Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

The Blasphemy of the Rich Young Ruler
Scripture: Mark 10:17-22
Code: 41-51

Open your Bible now to the tenth chapter of the gospel of Mark...the gospel of Mark, Mark, who tells the story of Christ along with Matthew and Luke and John has written this great history that we have been enjoying now for well over a year. We find ourselves in chapter 10. I've entitled this particular event "The Tragedy of a Selfish Seeker," The Tragedy of a Selfish Seeker.

We hear a lot today in the contemporary evangelical church about seekers. We even have ministry define for us as seeker-driven and needing to be seeker friendly. We might assume from that that the world is full of seekers and that we just need to find out the angle of what they're seeking and provide it somehow for them and that will draw them to salvation.

The truth of the matter is, the world is full of seekers, they're not seeking God. Fulfillment? Sure. Purpose? Right. Happiness? Absolutely. Love? For sure. Meaning? Of course. God? Not really. Romans 3, the Bible says, "No man seeks after God."

The world is full of dishonest seekers. The truth is, there are lots of people who want a more satisfying life, a more fulfilling life and if you throw in heaven, all the better. However, the offer must come on their terms. There are lots of selfish seekers.

And by the way, I'm not just limiting them to sort of secular psychological areas. Religion is full of selfish seekers. They would say they're seeking God. They would say they're seeking the Kingdom of God. They would say they're seeking heaven, that's why they're so religious. But maybe they're the most shallow of all.

The truth of the matter is, the world is full of superficial religious people. On the outside and even by their own confession, they may appear to be legitimately religious, really pursuing the things of God. But if the truth were known, that's really not the case. And we have an example of that in the text before us. This account of Jesus meeting with a young man is so definitive that Matthew records it and so does Luke, and we're looking at Mark's history of the same encounter.

Verse 17, "Speaking of our Lord Jesus as He was setting out on a journey, a man ran up to Him and knelt before Him and asked Him, 'Good teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?' And Jesus said to him, 'Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone. You know the commandments, do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not bear false witness, do not defraud, honor

your father and mother.' And he said to Him, 'Teacher, I have kept all these things from my youth up.' Looking at him, Jesus felt a love for him and said to him, 'One thing you lack, go and sell all you possess and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven and come follow Me.' But at these words, he was saddened. He went away grieving for he was one who owned much property."

This is an actual encounter. This is not a parable. This is not a story that Jesus invented as He often did. This is a real encounter between Jesus and this man recorded by Matthew, Mark and Luke because it deals with such an absolutely critical issue for us to understand. Superficial interest in eternal life must be confronted. It cannot be accepted. We cannot accommodate selfish seekers. After all, didn't Jesus say it is a narrow gate and few find it? It is a great struggle and few win it. It is a costly choice and few pay it.

Here we learn from the life of our Lord the reality of how to deal with a selfish shallow seeker who in this case is extremely religious. And the central point of this encounter is that proud, selfish people, no matter how much they may say they want eternal life, are not prepared to receive it. This young man failed the greatest test of his life. He was offered a choice between himself and God, between fulfillment here and now and fulfillment in the life to come. The question was...what was more valuable to him? God and the life to come? Or his own will and the present life?

And whatever might have been the details of this encounter, and it was certainly longer, perhaps, than the record we have here, the details aren't really important, there was just one detail that really mattered and Jesus nailed that one. And the end is apparent. It's a brief story. As I said, there were perhaps many more things said in the dialogue but all we need to know is here, to know how to confront a shallow seeker.

The bottom line is, he wanted eternal life but not enough to give up his pride and his possessions. That's the bottom line. He never questioned what Jesus said. He never questioned the truthfulness of what Jesus said. He didn't equivocate, he didn't argue, he just walked away. But there are very evident things here that become crystal clear to us. Whatever Jesus was offering was going to cost him his pride and it was going to cost him his possessions and the price was too high, even for eternal life. He wanted eternal life only as an add-on to what he already possessed. He loved himself, not God. He loved earth, not heaven. He loved the material, not the spiritual.

