

# Judgment must begin at the house of God

by Anton Bosch

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*This sermon from 1 Peter chapter 4 discusses the importance of enduring suffering for Christ's sake, highlighting the purification process believers go through in times of trial. It emphasizes the need to glorify God in suffering, discerning the reasons behind persecution, and the significance of judgment beginning in the house of God for correction and purification. The message urges believers to examine their faith, respond in a Christ-like manner to trials, and worship God amidst difficulties.*

**Scripture:** 1 Peter 4:12, 1 Corinthians 11:32, Hebrews 12:6, Matthew 7:13, Job 1:20, Proverbs 3:11

**Topics:** "Enduring Suffering", "Glorifying God in Trials"

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## Description

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## Transcript

All right, we're in 1 Peter chapter 4, 1 Peter chapter 4, and I'm going to read 12 through 19. 1 Peter 4, reading 12 through 19. Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you.

But rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part he is blasphemed, but on your part he is glorified.

But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. If anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter. For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God, and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? Now if the righteous one is scarcely saved, where will the ungodly and the sinner appear? Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God, commit their souls to him in doing good as to a faithful creator.

And so Peter is dealing with the issue of suffering, and we end last week that if you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. So he's saying it's a

good thing, and it's a good thing for three reasons, and we didn't cover these in detail last week, but the first is that it is a good thing because God is working all things for our good, and so he's using these things to shape us and to mold us into the image of his Son. The second reason is the reason he gives here, and that is because when we suffer, the glory of God rests upon us if we're indeed suffering for his sake.

And then the third reason we're going to deal with tonight, and that is that in suffering we are purified for the Lord's return, and that'll make sense as we go along. So let's get to the first verse tonight, and that is verse 15. So here is the warning, the caveat, the thing that we need to be careful, and of course we have this very important word but again.

We saw that word but twice last week, and it was very important. So he's saying it's a good thing to suffer, but let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, as a busybody in other people's matters. So when we suffer, it must be for the right reason.

It must be for Christ's sake, and not for our own. And I'm not going to spend too much time on this, because we did speak about this as we went along, and in 1 Peter chapter 3 we find the same idea. So Peter is repeating this idea, and that is that when we suffer for our own faults, as he said in chapter 3, when we suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or a busybody in other people's matters, well, then we can't claim any of these blessings, because we're suffering for our own faults.

We just reap what we have sown. And so it's interesting that he uses these particular titles or lists, just a short list of four or five, was it four? Four different things. Now you'll remember if this was Paul, there would be a much longer list.

And I was fascinated that he included the things that he did include, because on the one extreme we have a murderer, which probably, I guess, has to be the worst kind of crime that you can commit. We can argue about other crimes that may be bigger or greater than that, but I think that that's probably the worst on that one scale. But then he ends up as a busybody in other people's matters, and we look at that and we say, well, you know, what's the big deal? You know, we all like to go on Facebook and to gossip, and to interfere in other people's stuff, and to carry stories of, you know, what somebody else did or somebody else said.

And in fact, you know, it seems to me that that's most of what Facebook is made up out of, is really gossip. There's not a lot of encouraging stuff, there's not a lot of good teaching, there is some, but most of it seems to just be gossip. Oh, did you hear what Biden did the other day? Oh, did you hear what Trump did the other day? And so it's really perpetuating these things, and most of it, we've spoken about that before, is not even based on truth.

So these are the two extremes, and we say, well, you know, how can you compare and put in the same list being a murderer and a busybody? Because a busybody seems to be pretty innocuous, seems to be, you know, it's just a minor little thing. In fact, it's not just a minor little thing, and you remember in Paul's epistles, over and over and over, he speaks about this problem of being a busybody, of interfering and gossiping and getting involved in stuff that is not our business. And so obviously, there is a serious warning for us in that.

And then in between these two, he has a thief, and that speaks for itself. And remember that many of these things have a spiritual application as well. And so we say, well, you know, I never killed somebody, I never pulled a gun on someone and shot them dead, and so, you know, I'm okay on that.

