

## **THE POWER OF GOD THAT HELPS US IN HARD TIMES**

**Bertie Brits**

**July 2, 2017**

**COMMUNION:** The heart of the Father is upon me and who the Father is, enables me. As Jesus was in human form fellowshiping with the Father, the Bible says that He grew in Grace. It's amazing to think that Jesus grew in Grace. We think of Grace as God dwelling with us and God living with us and God sharing His life with us. We find that in the life of Jesus, we could see more and more of His vocation manifesting and coming forth in His life to the point that at the age of twelve, He went to the Temple and said, "I must be about My Father's business." Then we find at the age of about thirty, He gets baptized by John the Baptist and then more and more, to the point where He gives His life and He is raised by the Father to the point that the influence of the Father, on the human Jesus, is so powerful that the human Jesus stands up in immortality and above any ability to sin.

Jesus says, "The life you see Me live is on account of the very Spirit of God, or the core of God, or the heart of God, that is in Me and manifests in Me." That's what it is. If I come to you and I say to you that the spirit of a certain person is on you, it means that you are like that person. If I come and say to you that the spirit of Nelson Mandela is on me then you know that means that I am forgiving and all those kind of things. But if I come and I say to you that the spirit of, and I call the name of some bad person, like a murderer, is on me, then you would say that which drives that person, that which is in the heart of that person, the core of that being, is now on me." And that's what Jesus said. Jesus said, "The Spirit of God is on Me. That is why I am meek and kind and good." In that we not only could see who Jesus was but we could also see who the Father was. That is what our Communion is all about today.

If we take this bread and we break it, we are talking about the Spirit that was upon Jesus. .. the Spirit of Grace, the Spirit that says, "I want to live with My people. I want to be with My people and I want to share My life with them!"

As you take this bread and eat it, you eat it in remembrance of what Christ has done for you. That's what you do. And as you drink the blood, it's the blood of the New Covenant, it is the sign of the life of Jesus that was given to us so that we can share in His life. Amen!

The reason why we do this Communion is that we, as an internet fellowship, can fellowship around the body of Jesus and also have the mindset that Christ gave His life to us but also that we are part of a bigger family. Although we gather by the web, we are still a family that gathers around the Grace of God. This morning in our morning Service in Durbanville, my friend and I were talking about fellowship and the influence of the local church. The benefit of gathering, the benefit of coming to a Service on a Sunday, the benefit of fellowshiping with people during the week about this Grace Message is simply this: It keeps your mind in the message of Grace and it encourages you and

strengthens you. It's not a mystical thing. It's like anything when you regularly gather around a certain topic and people gather there it stays strong and it stays in the minds of people.

It's the very same way about the Gospel. As we come together and as we are experiencing the unity that God has brought between God and man, as well as between humans in the fact that He ended the Law man and He ended the man of death and brought Jew and Gentile together, as one man, in that fellowship together, we experience the power of edifying one another in the Gospel.

So I want to say to you, even if you are sitting at home and you feel alone today, maybe you don't have people that care for you, you don't have people in your town to fellowship with you, I am talking about fellowship around this Gospel, I want to say to you that there is a web family. As you slot in here you can know that there are more than just you believing this. There are also other people who are being persecuted for this message, other people being rejected for this Gospel and what they believe. That is also what I am going to talk about today. Let's take this Communion together as a family.

Father, I want to thank You for the body of Jesus that was broken for us and the blood that flowed. Thank You for the brand new life that You have come to give us. Thank You for the care, the grace, the kindness that You have towards us. Thank You, Lord, that we can make use of Your body and Your blood and so find a brand new life. Amen... let us enjoy the Communion together.

## **TODAY'S MESSAGE:**

### **THE POWER OF GOD THAT HELPS US IN HARD TIMES**

**Bertie Brits**

**July 2, 2017**

I am going to talk today about the power of God that helps those in hard times. I trust that today's message will really bless you and impact your life in a great way. If you just slotted in to our Service for the first time, I want to welcome you. Welcome to all of our regular viewers. I know that this message will impact your life.

I'm busy doing a study or preaching, recording a course on Ephesians. We do about six sessions per chapter where I explain Ephesians verse by verse. In my study of Ephesians we just start to see the heart of Paul. We start to see the heart of God and what the Gospel is all about. Taking all of that together I felt that I am going to preach on Romans just with the background of what Paul was saying in Ephesians. For all of you that want to read a book in the Bible, do yourself a favor and read the Book of Ephesians. Read it through fifteen times, twenty times. Don't think that you have read it once and you know what is written there. There is so much depth, so much power, so much, I almost want to say, hidden truth, understanding behind definition and words that this will continue to enrich your life and it will provide a great platform for many other books in the Bible.