The issue here is really salvation. It's about salvation. Eternal life equals salvation. He asks the question, "What do I do to take possession of salvation?" And Jesus stopped him dead in his tracks. Much of the work that we do in evangelism, you might label as pre-evangelism. Sometimes we have to convince people that there is such a thing as eternal life, although most people believe there is. It's kind of built in to what it is to be human. But sometimes we have to tell them that there is eternal life and convince them that there is eternal life in hell or in heaven. Not this man, he knew that was the case. This man was already at the point where he knew there was eternal life and he knew he wanted

it instead of its alternative, eternal death. Some would say this is the ideal seeker. This may be the ideal seeker of all seekers that we meet in the New Testament. By contemporary evangelical standards, Jesus needed to be seeker-friendly and reel him in.

That is not what Jesus did. The man left the same way he came, in a direct line toward hell and eternal death. I'm pretty sure he would have prayed a prayer if Jesus had given him one to pray. I'm sure he would have made a decision if Jesus had given him a decision to make. I'm pretty sure he would have agreed to some terms if Jesus had given him some agreeable terms. Jesus never gave him a prayer, never asked him to make a decision, never called for a commitment, not at all. He stopped him dead in his tracks.

Did Jesus fail? Did Jesus miss the opportunity that was right there in front of Him? Or do our ideas of evangelism indict Jesus? Do we have a better way than He did?

I really don't think so. So let's look at the story.

"As He was setting out on a journey," now we know where He is, He's on the east side of the Jordan River, down in the south. He is in the last days of His ministry in a place called Peraea, region east of the Jordan, been ministering there. He's headed for Jerusalem for the final time to die and rise again. Verse 32 of this chapter says they were on the road going to Jerusalem.

They first arrive in Jericho and then up the hill to Jerusalem. So it's at the end of His ministry, the end of this brief ministry in the region called Peraea. We don't know any more detail than that about the location.

So what happened? A man ran up to Him and knelt before Him. Now this is very unusual, that's why Matthew in his account of this says, "Behold," like Wow! You don't expect this. We also know from Matthew and Luke's account that he was a young man and that he was a ruler, probably the ruler of a synagogue. That would be the only ruler essentially in the social religious life of Israel. He wouldn't be a scribe or a Pharisee, necessarily, but a very wealthy layman, very young who had ascended to be the leading lay person in a synagogue, which was usually reserved for an older man, somebody wiser, somebody who had lived longer, typically would be called an elder because in reality he was older. This man has achieved much religiously.

We know he's rich because the other gospels tell us, he is therefore called the rich young ruler. His life is exactly where he wanted it to be at this time. He has...he's beaten the curve. He's beaten the trend, he's beaten the odds. He's young and he's wealthy and he owns a lot of property and he has achieved spiritual respect and spiritual status by being made the chief of a synagogue. It means the people have great respect for him. He's a moral man. He hadn't gained his wealth immorally and he's respectable. And yet there is in his heart a deep fear that he does not possess what he needs most

and that is salvation, eternal life, the hope of heaven.

Well let's look at him and see what is commendable about him. First of all, he came running. That's pretty remarkable, actually, because as we learn in the story of the Prodigal Son, Middle Eastern people of status don't run. That would be crude. And then to run to Jesus, this rejected Galilean teacher whom the religious establishment had wholesale rejected and sought to kill and He's in public view, running to Jesus. And then it says, not only ran up to Him, but knelt before Him. He postures Himself in a humble manner. Again this is a man who is elevated and exalted in his religious society who takes the posture of one who is humble. And that's why Matthew says, "Behold," because this is really a startling thing. This man is not the kind of man who runs to a rejected teacher and falls on his knees.

It's commendable that he comes with the attitude he comes with. No question about it. It is also commendable that he comes with a measure of humility. And on the surface it is commendable that he addresses Jesus the way he does. Would you look at what he says? "Good teacher...good teacher." He acknowledges Jesus as not only a legitimate teacher, not a teacher to be rejected, but as a good teacher, *agathe didaskale, agathe*. That's the word *agathos* from which we get the old name Agatha. *Agathos* means good internally, virtuous. *Kalos*, the other word for good means looking good, good in form. This means good to the core, virtuous, beneficent. This is a deep kind of inherent goodness.