But how easily do we not murder someone else's reputation? How easily do we not murder someone else's good name? And, you know, it's the same thing. And remember, Jesus said that if you hate your brother without a cause, you may as well have committed murder, because the only difference between the one who actually committed the murder and the one who hated was opportunity. That's the only difference.

And so a murderer is not just physical, it can also be a spiritual or a murderer. The same with a thief. How easily do we steal God's glory and take it for ourselves? How easily do we steal God's time? How easily do we steal our boss's time? And I think now that many of us are working at home, it's very easy to not put in the hours that you're supposed to be putting in.

It's still stealing. It may not be actual cash that you're taking, but you're still taking profit out of the company. And, you know, obviously, if you are clocking in and working in a particular business, and you're spending time on the phone instead of doing your job, it's stealing.

You know, in the old days we used to talk about paper clips and erasers and pencils. Well, these days, you know, we don't have those kinds of things. But we use the boss's internet, we use his time to do personal stuff.

It's really stealing at the end of the day. And there are often consequences to that. Or an evildoer, and this is the interesting one.

The word is well translated here, evildoer, somebody who just does bad stuff. So what is included in that? Well, everything. And I think that's why his list is so short.

So he's given us the extremes, he's given us the worst kind, he's given us murder, he's given us something which we would say, well, it's not such a big deal being a busybody. And then he covers all of the bases by this word evildoer, someone who's doing bad stuff, who's doing what they should not be doing. And obviously this is particularly relating to other people.

And so when we suffer for these things, it is not for Christ's sake. And the problem is that so many times Christians do suffer for the faith, but other times they suffer for their own stuff, but they'll pull the Christian cart. I think you understand what I mean by that.

Oh, you know, the boss has fired me because I'm a Christian. No, maybe it's not because you're a Christian, maybe it's because you didn't do a decent job, or maybe because you were difficult to work with, or whatever else it may be. So we have to be very, very careful about pulling the Christian cart and saying, well, you know, it's because I'm a Christian that they're discriminating against me, when in fact it's something else.

And so we need to be sure, and remember we've spoken much about this particularly from Paul's epistles, the need for us to be exemplary employees, to be above reproach as citizens, and to be model citizens, model employees, model families, because we have been saved and we are different. All right, now in 1 Peter chapter 2, and in fact I said 1 Peter 3, but it's in fact chapter 2 verse 20, here's the verse, for what credit is it when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently. Now obviously this could be a physical beating, because remember some of these people he's writing to are slaves, but this may just be some other form of punishment, losing your job, losing time, being demoted, getting a scolding, whatever it is, and you take that patiently.

He says it's no credit, he says you got what was coming, but when you do good and suffer, and you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. So verse 16 then, the next verse in the passage, if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, let him not be ashamed. Now obviously in suffering for Christ there is invariably shame attached as far as the world is concerned, because together with the punishment or whatever comes against us, is the shame that goes with it, and invariably we feel, well maybe I deserve this, maybe I'm not that great.

Now I think it's important for us to examine our hearts in all of these things, and remember this is one of the most difficult things for us to do, but when someone turns against us, whether it be in the workplace or whether it be in society, wherever it may be, when you feel that someone is persecuting you, it's vitally important that we determine the cause. Am I being persecuted because of something I have done which is ungodly or un-Christlike, or is this genuine Christian persecution? Many Christian ministers and those who blog and write on the internet, write a whole lot of nonsense, and then someone will comment and say, well you know, this is nonsense, what are you doing, what are you on about? And they'll immediately retreat and say, oh you know, woe is me, I'm being persecuted for Christ's sake. No, you're being persecuted because you said something dumb, or because your position is untenable, is not a good position.

And so we must be able to be objective and say, did I deserve this or didn't I? Today someone asked me a question about conspiracies, and in fact I'm going to write an article on it in the next few days, I've actually started. And of course this is a very very sensitive area, and it is one which I have come to understand has a spiritual, a very deep spiritual undertone. There are demonic forces behind these demons.

But anyhow, on one of the websites that run my videos, there are over 800, I don't remember the exact number, but over 800 comments. 95% of those comments are negative comments. Some of the vilest comments that you can imagine, you know, calling me all sorts of things, calling me a messenger of Satan, literally, calling me a communist, calling me all sorts of things, because of the message which we preached here when we were closed down on conspiracies.