What we need to know is that the Apostle Paul didn't just have the most wonderful life the first day that he believed and from there he was the top Christian and couldn't learn anything because Jesus appeared to him and now he had everything working for him.

The Apostle Paul went through some difficult times. If I read the letters of Paul I find that he is, to a certain degree, a quiet person, not always an extrovert. We even see that. He says, "In your presence I was quiet." He seemed to be a timid person. "But now that I am away, I write these strong words." Then he says, "I would rather write them now than be present with you and come over harshly." That's what he said. I think he didn't just do it that way from the beginning. There was a time when we would see Paul go about and when Peter didn't do things right he would stand up in front of everybody knowing very well that Peter was like the "big shot" of the apostles and he rebuked him in front of everybody. Now imagine I do that today. I go to a conference and there are 200-300 people. I just stand up in the middle and take the big shot on You know that guy walked with Jesus, saw Jesus and all those kind of things and I stand up and rebuke him and call him a hypocrite in front of everybody. I'm sure that when Paul looked back at that, he must have had thoughts in his heart that said, "I could have dealt differently with that.

There were things, I believe, with Barnabas, for instance where he looked back and you could see there was almost a little bit of what was in Peter in Paul to a certain degree where he would do things and then, like Peter, looking back thinking, "I shouldn't have done it that way but this way." Although I believe that the doctrine that Paul preached was absolutely accurate. What I do see is that the Apostle Paul according to Romans 7 says that there was a time when he was alive without the Law, full of life, happy and blessed. Then when the commandment came, when the Law came back into his life, he found all manner of desire in his heart and he realized the doctrine of Romans 7. He realized the doctrine of Romans 8. That's why he wrote it down there because he wrote it out of first hand experience. There was a time when it was going well with him and then there was a time when things weren't going well.

There was a time when the Apostle Paul was tempted to find his identity in the size of his ministry. You may say, "No, Bertie. That isn't written anywhere." Yes, it is written clearly in the scriptures where Paul came and prayed and said to God, "Would You please remove this thorn in the flesh from me?" Then it clearly says what that thorn of the flesh was. I don't know why it's such a difficult thing to find out what the thorn of the flesh is. It's simple plain text right there. It is a messenger from Satan as what Paul was a messenger from Jesus doesn't mean he was an angel, a spiritual angel. He was a physical angel. Angel also means messenger. Paul was a messenger of Jesus and then there was a messenger from Satan. I believe what it is all about is that there was a message preached and the biggest thing, even if you study Ephesians, and if you study Galatians, it is so clear that Paul was completely against the Judaizers.

For us, if you go and study out what the thorn in the flesh is in the Old Testament, find the concept in the New. Obviously Paul would use things like that. Peter would use things like that from the Old Testament context, or the Old Testament perspective because that was their understanding and their language. Go back into the Old and look where was the thorn of the flesh used. How did they use thorn in the flesh? How was it used in their communication and what was the understanding around that. You can also go to literature that is outside of the Bible to see how did the people in that time use that term. From there you can understand what it means. Thorn in the flesh simply meant that when you went into a land and you had a war there and you conquered that land, you should kill all the inhabitants of the land because, and this is what the Bible says, the context where it was used, if you don't kill all the inhabitants of that land then they will become a thorn in your flesh. In other words, it is people of the

old country who are still left in the new country. That's exactly what happened with Paul. Paul came and he was from the Law system and then when Christ came and brought the new, there were still people of the Old system alive in that time as they are now. They would come and Judaize all the churches where he preached and he wanted God to end that.

Why would he want God to end that? It's simply because of the havoc it brings in the Church. Remember Paul said that all Asia believed when they preached and not long after that he said that nobody believed them in Asia. That meant that all the work they had done had just come to nothing. He said the same thing in Galatians and in Philippians. He said to them, "I don't want to preach to you and then my preaching would be in vain or for no reason to you. I want you to stand before Christ, in His return, and have the glorification that was promised. That could only come through continual belief in Jesus Christ and in continual relationship with Him. He said, "I don't want this to be for nothing."

