

An Unbelievable Freedom (Ezra 1:1-11)

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[0 : 00] I want to invite Eden up to come and read us our first ever Israel passage, chapter 1, verse 1 to 11. So open up your Bibles.

If you don't know where Israel is, it's in the Old Testament. And yeah, Eden. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen.

[4 : 17] So a thousand rabbits. And you want to imagine the scene, right? Okay. Beautiful French forest. And then cages of cowering rabbits about to be hunted. All right.

And then waiting for the cry from some of the most powerful men in Europe. Release the rabbits, they cried. But then something strange happened. Rather than scurry into the forest in fright, the rabbits all banded together and raced towards Napoleon.

I'm not kidding, right? Fuzzy bunnies charged towards Le General. So you want to imagine the scene, a horde of long-eared rabbits. They're just swarming the emperor. One eyewitness who was there, he describes the scene, right?

The intrepid rabbits, they turn the emperor's flank. They attacked him frantically in the rear. They refused to quit their hold and force the emperor, the conqueror of conquerors, to retreat and leave those rabbits in possession of the field.

Sometimes history can be a bit unbelievable. Whether it's the great bunny attack of 1807, whether it's the fact that we are still at war in Ukraine several years now, whether it's the fact that once upon a time people used to have a bath once a year.

[5 : 37] Look, sometimes history can be just a bit unbelievable. And yet here in our Bibles, here in Ezra, we are introduced to unbelievable history.

It's unbelievable because who would have called this? Who would have predicted this, right? Here is a change in 538 BC of kings, right?

And what this king in Persia, ruling of Persia over what used to be the Babylonian Empire, what he's done, it is world-changing. It is unbelievable.

It's precisely because of this change of regime that a scattered people of God, are able to return home.

And then we get our word. We get our history. We get our Jesus from these returned people. We get our Messiah. We want to pay attention to Ezra and Nehemiah because as these books unfold for us, we're going to see that even the heart of a king is in the hand of the Lord.

[6 : 42] Even what seems to be unbelievable in history and in your history, it's in reality all coming from the hand of a sovereign Lord, ruling over kings, keeping his ancient promises.

He is shepherding his chosen people home. But to be honest, if you and I are honest with ourselves, we probably don't see a sovereign God behind history, right?

We feel paralyzed when we see news of wars and more wars. We feel stuck when things happen in our own personal lives that just feel out of our control.

Behind your story and my story, some days we're just trying to survive, paying the bills, getting to the next life goal, totally unaware of the God we don't see.

And so I'm excited as we journey through these books of the Bible. And as you know, the whole church is doing this as part of our theme, right? So united in service, we are going to journey through these two books of the Bible.

[7 : 53] But I want to remind you, this is not a history lesson. This is God's Word, right? We're going to hear about all these edicts and lists, not just for our information.

They're going to be for our transformation as well, right? You and I, we need to behold the sovereign God, and He's going to show us how He restores His people to worship Him.

I'll say that again. Today, we're going to see how the sovereign God restores His people to worship Him. Him. Some of you have been here at PCBC for a while, but some of you have just joined and started coming.

So wherever you are on the journey, remember that our practice is to go through whole books of the Bible here in PCBC English. And by God's grace, I've gone through a few, right?

So there are 66 books of the Bible, and two this year. And let me just give you a quick reminder. Why expository preaching? Why put them up online so that people can review them?

[8 : 50] Because we believe this is how God speaks. He gives us whole books. And when we pay attention, when we understand what the main point of every passage is through the main point of every sermon, we're going to be transformed.

The Holy Spirit is working, transforming, changing us, giving us knowledge and insight, changing our attitudes and our behaviors. And so Ezra, the next three months, Nehemiah in the second half of the year, I want to encourage you, bring your Bibles as your biggest weapon, right?

Bring it on your phones. Bring it in paper mode, right? And I want to encourage you to worship as we hear from God's Word. Let's keep being in an in-flight mode.

Let's continue. And we're going to listen to this historical narrative. Let me share a little bit about historical narrative as well. So you'll know that the Bible has lots of different books. So we've heard from poetry, right?

Our first worship song, right? Based off Psalm 103. There's the Gospels. I've heard from, you know, people who walked with Jesus. But a lot of the Bible is just, it just seems like history, right?

[9 : 55] Names and people and places. Let me give you a few tips as we listen to Ezra and Nehemiah. Okay, so just keep these ones. These are for free. Firstly, what's described isn't always what's prescribed, right?

So none of us are going to be able to collect up 30 gold dishes and, you know, cart it along with us. So what's described here isn't always prescribed for us. But we're going to have to dig deeper and go, what's the principle here for God's people today?