I cannot afford to just brush it off. I must examine myself against those accusations. Are those accusations legitimate? Is there truth in them? You see, because our knee-jerk reaction is, oh no, this is nonsense, you know, I'm right, you're wrong.

I mean, we know, you've heard us quote that verse so many times, or the verses, three verses in the book of Proverbs. All the ways of a man are right in his own eyes, but the Lord tests the hearts. And so our knee-jerk reaction is, yeah, of course I'm right and he's wrong, I'm suffering, I'm being persecuted for righteousness sake.

No, it's not necessarily true. And I believe that God uses these things to cause us to examine ourselves. And sometimes we have to make a correction.

We have to change course. And sometimes God uses those things to bring correction and to bring a change of course into our lives. So when we get a negative response, we need to make sure that I'm suffering for the right reasons, that I'm suffering as a Christian, as a follower of Christ, not as a follower of some ideology, or a follower of some theology, or a follower of some political idea.

But I'm suffering as a Christian, a follower of Jesus Christ. When that happens, don't be ashamed. Don't be ashamed of the illustration that I've been using, because it's just very pertinent, because it just came up

again today.

The immediate reaction is to delete all of those negative comments, because it's shameful. People are calling me all sorts of names. They're calling me all sorts of things.

But I won't delete them. The viewer must read the comments, must listen to the Word of God, and make up their own mind about what is true. I'm not ashamed by the things that I'm called, because I have examined my heart, and I believe with all my heart that I have taken the right position and the right stand.

So don't be ashamed. Remember the apostles, and we spoke about them last week. They rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer with Christ, to be identified with Him.

And so the book of Hebrews speaks about the fact that we need to go to Him outside of the camp bearing His reproach, bearing His reproach. And the shame which they heaped upon Jesus is the shame that they will heap upon us. But it is glorious to suffer with Him for the right reason.

So don't be ashamed, but let Him glorify God in this matter. Here is the response. And folks, this is the most difficult thing, and I've touched on this last week.

I'm going to re-emphasize it again today, because Peter is re-emphasizing it, and because it is important. How we deal with the suffering is absolutely critical. If we're going to complain, and groan, and moan, or if we're going to lash out and respond, then what reward is there in that? We got what we want out of it.

We got rid of our anger and our blood pressure, and we said what we wanted to say. But when we are not ashamed, and when we suffer as a Christian the way that Christ suffered, Father, forgive them because they don't know what they're doing. We glorify God.

We glorify God. But when our response is carnal, when our response is fleshly, or just human, that does not glorify God. That brings dishonor to Him, because we claim to be His followers, and yet we will only be His followers when the going is good.

We don't want to be His followers in the suffering. But let's glorify God in the way that we deal with the suffering, number one, and in our worship of Him in the midst of the suffering. And I know that that's hard.

I know it's difficult to be positive when things are difficult, but that's what we're called to do. And again, I spoke about martyrs last week, and again, when you look at the way that those martyrs died, worshiping God, singing hymns, and glorifying Him as they suffered and as they died. I read again today a story I've read a number of times of a Roman centurion.

Remember we spoke about the centurion from Luke a few weeks ago, and he had a hundred men. And it was at the time when Nero was clamping down and insisting on emperor worship. And so what you needed to do is you needed to burn some incense, and you needed to say Hail Caesar.

And if you did that, you would get a letter of exemption saying that you had done this thing, and you were free to go, and you could get on with living your life. But Christians could not do that. And so the purge began with the army.

And so a decree went out to the army that all of the centurions needed to get their men together, and they needed to get these men to burn the incense and to say Hail Caesar. In this particular centurion's unit, there was 40, I believe, Christians. And they could not do this, because obviously to worship Caesar, to

say Hail Caesar, would be worshipping Caesar, and would be denying Christ.

And so what he did is he took the 40 men, and it was in the middle of winter, and took them out on a frozen lake, and left them there. And he went out back to the shore, and he made a big fire there, and he said look, when you're ready to worship Caesar, or to do the little ceremony, then you can come, and we'll do the ceremony, and everything is good. Otherwise you're going to stay out there, and you're going to die out there.