Now here is a man who is commendable. He comes eagerly. He comes humbly. There's a great sense of urgency. "Good teacher, what shall I do?" He comes respectfully. What shall I do? There's some pathos in that. He's feeling the pain of doubt. In fact, in Matthew 19:20 it says that he said, "What am I lacking?" What is if to say, I've climbed the religious ladder to the top rung, what did I leave out? There's a hole in my life. That hole could be described as unsatisfied desire, unfulfilled longing, or just plain fear. He is afraid that he doesn't have a relationship with God that could be defined as eternal life.

Now to the Jews, eternal life is not a quantity of life, it is a kind of life. It is the life of God, *aionios*, that which is forever. It is forever kind of life, the life that belongs to God. It's as if he says, "I have the life that belongs to man but I want that life which belongs to God. I want that life which is God's life.

This is a very spiritual pursuit for him. So he comes with all this complex of very, very appropriate attitudes: eagerness, urgency, fear, doubt, emptiness. He comes knowing what he wants, feeling the need for it deeply, seeking diligently. He comes respectfully. And we could even add that he comes to the right person because who better to give him the answer than Jesus? First John tells us, 1 John 5:20, He is the eternal life...He is the eternal life. So he comes to the one who is eternal life to ask how to take possession of eternal life. That's what he means when he says inherit. How can I take possession of it? How can I make eternal life my own? And remember, to the Jews the concept of

eternal life is salvation, a God kind of life.

Now as you look at that, you say, “Well, you know, everything is in the right place here. Where is the problem here?” Amazingly it comes up where you wouldn’t expect it. The problem shows up in one word, that word is in verse 17 and it’s the word “good.” It’s the word good. You know, if there’s any word that the world doesn’t understand, it’s that word...good. Stop anybody on the street and say, “Are you a good person?” What are they going to say? Of course I’m a good person.

The world en masse and throughout its entire history has had a wrong definition of good. That’s the problem. That’s the problem. Everything else...fine...empty feeling in his heart, an understanding of eternal life, a desire to possess it even to the point where you embarrass yourself by running and kneeling. The problem here is the word “good.” He uses it really loosely. He doesn’t know that Jesus is God, there’s no indication of that. He just knows He’s a teacher and by virtue of what He has taught and what He has done, and the reputation of Jesus, he’s convinced like everybody else was that He was a teacher sent from God, like Nicodemus said, and therefore good must apply to him. Now remember, he thought he was good and everybody he associated with good. And the whole synagogue crowd was good and everybody was good. And so he’s loose with the word. Thinks he’s commending Jesus by using that word for Him. That’s the problem. And if you understand that that word is the problem, then you begin to understand Jesus’ answer. “Good teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” Before we look at His answer, how would you answer that question if somebody came up to you running, slid, knelt, what do I do to take possession of eternal life? Probably you would jump to the gospel. Oh, hey, believe in Jesus. And you say, “Well, shouldn’t I do that?”

Well, that depends. There are some passages of Scripture that might lead you to do that. In John 6 verse 28 they said to Jesus, “What shall we do so that we may work the works of God?” How do we become one with God? How do we move out of the world of men into the realm of God? They’re asking the same question. How do we come to salvation? How do we enter the Kingdom of God? How do we participate in the life of God? It’s the same question and Jesus said, “Here’s what you do. Believe in Him whom He has sent.”

Isn’t that the way you would normally answer the question? What do we do to work the works of God? What do we do to receive eternal life? What do we do to have salvation? Believe in the one whom He has sent. And so you would have John 6 on your side.

Also, you might remember the sixteenth chapter of Acts and Paul and the Philippian jailor, and the Philippian jailor says to Paul and Silas after the earthquake hit the prison and they were set loose, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved? Whether it’s the work the works of God, or possess eternal life, or be saved, it’s the same question and Paul said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus.” Now we understand that answer. That’s kind of the normal answer, isn’t it? If somebody comes running up to you and says, “What do I do to take possession of eternal life?” You say, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, believe

on the Lord Jesus Christ."

Well, Jesus didn't say that. He did not say that because there's something else that has to be confronted here. Faith, essential. But something else as essential as well and it is repentance, repentance. The gospel hangs over this account but it never enters. You can feel it because you know it. But Jesus never says it. It looms in the shadow of this event. It is never uttered. No word of faith ever appears. No comment about believing is ever stated because the issue here is sin and the law and repentance first.