We find the writer of the book of Hebrews, who I think would be Paul, saying the very same thing: "We don't want to preach to you in vain. We don't want this to be for nothing." The understanding that Paul then received from the Lord was, "Listen. My grace, My visitation, in your life is more than enough! You don't need to have all these churches. Like Paul said, "My ministry would have excelled beyond measure would it not have been for this thorn in the flesh. It would have had such a big impact in the world if it had not been for this thorn in the flesh. Paul was not seeing that the letter to the Ephesians, for instance, that he was writing from jail which he secretly slipped out of jail, would impact the whole world... billions of people later, thousands of years after he wrote that. He didn't see that impact.

So, even the Apostle Paul was going through very difficult times. I don't think that Paul, in every situation, handled everything right. Surely even in those difficult times, even when he was persecuted, even when he was going through all of that for the Gospel, people didn't like him for what he said. People didn't want to be his friend because of what he said because what he was saying was contrary to the Old system.... like many of you who are in the web church would have. Many of you are in this web church because you don't find and you are not part of a local church where there is a body of believers who believe the same, where you can fellowship with them. Whenever you go to a meeting or whenever you fellowship with people, you can fellowship and smile and be happy... until you say something. Immediately they will find that what you say, it doesn't matter how kindly you say it, it's different. The moment they realize that things are different, they are standing with a choice. They can either accept the truth or reject the truth. In many of your cases, people didn't accept that. It doesn't mean that they will never accept it. It just means in your case, it wasn't accepted. Now you can feel rejected or you can feel like you don't know what is going on.

When I was under the Law, I had more people love me. It was going better to a certain degree but look at what is going on now. Yet, on the other side, you feel so much more peace in your relationship with God. You feel loved by God and you feel accepted. It's almost as if there is a bit of a difficulty. I know about that because I have experienced that for myself. At this stage in my life, it is going well with me concerning that. We have three churches in our area and people that we can fellowship with, people we can talk to about this. But I remember a time when I was alone. Many of you may be going through that as you are hearing this and I want to encourage you today. The Apostle Paul went through the very same thing. He went through that but he also talked about how God would empower us.

What I love about the letter to the Ephesians is that Paul comes and he writes in Ephesians from the perspective of the power of the Gospel and what happened in their lives when they first believed upon Jesus. When they believed upon the Lord for the first time, these Gentiles had a great encounter with the very person of God, almost like Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus really loved money. He was for the money

thing. He wanted to be rich. He wanted to show how much wealth he had and in the setting of the Jews back then, I'm sure Zacchaeus felt that he was the blessed. He said, "You guys call me cursed because I work for the Romans but I am the blessed." In Judaism, blessedness was defined by financial prosperity. That is what it was all about.

Zacchaeus comes and he, from his high horse of wealth, wants to see who Jesus is. Jesus visits him and what happened in that visitation there was a power that caused him to say, "I'll give half of what I own to the poor and if I stole anything from anybody, I will return it fourfold." You find a change in life. The very same thing happened in Ephesus. The people, the Gentiles, heard about Jesus and as they heard about Jesus all of a sudden they loved the Jewish saints. Paul said, "When I heard about your love for the saints, I realized that what you heard was the real thing because it is bringing forth a brand new life in you." Remember that the Jews and Gentiles hated one another in a great way. They didn't love one another. It wasn't as if the Gentiles felt, "Man, look at these Jewish people. They are wonderful people! They were the people who first that walked with God and all of that." No, that is not what they believed. They believed that the Jewish people were racists because that is what Judaism was all about. That was the way it was seen by the Jews of that time. It was absolute racism. It was, "We are the Jewish race and you are not the Jewish race and this race is God's race. You don't have a law that was given to you in the finger of God, but we have!" From that elevated state of, "We are better than the Gentiles and we are the people of God. We are supposed to rule and reign over the world with this Law that God has given us." Then above that, they had a temple with a wall and a sign that said, "No Gentile beyond this!" because they would defile this place.

Imagine you are a person and someone else says that if you are present here then there needs to be certain washings and certain rituals because you have defiled it just by who you are. Your holy works didn't have anything to do with it. Just by your ethnicity you've defiled the very temple of God. Do you think that those people would love the Jews? No! They hated the Jews! As much as what you would find one group of people oppresses another group of people that their children and those people eventually start to hate the oppressor. In the very same way they hated the Jews. That's why even in Samaria they wouldn't allow Jesus to walk through the city. "No, you can walk around our city. Take the five miles around. You are not coming through the city." It was because of all that antagonism, all that bitterness and hatred. But here we find the people in Ephesus, the Gentiles, believed and all of a sudden Paul heard of their love for the saints. Then from that power, of what I would call initial salvation or one's first encounter with salvation, Paul draws on that and then writes to them and says to them, "Do you see how this works? You believed and after you believed you found this power? That's how the rest of this also works. It's not about your works." Paul comes in to protect the Church and help the Church against all these Judaisers and getting back into the Law where they just had the fruit of the flesh.