And apparently the story is that sometime in the early hours of the morning, one of these men came, and he was almost dead. And he came to the fire, and he said I'm ready, and he and he did what he had to do. Well, he didn't do what he had to do, he did what he did.

But the centurion was so touched by what he had seen out there, that he took his uniform off, and his armor, and he went out there, and he took that man's place. And they were singing a hymn about 40 men standing for Christ. And they changed the hymn to 39, and then when he joined them, they were able to begin again, and say 40 men standing for Christ.

What persuaded him? No one's preaching persuaded him, but the way that they glorified God in their suffering. The way they glorified God in their suffering. And folk, we've said this before, that when we suffer, and we act like the world does, the world looks at us, and they say, well what good is your faith? And now I'm speaking about suffering, not just for the faith, but just suffering in life.

Dealing with the virus, and dealing with layoffs, and all the stuff that we're dealing with. When our reaction is the same as the reaction of the world, the world look at us, and they say, well you know you're just like us, you have nothing to offer us. But when we're able to glorify God in good times and in bad, when we're able to glorify God in the midst of the deepest trials, that is the testimony that the world is looking at.

And they're able to say, this person has something which is different. They have something which we don't have. They have something that keeps them going in times of difficulty, and times of trial.

So let's glorify God in the suffering. Now verse 17, and this is a difficult verse, but we'll see what we can do with it. For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God.

And if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? Now he hasn't changed the subject. The subject is still persecution or suffering for the faith. And the next verse, let me just jump forward, verse 19, the second to next verse, therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him.

So it's still the same subject. So let's go back to verse 17. So the subject hasn't changed.

He was dealing with suffering, he's going to go back two verses later, he's going to go back to the subject of suffering, and now he says, the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God. This is a verse many people know and quote without quite understanding what they're quoting. So in what form is the judgment coming? This is not hellfire.

This is not eternal judgment, because he's talking about persecution. So what is the judgment? It's persecution. It's persecution.

He's not talking about, this relates to the second coming, but this is not talking about him coming on the great white throne or the Bema Sita rewards for Christians. So how then can persecution be judgment? Well God works all things for our good. And so we said last week that even though the persecution comes from evil men, God is still able to use that persecution for our good.

So it doesn't matter who causes the problem, whether it's the devil or the demons or whether it's unbelievers or atheists or even bad Christians, wherever it comes from God is able to use those things, and he does use them for our good. But you say this is talking about judgment. Yes, it's talking about judgment.

So what is the purpose of judgment? And the root word for judgment throughout the New Testament is the word krino, which simply means to select or to sort, to put the good this side, the bad that side. And so he says then judgment must begin at the house of God. Remember that if it is the house, what is the house of God? Clearly it's the church, those who are born again.

This is not the, I don't believe that he's talking here about the institutional church or the visible church. He's talking about the true church, the true house of God. So can and will the house of God be judged? No, because Christ has taken our judgment on the cross, so there's no more condemnation.

There's no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. So this is not eschatological, this is not judgment in the future. This is present judgment.

And so in what sense is there present judgment? Let me take you to one example here, and I'm going to come back to the verse 1 Corinthians 11:32. You should know this verse off by heart because we read it every time we serve the Lord's Supper, and I think it's coming up this Sunday, next Sunday. When we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord that we may not be condemned with the world.

So what is he talking about? He's saying that when you come to the Lord's table, you must judge yourself. Let a man examine himself. So I must judge myself.

The warning is if I do not judge myself, then God will judge me. Not again, not in the end time, but He will judge me now. And if you look at 1 Corinthians 11, and I didn't open the whole passage because we want to focus on Peter and get through this passage, but if you look at the context, he says, for this reason wherefore many are weak and sick among you, and some have even died or some sleep.

And he's saying that is God's judgment. So what Paul is saying in Corinthians is that God can judge us if we are not discerning the Lord's body. And remember, and I'm just going to throw this in here, that not discerning the Lord's body has nothing to do with the bread and the wine on the table.

It has to do with the body of Christ made up of believers. That is the context of Corinthians. Now I know that may be a new idea to you.

