Trees are uprooted and fallen down.

[41 : 57] Roads and bridges are twisted and torn and impossible. When the earthquake has passed by there's a whole new scene to behold. A town looks like nothing it ever looked like before.

Everything is different to before. And so too for this jailer he's been so shaken to his boots and he sees life with a different way. He's realized his life is without foundation.

He's realized his life is without hope. But as he looks and he sees that the prisoners haven't escaped the earthquake has passed he views life with a different perspective and so he begins to ask the question what must I do to be saved?

Like most people no doubt the jailer was somebody who never gave much thought to God certainly very little thought to Jesus maybe even never heard of him until that day. He was a man who was busy about his work he was conscientious we've seen that in the way he imprisoned these two criminals as he was led to believe.

He had commitments to his family clearly there was a number of them because we don't know how many or what age but they are there later on in the story. His view of life was we get on with the here and now we get on with doing our job and making sure our family are provided for we get on with the important things but now this life quake this earthquake has come and suddenly he realizes that his life has much more to it than just the here and the now what he can see and touch he's about to end his life but Paul steps in and prevents him from doing so he sees life differently than he once did there's more to life more to living than just doing our job more to living than just our families even there's more beyond this life than what we see touch feel here life quakes have that effect often of making us focus making us change focus making us see things differently we begin to appreciate our families and friends perhaps more than we did we don't count money of such great importance as once we did we value our health we value our home we value so many other things that we have taken for granted perhaps perhaps even like this jailer we begin to recognize there's more to life than what we have there's more to life than what we first thought there was we need to think about this question he asked what a strange question he doesn't say how did this happen or what's going on he says to Paul and Silas sirs what must I do to be saved

[44 : 44] I don't think primarily this question is a question about religion necessarily it's not a question about salvation firstly I think it's a sense in which he knows he needs saving from the life in which he's been living he's been living a life of fear he's been living a life of inner imprisonment fearing what would happen to him if he didn't keep his job and do it well what would people do to him that fear that over over oppressive desire to please others to live for the here and now to do his job the pressures of life nearly cost him his life you see the reality is that when we suffer an earthquake or even a life quake we begin to find that we are trapped that's something that happens doesn't it when there's an earthquake inevitably there are people who are trapped under falling buildings nowadays there's wonderful technology listening devices heat seeking devices infrared devices that can tell when someone is underneath the rubble still alive breathing but unable to move unable to rescue themselves for those people who are trapped and buried of course there's the hope that somebody will hear them somebody will hear their cries or somebody will rescue them and dig them out and there's been wonderful stories hasn't there over the years people being ten days trapped and yet amazingly rescued life quakes like this earthquake the jailer felt make us feel the need of someone to save us to rescue us although we don't like what's happening in our lives we don't like the trauma that they bring they are often

God's wake up call to us that we need to be rescued C.S. Lewis the author of many many books including the lion the witch and the wardrobe and the Narnia series and so on writes in a book called the problem of pain he writes this God whispers to us in our pleasures God speaks to us in our conscience but God shouts at us in our pain it's his megaphone to rouse a deaf world we're trapped you see this is the bible's definition of men and women boys and girls we're trapped we're trapped under our own sin our selfishness our greed our pride our hatred our fears all these things trap us they're easily seen we don't like to recognize them but they're seen by the way we behave the way we live the things that are of value to us the things that we focus our attention on the trouble is that these sins of our lives demolish and ruin our relationships with other people they fill us with a sense of guilt and self loathing they create in us an unquenchable thirst to find meaning and purpose and satisfaction in life so that we are desperately searching out pleasures or enjoyments or other things which will somehow satisfy that deep longing men and women are trapped under sin we see that over and over again and we need to recognize it for ourselves if we haven't done already the second thing is far more horrific in one sense is that men and women are buried under

God's sentence God's judgment of our sinful lives God is the God who's given us everything made everything provided for us so much our health our strength our life our family our friends all the things that we have come from him but we have in the main rejected him ignored him denied him God has given us a conscience it's that annoying warning bell that rings when we are acting or behaving in a selfish or wrong or displeasing way to God it's that thing that we try to block out as much as we can and to stick behind a black cold door but that's why God sends earthquakes into our lives surely as he sent this one and we see don't we verse 26 suddenly there is an earthquake it must be a God given earthquake mustn't it because the doors flow open and the chains fall off it's a supernatural event that God is doing

God sends earthquakes to you and I so that we have to stop ignoring him we have to sit up and take notice that our lives are not right with God and that we are answerable before him that one day we must stand in judgment before him one day we must give an account of how we've lived and not one of us is innocent no one of us is guiltless not one of us is sin free we all are as guilty as sin and therefore we shall spend eternity trapped in that place called hell by our own volition by our own will by our own sinfulness by our own rejection of God but who then can save us here's the question in one sense that he says what must I do to be saved but really who's going to save me like the people trapped under the rubble who are unable to clamber out and pull themselves out under the weight of the rubble so we under our sin and under