Look for repetition. And we're going to see a little bit of repetition happening in this chapter as well. Because when something's repeated, right, the author is trying to tell us something. God is trying to tell us something.

And we want to spot the God who is at work to save and shape his people. There are so many times in the Bible we see pattern after pattern, right? People coming home. That's not a new thing. People being rescued from slavery. That's not a new thing. We're going to see that happen over and over again in different ways, in different eras. Because this is how God is at work. And then finally, remember this phrase, now and not yet.

[11 : 03] Can everyone say that? Now and not yet. Okay. We're going to see salvation now and not yet. All right? We're going to see rescue now and not yet.

So there's going to be this tension. And we feel that tension too, right? We are saved now. And yet, we are waiting for salvation. We heard that last week from Pastor Sam. In the same way, we're going to see a lot of things that just show us joy now and not yet as people weep.

So pay attention to some of these things. Here's some clues that will help you to get the most out of these books of the Bible. And my prayer is that as we listen to Ezra and Nehemiah, we're going to see God's people at some of their best.

Right? We need good examples of God's people sometimes. Sometimes you show up at church and you're like, are you serious? You know, is this really God's people at their best? Thank God for some people that we're going to see here in Ezra and Nehemiah.

Right? And I mean, last year we listened to a lot of quarreling, right, from brothers in the book of Corinth and brothers and sisters, all trying to up their game and trying to be better than the other. Thankfully, this is a book largely filled with people who are just full of joy, devoted to restoring worship in God's place.

[12 : 21] And that's a wonderful thing that we can learn from as God's people. Whatever plans God has for us as PCBC. All right. Okay. So there are two unbelievable moments in history that we're going to see in our passage.

All right. So better than rabbits on a hunt. All right. First unbelievable moment in history. We see in verses 1 to 4. The Lord is stirring a king's heart to free the Israelites.

Listen again to verse 1. It says, King Cyrus, he might be a man of mystery to most of us.

You can Wikipedia him if you like. He is a real person. He is founder of the Persian Empire. And yet, in this account of King Cyrus, it is very clear, right, that he is in power to fulfill the word of the Lord spoken by Jeremiah.

Can you see then, straight off, that this is not just straight off the bat Wikipedia history. This is biblical history. This is theological truth being told to us through history. You see, Cyrus, look, his role in global politics is so famous, so well known, that even in the United Nations building in New York, they have a copy of the Cyrus Cylinder, okay, preserving his decree to release all the people in his empire to go worship their gods, right?

[13:56] But, but, but, Ezra is trying to tell us. Ezra, the book of Ezra is saying, Cyrus is not the most important character in the plot. What about Jeremiah, right?

It's named here in verse 1. A prophet who predicted 70 years of exile and loss for the Israelites because of their unfaithfulness to God. That's why they were in exile in Babylon.

Well, Jeremiah, he prophesied that renewal is coming, right? There is a hope in the future, those famous verses in chapter 29, all right?

There's about to be, there will be a new exodus. You'll get to go home. There'll be a new freedom. And here, at the start of Ezra's story, these words from Jeremiah are fulfilled, just as promised. How? By the one who gave Jeremiah words to speak, by the Lord himself. Those of us with eyes of faith are going to see that the main character behind both Ezra and Nehemiah's histories is the Lord.

[15:03] L-O-R-D, right? The Lord. This is the main character. He is the one whose hand is at work. He is the one who sets captives free in God's story.

He is the one who is mighty to save in God's account. And look, as God's people today, we need to see this time and time again. We have to see the rise and fall of kings in perspective.

It's not just random history. It's one of a billion events that the Lord Almighty is orchestrating right now. That's what verse 1 tells us, doesn't it?

Look in your Bibles again, right? It says, the word of the Lord is to be fulfilled. It says, the Lord is the one who moves the heart of Cyrus the King. Literally, the Bible here in the original language says, stirs the spirit.

Just like you stir your bubble tea straw. The Lord is doing that. He's mixing. He's shaping events right this moment and including in the heart of this king.

[16:04] This is not a random fact thrown in. This is theology. This is telling us who's the boss, who's in control, who is sovereign. And in fact, this is actually a 200-year-old prophecy fulfilled.

Look, hundreds of years later, another prophet, not Jeremiah, Isaiah, predicts judgment for the Israelites, right? This was a time before they were in exile.

And Isaiah predicts that there will be judgment for their sin. And yet promises them a savior. And goes as far as to name him specifically. It's the exact same word in the Hebrew, right?

Cyrus. Cyrus. And actually, when Isaiah speaks of him, he is literally called the chosen one, right?