And our Lord makes that clear in one profound statement. Why do you call Me good? Why are you throwing that word around? You don't know Me. I am a total stranger. Why are you calling Me good?" He used the word casually. It was a word he used concerning himself and most of the people in his world. And Jesus redefines that word with the next statement. "No one is good except God alone." Does that change your definition of good? Does that have some effect on it? No one is good except God alone. That makes good...listen to me...absolute, not relative. There are relative degrees of bad, you're not as bad as everybody else. I'm not as bad as everybody else. But none of us is good, only God is good. That is a smashing blow for a legalist.

The issue here is to challenge the sinner's sense of goodness. Before you can talk about the gospel, before you can talk about salvation, before you can talk about the Kingdom and eternal life, and working the works of God, people must understand that they are not good. And that takes all the works out of it. This man had no true idea of goodness, therefore he had no real understanding of the law of God which he fastidiously studied or he wouldn't have thrown the word "good" around casually and labeled a stranger with it.

Now as a Jewish religious leader, he should have known the Psalms...should have known the Psalms. And if he knew the Psalms, he would know that the Psalms say this, "There is none righteous, no not one." There is none who is good." "There is none who seeks after God." All of that comes from the Psalms, but it is also collected by Paul in Romans 3. In Romans 3 verses 10 to 18, Paul collects sayings out of the Psalms, none righteous, no not one, none does good, no one. He borrows from Psalm 14, Psalm 53, Psalm 5, Psalm 140, Psalm 10, Psalm 36 and even throws in a verse from Isaiah 59. He collects from the Old Testament the testimony that no one is good, no one because good is not a relative reality, it is an absolute...it is an absolute.

What does it mean? To be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect. As God says, "I am holy, I am holy, I am holy, I am holy, without sin, without flaw, without error." It is perfect righteousness, perfect holiness, absolute goodness. The law is given to reveal that. How perverted had these Jewish people become when they took the law as a means to establish their own goodness when the purpose of the law was to reveal the goodness of God to which they could never attain? You understand the difference?

The testimony of the Apostle Paul would be very much like this young man. I see a lot of parallels. The Apostle Paul was doing really well for a while as a legalist, wasn't he? Circumcised the eighth day, born of the tribe of Benjamin, Philippians 3, he goes through all of that. He says he was a traditionalist. He was zealous for the law. He was blameless before the law. He toed the line. He had all these credits to himself as a legalist. And then something happened to Paul which he speaks of in Romans 7:7, he says this, "I wouldn't have come to know sin except through the Law." Once he began to really understand the Law of God, he saw how sinful he was. What is the Law of God? The Law of God which defines for us sin and holiness is simply a revelation of the nature of God. God discloses His nature as holy in His Law. God has revealed Himself in His Law. And when Paul saw the reality of the nature of God in the Law and knew he couldn't keep the Law, he said, "The Law killed me," Romans 7, "It slew me, it resulted in death for me," he says verse 10. In verse 13 of Romans 7, "Therefore did that which is good become a cause of death for me? May it never be. Rather it was sin in order that it might be shown to be sin by affecting my death through that which is good." The Law is holy, just and...what?...good. True goodness is the nature of God and the true goodness of the nature of God is revealed in the Law of God. And when you measure yourself against the Law of God, you don't come out as good as God. You come out bad.

You say, "What's the purpose of that?" So that you're slain, so that you're devastated, so that you're crushed and broken. Then the Law becomes, Galatians 3:24, the tutor that drives you to Christ who alone can save you from your own corruption.

The purpose of the Law is to kill, to crush, to show how perfectly good God is and how utterly evil man is, therefore to produce guilt and fear and dread and remorse.

Well the rich young ruler totally missed that. Totally. He had a superficial view of the Law like all legalists do, all phony religionists. His response is consistent with fallen human nature that thinks its good and the religious people think they're better than everybody else. He is sure that he is good. He has met the Law's demands. He is good. Since Jesus is a teacher, from God He's good, too.

Here is the most damning delusion that any mind can ever believe, that I'm good. That's it. That I'm good. When you tell people they are wicked, evil, corrupt, and not good at all, they don't believe that. They didn't believe it then, they don't believe it today. People don't believe that. So they go to hell believing they're good. And until they believe they're not, there's no hope for them. Till you believe you're not, there's no hope for you.