God's sentence cannot pull ourselves out who can we call to who can we look to to rescue us and bring us out well we need a saviour a rescuer a deliverer and there's only one person the jailer's question receives the answer that we need to hear who what sirs must I do to be saved they replied believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved believe in the Lord Jesus says Paul simple as that he doesn't say stop being a bad person turn over a new leaf get some religion do good works none of those things it's nothing that we can do ourselves it's nothing that we can attain or achieve by our own actions it's simply a matter of placing our faith in the one who's done everything for us it's like again the person under the rubble when they say what can I do to save myself nothing you simply call help the person above you has to take the rubble off they're the ones who have to usually lift you out it's them who do it they are the rescuers and so it is with the Lord

[51 : 26] Jesus Christ the reason that he lived and lived in this world was to save and to rescue us that's the reason he came into the world from heaven his name means Jesus which means the Lord saves and we're given the explanation of that in Matthew's gospel for he will save his people from their sin that's why he was born that reason he lived and taught that reason he performed those incredible miracles all to point to the fact that he was coming to rescue and save people and especially that's why he went to the cross to suffer for our sin to pay for our debt to win for us acceptance with God and forgiveness to do what we could never do and for that very reason he rose again from the dead an absolute proof that he is able to save those who put their faith in him absolute proof that we need not fear death or fear life or fear anything we may not have to fear the judgment seat of

God because Jesus Christ has risen and we shall live as well with him what a changed man we find in a matter of a few hours his fears are gone his mind is at peace why verse 34 the jailer brought them into the house and a meal before them he was filled with joy why because he had come to believe in God come to faith in God come to faith in the son of God the Lord Jesus Christ he's a changed man he and his family are baptized they're sitting and eating a meal with Paul who just a matter of hours ago was a prisoner and someone that he despised and rejected but now someone who was a brother and a friend and someone who led him and pointed him to this wonderful saviour he's filled with joy and let me close by asking you are you still suffering the after effects of an earthquake in your life perhaps that earthquake is very recent perhaps it's maybe months or years ago but there's still the tremors going on what will the outcome be for you will you like him put your faith and trust in

Jesus receive the peace the joy that he gives it's very easy in one sense it's very simple in one sense it's simply acknowledging Christ I need you to save me because I'm trapped and I cannot save myself it's simply faith in him if you are not a Christian if you haven't called upon the Lord Jesus and trusted him or know anything about him please talk to somebody here who you know is a Christian there's a few booklets about how can God accept me they're very helpful to talk about these things explain these things please don't put off what God is doing and speaking to you about so we're going to sing a hymn together now and as we go and sing this hymn those who are going to be going into the pool are going to go and get ready and get themselves sorted out and then they'll come back in and then they'll hand over to

Barry and he'll take us from there so let's stand and sing this wonderful hymn 647 in Christ alone my hope is found 647 he is the person his his his Thank you.

Thank you.

[56 : 41] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. And I'll hand over to Barry now as well. Okay, Barry. Thank you. Just to explain what's going to happen, they'll come in in turn and they'll be asked three questions.

And on their response to those questions, then we'll baptize them. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Yeah, we're going to sing as they come out.

[59 : 38] Yeah. Yeah. 918. Just the first verse. He is Lord, he is Lord, he is risen from the dead, he is Lord. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Paul, have you fully and truly repented of all the sins of your past life?

I have. I have. I have. Have you put your faith in Jesus Christ alone for your salvation? I have. I have. Do you intend with God's help to confess Christ before the world without shame and to seek God's will first in your life?

I do. On confession of your faith in Jesus Christ and by your own request, we baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Thank you.

[61 : 00] Amen. Elliot, have you fully and truly repented of all the sins of your past life? I have. Have you put your faith in Jesus Christ alone for your salvation?

I have. Do you intend with God's help to confess Christ before the world without shame and to seek God's will first in your life? I do. Do you intend with God's help to confess Christ?

I do. I do. I do. Do you intend with God's help to confess Christ? I do. Do you intend with God's help to confess Christ? I do. I do. I do. I do. Do you intend with God's help to confess Christ?

I do. Do you intend with God's help? I do. Do you intend with God's help? I do. Do you intend with God's help? I do. Do you intend with God's help? I do. Do you intend with God's help? Oh, no.

Oh, no. Go to God's help. I do. Go to God's help. I do. I do. I do. Do you intend with God's help? I do.

[61 : 58] Go to God's help. If you are, Lord God's help. Let's close in prayer together now and then these folk can get dry.

So let us pray. Just stay where you are. You're all right. Stay where you are. Stay. Stay. Thank you. Freeze. We've got to pray. Just close your eyes. We are.

Lord, we thank you so much again for what you've done in Paul and Elliot's lives. Thank you for bringing them to Jesus and bringing them to faith in him and giving them that joy. And we thank you for this day that they've been able to say that they know you and trust you and want to follow you.

So bless them, Lord, we pray, from this day. Make them strong in their faith. Make them men of God for this day and generation. For their families, for their friends, and for this church, we pray. Work in them and do them good and help us to pray for them, to support them, to encourage them and to build them up in the faith too.

And for those of us, Lord, who don't know you, oh, Lord, whatever you need to do, bring us to you as well. Bring us to that place where we cry to you for salvation. Open our hearts and show us our sin.

[63 : 07] And, Lord, we ask these things as we ask your tremendous blessing upon us now. For Jesus Christ's sake. Amen. Okay. You can get dry. Thank you, folks.

Please do stay. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.