The chosen one actually sounds like, you know, someone to you, but literally it says his Messiah.

Can you see what's going on here? In a sense, Israel's Messiah is a pagan king. Is that even believable? This is what the Bible says, though.

[17:13] God is able to raise up this chosen one merely as an instrument in his sovereign hand to set God's people free from exile.

He can do this. It's unbelievable. And yet it's true. And you need to remember this, right? When we see the world news, when we think about things happening in our lives, right?

When we see powerful people, maybe in your workplace, at your school, in your families. Look, we see from Ezra. Look, someone like Cyrus may be the most powerful man on earth at this point.

And yet, the Bible says he is like a chess piece in God's greater purposes for his world and his people. History is his story.

I mean, look from verse 2 again, and let's consider what happens in this edict that the Lord allows Cyrus to give, right? He moves him to say this. This is what the king of Persia says. Yahweh, God of heaven, is appointing me to build a temple, verse 2.

[18:16] And in verse 3, he says, now anyone in my empire can go back to Jerusalem and rebuild his temple. And in fact, verse 4, he says to God's people, go get your neighbors and help fund this project.

Again, note how God is described, right? The Lord, the God of heaven, of Israel, of Jerusalem. He's not just some minor deity in a remote corner.

He's not just some trinket on a shelf. This is the God of the universe. He's the king of kings.

Whereas whole nations are like a speck of dust in comparison to him.

This is a big view of God that you and I need. That God's people then need it. And you know what?

This command from Cyrus' lips to rebuild, it seems unbelievable.

And yet it's true. And as Pastor Albert reminded us a couple of weeks ago, this is actually a stunning reversal of government policy, as it were. You might remember that before Cyrus and the Persians ruled, it was the Babylonians.

[19 : 26] And what was their policy when it came to capture peoples? Well, they took their best and just left the rest to die. Took the best and kind of basically brainwashed them.

Retrained them. Gave them new names, a new education. It's this kind of re-education program that still happens in some countries today, sadly. And this is what was happening to God's people back then.

So what a reversal then. An unbelievable reversal that as a new king rises, God's people who are right now scattered, suppressed for generations, they're now told to go from wherever they are.

Go and rebuild Jerusalem. And Israel is telling us, this is not just the hand of Cyrus at work. It's the hand of the Lord, the God of heaven.

We need to remember this. And if the God of the Bible can stir a king's heart, he can work in your heart and my heart, can't he? He can stir the heart of your atheist friend to come to know Jesus.

[20 : 32] He can work in the heart of your Hindu work colleague to give Christianity a consideration. He can help your live for pleasure, brother or sister, have a crisis moment where they need to reconsider what they're living for, what their purpose is.

This God of the Bible can do that. Maybe he's done that for you. No human being on this planet is too far from the Lord of heaven's reach. We've got to remember that. We've got to remember that. And look, if the God of the Bible can work to free his people in such an unbelievable way here in Ezra, then you and I can trust that he is always at work.

We don't always get to watch and see his every move. We don't always get a running commentary. This is why I did this. This is why I didn't do this. But even when you and I don't see it, as that famous song sings, he's working.

He's working. He's always working. Because he's the God of heaven. His reach extends everywhere over rulers and authorities, clans and families, over every single heart.

[21 : 42] This is all what we see, isn't it, in Ezra's opening description. So let's not miss how the Lord stirs a king's heart to free the Israelites. But let's also see, in the rest of the chapter, how the Lord stirs his people's hearts to return home.

Look again at verse 5. Then the family heads of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and Levites, everyone whose heart God had moved, prepared to go up and build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem.

What was one of the points I said to look out for? Repetition. Did you notice the repeated phrase? What's the repeated phrase here? Whose hearts had moved, right? Heart stirring, okay? Stirring that drink, happening again, right here in verse 5.

But this time it's the people's hearts. And think of how unbelievable, actually, this would have sounded. We need to kind of visualize this for ourselves. Recently I watched, maybe last year, I watched this documentary on Chernobyl.

Who knows where Chernobyl is? It's in Ukraine. The Russians tried to capture it, and then, you know, things got funny there, and then they left. Turns out that actually, you know, in the 80s, there was a nuclear explosion, an accident, and so no one can live there except, you know, animals that love it, right?

[22 : 58] Because there's no humans. Imagine being told, if you used to live in Chernobyl, 50 years later, or maybe next year, all right, it's time to pack up and go back to Chernobyl and live there.

Go back to your old house, the one that you haven't been in, the one that you ran off in a hurry. So much has changed. Would you go back, even? Set up your life somewhere else? No, I don't think so.