So let's find out whether this man is good, that's Jesus' agenda here. You're throwing the word "good" around, let's find out about goodness. No one is good except God alone. I'll give you a test. You know the commandments. Matthew 19:17 says, he added, "And keep the commandments." You know them. You know you're to keep them. He gets that.

Jesus gives him some examples. “Do not murder. Do not commit adultery. Do not steal. Do not bear false witness. Do not defraud. Honor your father and mother.” And all of those except one is taken out of the second table of the Law, Exodus chapter 20 verses 12 to 16, the Ten Commandments. This is the second half of the Ten Commandments. So let’s go back to the second table of the Law, the first table deals with the relationship to God, the second with the relationships among people. So let’s just go to the human relationships, first of all, and see how well you’re doing on that one.

And his response, what is it? “He said to Him, ‘Teacher, I’ve kept all these things from my youth up.’” Wow! That’s why you’re good. You’re good because you’ve always kept that second table of the Law. You know what that shows you? The man is living in a delusion, first of all. But more importantly, he understands the surface of the Law but not the depth of the Law, because the Law goes much deeper than the surface. That’s why Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5 verses 20 to 48, can’t go through all of that now, said this, “You have heard it said, you’ve been taught, but I say to you...” And He said it over and over and over and over. You’ve been taught that if you don’t murder, you’re fine. I ‘m telling you, if you hate someone, you’re a murderer in your heart. You’ve been taught if you don’t commit adultery, you’re okay. But I’m telling you, if you look on a woman to lust after her in your heart, you’ve committed adultery. This man didn’t understand the depth of the Law. If he understood the depth of the Law, he would know that he had hatred, that lustful thoughts were a part of his life, that desiring to steal, covetousness, lies, dishonor to his parents were part of the fabric of his wretched heart. The truth of the matter is, he says, “I’ve kept these from my youth up.” In all honesty, he had broken those that day because no sinner can live without impure thoughts. He shattered that law that day with his attitude toward others. He had broken the Law. He was a law breaker. And as a law breaker, he was worthy of death, and that’s what the Law is supposed to do, kill you, sentence you to death and divine judgment.

You think you’re fine because you’ve managed to control it on the surface. You’re not. He didn’t understand the depth of the Law. And there was more. He not only was a violator of the second half, he was a flagrant violator of the first half. You say, “What’s the first half of the Law?”

Well you know what it is. “You shall have no other gods before Me, make no idols, don’t take My name in vain, and remember the Sabbath to keep it holy.”

You say, “Well wait a minute. I mean, he was worshiping God. He probably certainly didn’t take God’s name in vain. He must have observed the Sabbath. And he certainly put God first in his life.”

Not really. He is a blasphemer. He has violated not only the second table of the Law, but the first table of the Law by being a blasphemer of God. And Jesus takes him now to the foundation of the Law and the foundation of the Law is in Exodus 20 verse 3 and it says, “You shall have no other gods before Me...you shall have no other gods before Me.” You don’t worship anybody but Me. God

demands exclusive comprehensive total worship, Deuteronomy 6:5, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and might.” And if you do that, you won’t have idols, right? And you won’t take His name in vain. And you won’t desecrate His day. It all flows out of the first.

How bad was this man? How far from good was this man? He not only regularly broke the second table of the Law in his heart, but he lived an entire life of blasphemy in which he worshiped another God. He shattered the first table of the Law. Every time he worshiped, he violated the first table of the Law. Every time the name of God slipped between his lips, it was taken in vain. And every time he went to a synagogue or the temple to observe a Sabbath, he was a blaspheming hypocrite.

You say, “How do you know all that?” Cause I can read my Bible, follow, looking at him, verse 21, Jesus felt a love for him, maybe a tear like the tears He shed over Jerusalem, coursed down Jesus’ cheeks, tears of sympathy and compassion. So sad because this man was a blasphemer and didn’t know it. This man was a violator and didn’t know it. This man was the worst.

Here comes the exposure. “One thing you lack, just one thing.” You say, “How can you say that? One thing?”

“Go sell all you possess, give to the poor, you’ll have treasure in heaven.” That’s what you said you wanted. “Come follow Me.”

How can it be that simple? “But at these words, he was saddened and he went away grieving for he was one who owned much property.”