Go back and listen to the recordings on those passages. We deal with it in great detail. I'm happy to answer questions on it later on.

And so when I don't discern the Lord's body because I'm bringing division into the church, that's one of the issues he deals with in Corinthians. I'm of Paul, I'm of Apollos. Or you're not discerning the Lord's body because you're rich and you're gorging yourself at the love feast and your brother has nothing to eat.

Or you're dividing the body of Christ on ethnic grounds. And the list goes on and on and on. Not discerning the Lord's body.

If we don't discern the Lord's body and we don't correct ourselves, God will judge us. And he judges us through circumstances. In Corinthians, through sickness and death.

And yes, I have seen that happen. And so what is the purpose of that judgment? Well, he says here that when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord that we may not be condemned with the world. So the reason he judges us is to bring correction.

Remember, we have this problem. The moment we see the word discipline or judging, we immediately think this has to do with rejection. No, it doesn't have anything to do with rejection.

And of course that's a problem we have in raising kids today, is because we say, well, you know, disciplining the kid is a negative thing. No, it's a positive thing. And Hebrews says that if we don't, if we are not loved, then we are without chastening.

But because we are sons, God chastens us. Because he chastens and scourges every son whom he receives. And so the judging here in Corinthians is not a judging and saying, you have to go to hell.

But the judging here is God's discipline in our lives to bring correction. To bring correction. It has nothing to do with punishment.

It has to do with correcting. And remember, that's the whole principle of disciplining children, is it has nothing to do with punishment. If you're dealing with your anger and your frustration and your wrath, then it is punishment.

And the kid learns nothing except to resent the discipline. But when your discipline is to bring correction, whatever shape and form it may take, then it is the right thing. And so God's chastening is not rejection.

It is love. And it is to save us so that we don't end up in the world. We don't end up being condemned with the world.

So remember then, you have three levels of judging in Corinthians. Either you judge yourself, you don't judge yourself, God will deal with you. And if you don't submit to God's dealings with you, you get to get condemned with the world.

Those are the three steps, as it were, in that passage. So it's this kind of judging. So does God allow persecution into our lives to bring correction in our lives? Most certainly He does.

And so if we then go back to verse 17, so judgment begins in the house of God in the form of correction. But remember that there's always any discipline, certainly between God and us, has the potential of ultimate rejection. That's what Paul said in Corinthians.

If He judges us and we respond, then we are not condemned to the world. Clearly if we don't respond to that correction, the potential is that we can be rejected or we could be condemned with the world. And so here he's then bringing the same warning.

And he's saying God allows persecution in our lives. And this is the third reason. Remember I gave the other two earlier on.

This is the third reason. It's so that God can purge us. So that God can deal with issues in our lives.

So that God can deal with our attitude. So that God can deal with our relationship with Him. So that God can deal with our relationship to the world and our relationship to the body of Christ.

And so this is the first step of this judgment process. Obviously, because if you see the end of the verse, there is a warning of what we call eschatological future judgment. There's a warning of future judgment.

So if I don't respond to God's dealings in my life, there is a warning that there could be a more severe judgment coming. So judgment must begin at the house of God. And God sends persecution.

God sends or doesn't send, but He allows persecution to purge us individually. But He also allows persecution to purge the church. And remember we've been putting a lot of emphasis, because this has been heavy on my heart in the last year or so, since we began in Luke, that John preaches.

And he says, his winnowing fan is in his hand and he will thoroughly cleanse his threshing floor, and he will gather the wheat into the barn, and he will burn the chaff with fire. This is what John says about Jesus. Now remember we saw last week or the week before, John begins to question because he doesn't see Jesus doing these things.

Jesus is preaching about the kingdom. He's not bringing judgment. But the problem was that John didn't understand that that judgment was not for then, it was in the future.

We understand that that judgment is pretty soon. It's coming one of these days. In fact that judgment has already begun, because what we're seeing in the church today is an unprecedented time of Christians, so-called Christians, falling away.

And they're falling away for many reasons. They're falling away because they're growing cold. They're falling away because they're getting into sin.