The reason why I make that point is that the Gospel is a Gospel of power and we can expect power in our difficult times. What I think that we many times do is we believe the Truth and we find the joy of the Gospel that comes forth in us when we believe the Gospel. Then when the hard times come we think that we need to handle this persecution. We need to handle this difficult time. Maybe your spouse or your children don't believe and now you cannot have an open conversation with them. You are in a very difficult tight spot right there. What shall we do in those cases? The Bible writes about that.

***Romans 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:***

Before we continue, let me just summarize just what I am saying here. The Gospel is the power that brings a brand new life. That's all that I want to say from the beginning until now. The Apostle Paul

was a person who didn't just have everything smooth all the time. He wasn't this Christian who all the time had everything going for him and all the time acted correctly in every situation. No, I am sure that if you take the life of Paul, if you lived with him, you wouldn't live with him for a very long time before you find that he also has some form of fears and also has some form of difficulty.

Then I want us to look at the life of Paul and how he addressed the power of God in the life of the Ephesians as well as in the life of the people in Rome, and how he shares that this power encourages us when we feel lonely, when we feel rejected, when we go into difficult times. How does all of this work?

He starts off in **Romans 5** *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:* When he says that we are justified by faith, we shouldn't only look at that as a legal term in the justification of we are not guilty anymore. That is not what it talks about. Because the context here comes from chapter 4 where he says:

**Romans 4:**

*22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.*

*23 Now it was not written for his (Abraham's) sake alone, that it was imputed to him;*

*24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;*

*25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.*

So here he comes and he declares justification as being saved from sin and death. That is what he means there. So he is saying that when you are justified, it means what will come your way in the belief in the resurrection. So, justification is what we will have because of the power of the resurrection, which is a new life. Then he goes on and explains some of that.

**Romans 5:**

*1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:*

That word peace with God does not talk about peace like in the ending of a war. That word, peace, should be seen in the context of the word, harmony, which is found in one of the Greek meanings of the word, peace. It says, "We are justified by faith and now have harmony with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." That is exactly what happened with Zacchaeus. He believed in the Lord and when he believed, he was justified with the life of Jesus in him becoming a giver, in him becoming kind and loving and wanting to correct all the wrong and the pain that he brought in this world. Can you see how Zacchaeus climbed into the tree and then he wanted to see what kind of a man Jesus was in Luke 19 and then Jesus came to him and said, "Quickly, get out of this tree!"

When he got out of that tree, Jesus said to him, "Today I must come to your house!": The Bible said, that Zacchaeus quickly did that. He believed on the Lord and he trusted. The word, believe, that I am using here, I use with the mindset of having his mind at rest in the integrity of Jesus. As Jesus came and visited him, He justified him for He called him, a son of Abraham. You can go read it in Luke. He says, "After all, Zacchaeus is also the son of Abraham and when Jesus called someone a son of Abraham, He referred to faith and doing the deeds of Abraham which was belief. So, Zacchaeus believed and when he believed Jesus justified him, in the difficult time that he was in, where he couldn't see Jesus, where there was a crowd. There were so many difficult things from just trying to see Jesus and find out who

He is, what happens is Jesus visits him and visits him with His life.

This morning I used this example: If I owned a very expensive car and I want to share that car with someone I can go to his house and say to him, "Come, take this car and I will go with you and you can drive it for twenty kilometers and feel the power of it and enjoy it. I can come once a month and I can take you for a ride or I can even tell you, "Take this car and take it for a ride every now and then." Do you know what? The person will be able to experience the car but the person will never be able to experience your life because he doesn't know what it is to be the owner of the Bugatti! He doesn't know what it means to be the owner of that car. The only way that you can actually share your life with that person is if you make him an heir of who you are and you cause him to be a co-owner of that car and you sign half of the car over to him. Once you've signed half the car over to him and he's a co-owner of that car, then you will know what it feels to be the owner of that car. In the very same way with the love and the goodness of God. We can find the love and the goodness of God towards us wherein we feel that He loves us which is great. It can be compared to taking the drive in the car but it's still the other person is the owner of the car. But the moment you get born of the love of God and that love gets born into you to the point that it is also part of you, then you became a sharer and you can actually share in the very life of God. That is what Paul is talking about here when he talks about justification. He's talking about a justification where we are justified with the resurrection life of Jesus by we having the Holy Spirit bring forth that life as authentically ours on account of God in us.