You know why he is a blasphemer? Because he has another God. Who is his other God?

He had much...what?...property. He had an idol. He didn’t love the Lord his God with all his heart, soul and mind, that’s the one thing Jesus asked him to do. Let Me just have you do one thing. Get rid of the idol which is your money and your possessions. You don’t get saved by lowering your bank account. You get saved when you get rid of your idol and you embrace the true God. He’s a blaspheming idolater. And again I’ll say it, every time he opened his mouth, he took the Lord’s name in vain. Every time he showed up on a Sabbath, he violated that Sabbath as a hypocritical idolatrous blasphemer.

Earthly wealth, temporal satisfaction was his God. In fact, he was his own God. Jesus preached the Law to him and he never got to the gospel because you can’t get to the gospel which is the good news until someone accepts the bad news, the condemnation of the Law. How do you tell a highly respected, revered, honored, religious man who sees his prosperity as the beneficence of a God who is pleased with him, who sees his position in the synagogue as evidence of his true spiritual virtue, how do you tell that man that good is not relative, it is absolute and there’s only one who is good and

that's God and he is not? And then tell him, as a student of the Law, that he is a regular violator of the whole Law of God from the top to the bottom who worships himself?

And that's the way it is with all people who refuse the gospel, who never get to the gospel. That's why I say, the gospel hangs in the shadows silently here. If the Law doesn't drive you to Christ, it will drive you to hell in your own spiritual pride. He's a blasphemer who has another God.

If he would do one thing, it would be to get rid of the other God and love the Lord with all his heart, soul and mind. And the question is for you, what will you do? Many of you come near to Christ. You have a conversation with Him here on Sunday mornings. You walk away clinging to your cherished blasphemy, holding on to your own self-worship, your own pride, your own achievement, unwilling to recognize the profound depth and damning power of your own sin. You ignore the Law's condemnation. And instead of letting it be the tutor that drives you to Christ, you let it drive you into hell. You just want to say to this young man, "Don't you understand that the goodness you can't achieve will be given to you as a gift? The righteousness you cannot attain will be given to you as a gift through the sacrifice of Christ? He was made sin for you that you might become the righteousness of God in Him?"

This is Paul, isn't it? That the thing that he pursued was garbage when he found there was an alien righteousness, the very righteousness of God that would be credited to his account. You can't come in to eternal life unless you're as good as God and the only way you can be as good as God is to have the goodness of God credited to you. That's the gospel. Christ takes your punishment, pays for your sin, gives you His perfect goodness.

Beware of the selfish seeker, deluded about his own goodness, her own goodness. Stop the selfish seeker in his tracks with the Law and judgment and a biblical definition of what it really means to be good.

This is Your Word to us, and how compelling it is. How instructive it is. We're so rich. We have just literally been engulfed in spiritual richness today, sweet fellowship with those who are sitting right around us, the blessedness of this wonderful church family, the wonder of beautiful music rendered before you by young people who love You and serve You with their whole hearts. We have now been bathed again in the truth of Scripture, this incalculable and unparalleled treasure. We thank You for the gift that today is to us and it's not over, much more to come, even tonight. We thank You, Lord. We thank You for Your truth. We thank You that there was a day when the Law killed us and the gospel gave us life. We died and we rose again in Christ. We thank You for that righteousness, that goodness, that perfection that is ours, not because we earn it or deserve it but that it is given as a gift to cover us through faith in Him. Yes, the gospel is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, but to believe on Him out of your sinfulness and wretchedness with a penitent heart, receiving a righteous not your own, but one that comes from God. Lord, help us to understand that while the gospel is the end, the

Law is the beginning. May we understand how they go together so importantly, to bring the sinner to the right answer, how do I inherit eternal life? Again we thank You, Lord, for filling our place this morning with Your presence and enabling us to worship You in this way. And now as we close, we ask, Lord, that You'll draw to the prayer room now those perhaps who need to come and have resisted for a long time, who can have another conversation with Jesus and walk away. Let the Law do its work. May the Holy Spirit convict of sin and righteousness and judgment and may the glorious light of the gospel break on the sinner's dead heart to give light and life. And we pray, Lord, that You'll do Your work in hearts, we ask in Christ's name. Amen.

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