They're falling away because they're believing lies and false doctrines and false teachings. And others are falling away because it's just become too hard. It's just become too hard.

And there is not a day that I don't get an email or a message from someone somewhere in the world saying, I don't know that I can hold on anymore. If Jesus doesn't come, I don't know if I will make it. Things are getting hard.

This is God allowing judgment to come to test our faith. Remember where Peter began this whole thing, and he said that when our faith is tried through fire, it produces pure gold. And that gold either consumes the rubbish, leaves the gold.

But what's the problem? If there is no gold and it's all rubbish, it's all going to be burnt up. And folk, we're living at that time when judgment has begun in the house of God. God is allowing not just persecution, obviously we've said many Christians are being persecuted right now, but God is also allowing these difficult times that we're going through.

I'm not saying God can't cause the virus, please understand, but He's using that. He's using the economic downturn. He's using the fact that we're shut in.

He's using all of these things to test us, to see whether our faith is real. And remember I said before, He knows whether our faith is real. The problem is we don't know.

We think our faith is real. And then when things get hard, the wheels fall off. And we say, well, where's my faith? Well, maybe there never was a real faith.

Maybe it's time to get back to the real thing, to get into a real relationship with the Lord. You see, it's easy to go along as a Christian when things are easy, and to go with the crowd, and to go with the noise, and the hoopla, and the worship, and whatever else is going on. But when we have to sit out here in the cold, and with all the noise, and with the bugs, and whatever else is going on, it gets hard.

And God is testing us. Judgment has begun in the house of God. We've spoken before, and I'm going to remind you again and again as we go through this time, as we go on from here, that there is a sifting going on that we have never seen.

I've been preaching for a few years now, and I've never seen this. I've never seen so many Christians. I've never seen so many pastors falling away, getting into all sorts of heresy, all sorts of nonsense, all sorts of stuff, except the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Judgment is beginning in the house of God. And now here's the problem, and I'm out of time, so we'll finish off, and then I'll pick up on here again next week. But if it begins with us first, and he's quoting from the book of Proverbs, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? If judgment begins with us, and of course the inference is that few are saved, and we're discovering, in fact, that there are few that are saved.

The road is narrow, the other road is broad. Remember that other road is a religious road, it's not the road of the world, it's a religious road. It's broad, there are many upon it.

If it's so hard for us to make it, then what's going to happen to the world? They have no chance whatsoever. They have no chance whatsoever. So our concern, or he's concerned here, is not so much for the world, but he is saying to us, this is so serious, and it has an impact on those who do not obey the gospel of God.

In other words, those who are unbelievers. Father, we thank you for your Word. We thank you, Lord.

These are difficult and hard things, and we live in difficult and hard times. And yet, Lord, at the same time, we recognize that what we're experiencing is nothing in comparison to that which our brethren in North Korea, in China, and other parts of the world are experiencing. But Lord, we pray that we may glorify you in the midst of our trials, in the midst of our difficulties.

Pray, Lord, that every time something happens to us, and when someone says something negative to us, help us, Lord, to respond in a Christ-like way. Help us, Lord, to glorify you by the way that we react, but also to glorify you in our continuing to worship you. Just like Job, Lord, who, while they said to him, curse God and die, he refused to stop worshipping you.

And Lord, I pray that you'd help us to be those who glorify you in our words and in our responses. We ask this in Jesus' name. And I pray, Lord, for each one who is here this evening, and each one who is watching the video, I pray, Lord, that you would give grace, that we would be able to endure your test and your trial.

And Lord, that we may not be those who are found wanting, and who claim to have faith, but in fact don't have a real faith, don't have a real relationship, are not really born again. And Lord, even those who may be born again, and yet, Lord, they're falling away. Lord, our hearts go out to them.

I pray, Lord, for every believer who's listening, and Lord, who's here this evening, and who's struggling. And Lord, many are struggling. Strengthen us, Lord, by your word and by your spirit.

Help us, Lord, to be those who will endure to the end. Help us, Lord, to be those who glorify you in all of our situation, and all of our life. We ask this in Jesus' name.

We pray that you'd go with us, keep us, and protect us. Bring us together again safely on Saturday night. We pray this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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