Then he says:

***2 By whom (by this Jesus) also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.***

What he is saying here is, and remember we are talking about how to go through hard times, he says, "When we look at Jesus we are justified with the life of Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit." Then he says, "By faith we have access into this grace where in we stand." In other words, he says, "We stand in the very visitation of God, the influence of God, on our hearts wherein we experience the first fruit of God. He says, "That is not it. We have this and then we rejoice in the hope of the glorification." That simply means that we now experienced a certain fruit in our life but that is not all. There is still something that still must be and that is the glorification or the resurrection. So, he is talking about a peace in the presence of not having everything manifest in your life. That is what he is talking about.

I look at my own life. If I look back, many times I say to Helena, "I wish I knew what I know now when I was twenty. My life would have looked so much different. " That's what you think in your mind just naturally speaking. Some will say, "Oh, don't ever say that." It's too late. I already said it many times. You think of what you know and you think of what you have done long ago and you think, "That wasn't the wisest thing to do. You should have done it this way or you should have done it that way." But, you know we can't cry over spilled milk. That's it and we continue with our life. What I'm trying to say about that is, in the beginning when I just got a hold of the grace message I didn't know what I know now. I didn't have the wisdom that I have now. Neither did I have the experience of the power of this Gospel as I have now. Yet, back then I was as happy as what I am now. So it means that there is a joy in the presence of a lack. You may say, "We lack nothing. Everything was done for us. "Yes, everything was done for us. The whole ticket was paid. Everything was done and the Spirit of God is bringing forth fruit in our lives. As we understand and know more about this good news and as we find what it is to rest in His power, rest in His goodness, we find that He manifests. We find that it is like

our heart gravitates towards and actually receives more of what He has already done. So, experientially we experience more of this goodness. That's the first point I want to make as pertaining to going through hard times.

Yes, it is possible that you cannot have everything manifest in you and yet you can also be happy because he says, ***“We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God..”*** Thank God for what we have now our but we also rejoice in this glorification that will come.

Now he goes on further:

***3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation works patience;***

***4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope:***

***5 And hope makes not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us.***

I want to close off by explaining that passage and I am sure it will help a lot of you as you go through hard times. This is what I think of when I go through hard times when I am in a difficult time, when I think, “Man, I shouldn't have done it this way, I should have done it that way.” Not from a condemnation point of view where I feel guilty because of what I have done but because I know I see some shortcomings. Just try to raise kids and then you see the shortcomings that you have in your life. They are teenagers and sometimes they are emotional and you say one thing and then you think you understand they are emotional and maybe I should have said it this way to help them and teach them and get them to understand more of the grace of God and grow up in this world as successful people. By successful I mean standing the Gospel and having a life born from the Gospel. You just see that you should have done it this way or you should have done it that way.

Or in my case you come in church and you look at encounters with leaders, encounters with people where you differ and you realize how you could do things a little bit differently. Now maybe you find persecution or maybe it is something that is not your fault. You just preach the truth for the way it is and you are going through difficult times. You are going through rejection and what do you do? Paul says, “We rejoice in the hope of the good that is to come.” Glory to God because we know that it is Him that will manifest it. Verse 5 says that we are thankful for the life that we have today. Then he goes on and he says, “But we rejoice in this glorification that will also come but we also glory in tribulation for we know that tribulation works patience.” What he is saying there is the moment you experience tribulation or a difficult time, the first thing that the grace of God works in us is patience, the ability to endure that. Let me explain it to you this way: If you look at somebody who loses his child, the child dies in an accident or something, what would you say, what would be the first thing you would say? Even as I say this I can feel it in my own heart. You will feel, “I will not be able to make it. I can't make it.” But if you look at people that happened to have you seen that in that difficult time they are strengthened in that time? It's as if you don't experience that strength now until it happens. The moment it happens the power of God is there and it helps you in that time.