How about some of you? You've got parents, some of you that were born in a different city or country, even. Imagine if you just got the call one day, I'm sorry, we're moving, and all of us have to

go.

Going to move back to Gisborne or to Guangzhou or something like that. And you'd be like, hang on, I'm pretty settled here. I'm comfy. This is home for me.

I don't want to go back. I think this is exactly what a normal Israelite would have felt. Yes, they are exiled. Yes, they are far from their spiritual home, but look, if life is peachy in Babylon or wherever else in the empire you've been scattered to, why would you go back?

[24 : 08] It would take something special, wouldn't it? To pack up and go back and live in Jerusalem again. Remember Jerusalem, which still lies in a wasteland. No one's built it up for 70 years.

Probably looks like the Stonehenge or something. Right? And we'll talk about that more in the chapters to come. Who would move back? What was the turning point?

Verse 5 tells us, the Lord stirred their hearts. The Lord moved their hearts. The Lord called them. It's the exact wording as we saw with the king. Right? God opened their hearts to follow him.

And God works like this throughout the Bible, throughout history. Think about Philippi. Right? Some of you are going to be looking at Philippians. Think about how that church started.

A bunch of women hanging out by the river, praying. Some disciples came in. Tell them about Jesus. And the Lord opened Lydia's heart to believe.

[25 : 09] Right? Just as grace found Lydia, found God's people here, God is always making the move, stirring people's hearts.

But we want to be careful before we leave this place content and, oh, God stirred my heart. That's so great. Did God stir your heart too? That's so great. Let's not miss the obvious. They didn't just get their hearts stirred.

They obeyed. They followed through. Okay? That warm, fuzzy feeling was followed through by concrete action. They were committed.

Once they knew that the Spirit was touching them, they said, okay, I've got to follow. I've got to go. It's going to cost, but I'm going to go back to Jerusalem. This is a clear encouragement, isn't it, to us to act on our faith?

It's not one or the other. It's not like God moves and I just have no choice. It's not just I choose and God's just a passenger. We see both, don't we, in this story?

[26 : 10] Clear encouragement. Here are people who trust God is sovereign and as the sovereign God moves in people's hearts, they obey. They go for it.

This is the shape of divine sovereignty, human responsibility. They go together. It's never one nor the other. Is God fully in control? Yes. Are we called to follow His leading?

Yes. They go together. And behind this, I think, right, verse 5 to 11, we see a call to mission, is there not? Right?

Mission sounds like something that superhumans do. People who have, you know, been called to give their life heroically for Jesus to. But we're going to see in the next chapter that there are some very ordinary people who will make the trip back.

But God is moving all kinds of people's hearts. God's people here from Benjamin and Judah's family, they're about to head into a land they've never known personally, right?

[27 : 11] And they're going to go to a city in ruins. They're going to live among people who were left behind in Israel after the Babylonian siege. People who will see don't truly know God. not the God of the Bible.

And so whatever your situation is, maybe one day you'll be raising support to go on a short-term missions trip. Maybe some of you just give generously to missions and charities.

Maybe you're just here thinking, what is my mission? What is my purpose? How can I contribute? The Lord moves on your heart to help someone, to take up a challenge, to act on faith?

Then do it. Then obey. He will give you everything He needs. His grace is sufficient in our weakness. But if He's moving on your heart, then follow through.

Remember how missionary Hudson Taylor put it. God's work done in God's way will never lack God's supply. Maybe some of you, you'd love to be more involved in Christian ministry and telling people about Jesus, but you're afraid of the cost.

[28 : 21] How will I live without two mortgages and two incomes to look after them? The numbers may not look like they add up, but look, in God's economy, nothing's wasted, is it?

And His people will never lack what they need. We see this here. We need only trust He's in control and obey His leading. Sherwin and I, we spent several years with our family at Bible College. This was our experience too. Sometimes it did feel like these Israelites here, right? We experienced the unbelievable generosity of neighbors, even non-Christians who would be generous to us when they hurt our needs.

I mean, look at this. This is unbelievable, isn't it? Look at this detail. Cyrus here, he personally orders, verse 8, his treasurer, right, Mithradar, to count out for Shehbashar all the vessels of gold and silver that the Babylonians had actually taken away from God's temple, right, and put in their own temples to show, like, this is my God is better than yours kind of fight.

And Cyrus says, go, give it back. They can take it back home. That's unbelievable, isn't it? If this was a national government or a labor government, would they be that generous?

[29 : 42] I'm not sure. It's a stunning reversal. What was lost, now restored, and that is precisely how God is at work all the time.