So I want to say to you that when you go through a difficult time, don't separate your time like the Gospel is about the good that will happen in my life and what I receive from Jesus. It's about healing and prosperity and whatever we would call in the old Charismatic system. We would call it all of that and now when the difficult time and the persecution come, now it is up to me to resist this stupid devil. Now I must cast it out and I must speak to the situation and I must change the situation. I must now take all the “tricks of the trade” in the Gospel and I must apply it now and just make this good kingdom



work now!” No, that is not how you deal with that. That is not how you have a stable life. When I think of my own life and how it has helped me, you think of preaching and spreading the Gospel, the ministry, finances.

Someone put on facebook that if you are not in full time ministry in the sense that you get paid a salary from a church that is enough that you don't have to work another job. That's all it means. It doesn't mean that you are a second class pastor which I fully agree with. Alleluia! If I read something like that and I wrote there I am very grateful that I am in this situation where I don't have to work another job to do what I am doing. I am very grateful for that although I have worked another job for many years. I have done that but when I look at my situation now, I am grateful and in my mind I don't want to do another job. I love what I am doing! I love spending the time in studying the scriptures. I love having my mind revolve around this Gospel all day where I don't have to think of how to bring in finances, how to do business, how to do all of that. But I can think of this Good News and serve people with a good meal every Sunday and bring the Gospel as pure as possible to people from a heart that has prayed about the Gospel, thought about the Gospel and ministered this Gospel and see people be discipled in this message. That's what I love but if I think of what if I lose support, what if it is not there anymore?

Do you know what brings me peace in that time of difficulty? It is, “Well, when I get there, the Holy Spirit empowers me because in that time He brings forth patience or, another word for it is, endurance. Then endurance brings forth experience.” Experience doesn't mean to experience something. The Greek word there is trustworthiness. It means that this Gospel is trustworthy and when I go into a difficult time, the trustworthiness of this Gospel will carry me through. That is all it means! It's not as if, “When I go into a difficult time, now I must make sure that I bring forth a change and I push through, and I make it work by my faith and all those kind of things. I remember a time whenever I would go into a difficult time I would think, “Oh, my goodness... the devil!”

Like last night when my son and I put the car into the yard to lock it, and when we started it I think the cam belt broke. It was just a massive noise in the engine and you know it is expensive..So what happens when that happened? Well, we are either going to fix the car or get another car! You can't walk. What will happen in the midst of all of that doesn't matter because all of a sudden you can get to your mind things like, “Well, you shouldn't have bought that, you shouldn't have done this, and then you would have more money.” So many things can come to your mind but in this time, do you know what I feel in my heart? I feel absolute peace! And I can live with that peace. It doesn't matter thinking of any car or any situation because in that time you find an empowerment! Glory to God! Maybe we can take it and it isn't even a massive thing. Even if it is, who cares! At the end of the day, in that situation, that is when the strengthening comes. In that hard time the Bible clearly says that this Gospel, this message of Jesus, if you think of the incarnation of Jesus, it is powerful!

When I think of hard times, I just say, “Well, in that time, God will help me emotionally. In that time this Gospel will bring forth the endurance and it will bring forth the patience and the trustworthiness will be shown. In that trustworthiness will bring forth, at the end of the day, is hope. It just makes us hope more and have a stronger expectation because now that I see how God has helped me in that little difficult area and that other difficult area. Just think of your life. Think back in your life, your Christian walk and how many times God has helped you through situations. As you look at all those things where His grace has brought you through, what does it do? It strengthens the understanding of hope, the hope that you will have immortality in His return... the hope that He can sort out all the problems of this world.... the hope that He can make everything new as He has promised... the hope that the resurrection brings us.

Then it says, "That hope does not make ashamed." What the Bible means by that is that hope, when the Bible says, "The hope that He makes it not ashamed", does not mean that the hope will definitely happen. That's not what that message means although the hope will definitely happen since Jesus has already been raised. We need to realize that if you take the resurrection, it was what was supposed to happen in the end of time and was put in the middle of time so that this thing that happens in the middle of time can bring forth what is supposed to happen in the end of time, which is our resurrection.

So the fact that Jesus was raised from the dead is already the final seal on this will happen. It is the proof that our resurrection is sure because that is our resurrection. He even said that He is the resurrection. When we look at all of this it brings forth "The hope maketh not ashamed." As we have this confident expectation of the glorification, it doesn't make us ashamed in this life because we love people. The love of God has been shed abroad in how we believe about ourselves and about people.

This is what he says and let me summarize it this way: The Apostle Paul didn't always have everything going for him and many of the things that he wrote he wrote from experiential knowledge combined with the spiritual logic that he found in the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. That's how he wrote Romans 7 and Romans 8. That's how he wrote about the fruit of the Spirit and how he wrote about the fruit of the flesh in Galatians. That was what his logic was. I don't believe that Jesus told him "Write these things down. This is what you must write." and then he wrote that without understanding. The Apostle Paul knew when he was under the law that was the fruit that was in his life. Then when he started to believe in Jesus he realized, "Man, look at my life now! I love people. I see all people as the same. I don't see separation anymore. I don't honor a man according to his income anymore. I see the person for who he is. I start to see people, Gentiles, Jews, all those kind of people, not based on their flesh. I start to see them for the treasure, the gold, that they really are! That is how I see them and now I want to come and preach Christ as the Messiah for all people for I realize they were all included in the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

I have seen how this message brings forth life in so many Gentiles so now I am going to the Gentiles in the hope that they would believe this and have this brand new life." That was Paul's experience. He wrote these things and he writes in Romans 5 saying, "We rejoice in the glorification in what the resurrection promises but our rejoicing is not only in the good to come and when bad comes we don't have any joy because when the bad comes the joy we have now is this faith is trustworthy. It is all about Jesus conquering the bad in this world. So when bad comes our way we know the life in us, free from our willpower, is already greater than the bad!

If I look at my life, there were bad things in my life where I was in doubt and unbelief when I was complaining and then it still turned out good! Why? Because the life in me is the life of God and He is still was faithful to what He said. This message and what He has done is still trustworthy. Be honest with yourself. Just be completely honest. Think of the difficult times you went through and where the outcome and the end was good and how you received freedom. During all the time when you were in difficult times, did you confess right, spoke right, faith right, do everything right? No! Many of you, most of you, had a lousy way of dealing with it, maybe complaining every now and then and then say, "Oh, Lord, I had a week of good confession and then three days of sometimes even swearing at God." Then what happened in the end? It still works out. It shows the trustworthiness of this message. So now as you start to understand these things, it can bring calmness and peace to your heart that when those

situations come then you can actually sit back and say, “Well, I don't have to have a tantrum every time something like this happens because I know the outcome. I know the hope and in the midst of all these things, since this hope of the resurrection has this supernatural thing on me, that it brings forth love in my heart.”

Even in the midst of people badmouthing you, people not loving you, you still love people because this hope doesn't make ashamed today because through this hope the love of God is shed abroad in my heart. What does Paul mean when he says that? He says, “The hope that I have is that both Jew and Gentile can be partakers of the resurrection. The hope that I have is God conquered sin and death. That is the hope. That is what I see, the resurrection. As I see that and I see all people included into that, what does it towards the person in front of me today” It makes me love that person. That's what it does.

Even today when we drove through the gates, to the gated community where we preached. the guy comes with a little instrument and he scans the car to make sure it's not stolen. He checks your ID documents, your drivers' license, before you can enter. It is all put in the system. Then he came and walked around the car, what was in my mind was, “That person is God's dream. That person is beautiful to God. Jesus is his Messiah and I find a love for him. The person who comes to my house begging when I give him the hundred rand, when I bless him with something or give them food, or whatever, I look at what Jesus said, “You are doing it unto Me.” He is the very dwelling place of God. He is a qualified temple of the Lord. Jesus is his Messiah. His sin, his death, was conquered by the Messiah. So this hope of the resurrection makes me not ashamed in this life and I can even love on people while going through difficult times. Glory to God!

In summarizing everything, I want to go back to what I said last week. The Bible says, “*If your eye is single...*”

That word, single, means a braiding. In other words, in Afrikaans, it is 'N frazel. The moment you say, “braid”, you immediately know more than one. So when your eye is single, when you can see yourself braided into the Trinity, then your whole life will be full of light even in the midst of persecution, even in the midst of difficulty. In other words, I am not saying that there will not be difficulties. Difficulty is experienced as something that is difficult. That is it. It is an experience that is not easy. I think of traveling up in Zambia years ago when I just went with old, beaten up cars. Helena and I went up into Mozambique and preached there. We only had enough money for one way. Over there you are in the middle of the bush. There's no offering. It's not like, “I'm going in faith and I'm going to preach not asking anything but you know the people there have at least enough money that if somebody feels to be generous, you can have enough money to come back from an offering. No, there is no offering. There's some people back then, just after the war, that had not ever seen money.

Plus in many places there wouldn't even be fuel. We would go there and preach until our money is gone and then make plans. We would use half paraffin and half gasoline in the car driving it that way, doing whatever we had to do. That thing smokes like you can't believe but that's how we drove. Even in that time, even in that it was was experienced as difficult times, but in that difficulty, which was experienced as difficulty, we somehow had a supernatural smile. There were times we would say, “I wish I could have a new car!” You would say that but deep in the heart there was still a joy. That is what God has given to all of us.

Don't be dismayed if you look in the mirror and don't always find a smile on your face. Look at the smile in your heart. Many times we know deep inside us that everything will work out. Then we say things that contradict what we actually believe in our heart. Then we start to condemn ourselves and

feel guilty because we have now said things, confessed things, that are contrary to what we actually believe in our heart. You know, that which is in your heart is what matters at the end of the day. Glory to God!

I want to tell you that you are precious and loved by God and He cares for you. He has an eternal hold on you and it's not about how strong you hold on. It's about how strong His hold is on you! That's what we believe in. I want to say to you that, although the Apostle Paul didn't have everything going for him, he continued with this Gospel and at the end of his life he said, "I've run my race. I've done what I had to do. I felt that I could give expression to what was in my heart and I am ready to pass away. I am ready to die and I await the resurrection, seeing the glorification which I've always dreamt!" That's what Paul said. So in a difficult time, what we do is simply know that this message does have the trustworthiness, it does have the ability to bring forth endurance. It's almost like you drive a 4by4 vehicle. You don't put it in 4by4 unless you get in the thick sand or mud. But the moment you go into that thick sand you bump that thing into 4by4 and then you say, "Let's go!" Then those extra differentials and gym boxes start to come in and the thing comes and the computers and everything that makes everything works smooth then you drive in the sand. You'll feel a little bit of a bumpy ride but you are still going. I want to say to you that is what Paul is actually saying. This Gospel is already in you and when the hard time comes, it just kicks into all wheel drive and then it pulls you through. That's how the Gospel works so you can even expect that in a difficult time, although it feels difficult, the Gospel is still working. Trustworthiness will be shown and as you keep your eyes on the braiding where you've been braided into the Trinity and into His glorified life, you will find, even in that time, you will find the deep love for people. Glory to God!

I want to thank you so much for watching. I want to say to you that you are loved by God. You are cared for by God and He will always care for you. He isn't going to stop and take His hand off of you one day when you have done something wrong. He has started a good work in you and it is for Him to complete it... and not you! All we can do, like the Apostle Paul said in Ephesians and so many times and this is what he wanted people to have, and I've said it so many times, "Understanding doesn't make the Gospel work better. But what understanding does is it keeps away what doesn't work! Those of you who have followed my ministry now for some years and believe the truth about tithing, for instance, if you understood what you understand now, you would never have fallen for the tithing teaching. You would never have experienced that abuse and pain. That is all. That is why Paul wants us to have this understanding. So what we can have is and if you want to know what to do from your side in a difficult time, keep your eyes on your union between you and God in Christ and as you keep your eyes on that, you just pray the prayer as Paul prayed. That's what he did. He prayed. He asked the Father, "Please let these people understand how high, how wide, how deep and how long Your love is so that they can have the fullness of Your life manifest inside them. That is what it is all about. Glory to God!"

Father, I want to thank You so much that I can sit here today and encourage Your body from Your heart where I can feel Your compassion and Your love for Your people. Thank You that You care for them. Thank You that You love them! I pray for people who are going through very difficult times. There are so many people feeling lonely, rejected, not knowing if they are good enough. They believe the Gospel for a time and then they see it work and are in the bliss of knowing something new. Then when the something new washes off, and the good becomes the common knowledge, then it's like, "Well, everybody knows this. What now? How is it going to work?"

Father, I want to pray for those people. I want to pray for everybody and I include myself in these prayers. I thank You, Father, that we can see how high, how wide, how deep and how long Your love is. That we can know the love of God and not as something that we don't know but that we can just know

it over and over and over and that it will be all we know. Thank You, Lord, in that we can know what is the hope of the calling and as we understand these things we just start to see how this Gospel smooths out our lives in a great way. I pray for these people and I thank You, Lord, as Paul prayed, for enlightened eyes of their understanding. Amen and amen!