Whether it's God's people in bondage in Egypt, he frees them and he provides for their every need, right? The neighbors give them what they need to keep going. Whether you are stuck in the darkness of Pharisaical religion, like the people of Jesus' day, Jesus comes.

He makes a people and they have everything they need to keep going, to keep growing. And perhaps that's true for us today as well, isn't it? PCBC. He's a God who sets captives free, who heals the brokenhearted, and he can stir his people's hearts even to head to a far country and call it home.

unbelievable freedom, which of course as the people of God today should remind us of an even more unbelievable time in history.

Because would you have picked a pagan government pilot to execute a Jewish teacher as the precise way that God would bring salvation to his world?

[30 : 58] Would you script that if you were the script writer? No, I don't think so. If you and I were to come up with a plan to deal with our problem of sin and death and suffering, I don't know, we'd come up with a miracle drug.

We'd come up with a political manifesto. We'd come up with rules to live by. Surely everyone would get along then. God knows our hearts though. He knows we are broken deep down inside.

We need more than a miracle drug or rules to live by. He gives us himself. Son of God, he humbles himself, doesn't he? To death on the cross.

And what seems so unbelievable, laughable even to some, becomes precisely the way that our sin is paid for. That on that cross our rebellion is pardoned.

On that cross our guilt is removed, our shame is turned to honor. That is the most unbelievable moment in history, is it not? This is how Peter puts it, one of Jesus' closest disciples.

[32 : 03] Know this for certain, he says in Acts 2.38. Let all Israel be assured of this. God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, people, both Lord and Messiah.

God's people in Ezra's time, they praised the Lord for a Messiah of sorts, Cyrus. But God's people today, we can praise the Lord for the greatest Messiah, the King of Kings, Jesus Christ.

Do you know him for certain? Would you stake your life on him? Would you be willing to be stirred by the living God and to follow his voice?

Sometimes history can be a bit unbelievable and yet it's true. God sent his son, they called him Jesus. He came to love, heal and forgive.

He lived and died to buy my pardon, your pardon, our pardon, and the cross and the empty grave is there to prove the Savior lives.

[33 : 07] And look, if this is true, if God's history has unfolded in this exact way, can I suggest three truths from today's passage that we can cling to as we live as chosen people heading home as elect exiles heading for the better place.

Firstly, let me remind you that our sovereign Lord is faithful to his word. Our sovereign Lord is faithful to his word. Okay? Imagine God's people, right?

Lord, how long are we here for? Lord, would you keep your promises? Are they even worth remembering and singing about? Or should we just forget them? Imagine being in that room in 538 BC, the moment the family heads announced we're free, we're going back to Jerusalem.

Imagine the long, tiring journey, though, after that, and wondering, is this worth it? Is there going to be even a home for me? In those moments, God's people then had to trust, right?

He's faithful to his promises. He'll take his people home. And maybe you need that assurance today as well. Not one of his promises will fail to pass.

[34 : 22] As we're faithful to his word, to cherish it, obey it, let us hold on to the promise that he's going to transform us as we continue this journey. As we choose to live holy lives and say no to sin, let's hold on to the promise he is going to do something good out of this.

He's making me more and more like the person I'm meant to be. Fully human again. So let us untangle ourselves from the lies that undermine God's promises and his word.

Let's commit to keep following him despite the cost, despite the suffering. And secondly, I think what we can take from Ezra is that he is working in our suffering.

None of his trials will be wasted. None of his painful providences are purposeless. We go through hard times, don't we?

I can't tell you exactly why you're going through the exact hard time you're going through right now. That valley you are in right now. But can I encourage you, don't suffer twice.

[35 : 30] What do I mean by this? Okay. When you suffer but you know the sovereign God is at work, it hurts. There is suffering. But you know that, I don't know all the answers, Lord, but I know that something good will come out of this.

But you suffer twice if you are suffering and you have no God to hold on to, no sovereign Lord to trust. Then you're suffering strongly, you're like, why God? But you can't even say why God.

So why, oh, what am I saying? Don't suffer twice through unbelief. It's hard enough to suffer what you're going through and yet to do it without a sovereign Lord is to bring more suffering on yourself. Earlier this week, a neighbor was just sharing, you know, hurt his ankle, you know, hard to walk around. And then he just commented, it's the luck of the draw, isn't it? Okay.

Nodded politely, he's much older than me, I'm not meant to disobey and, you know, dishonor my elders, that sort of thing. And then in contrast, same week, a friend down in the South Island lost his son in a work accident just before Easter weekend started.

[36 : 46] I asked him, how are you doing? And he could just say, there is hope coming that I know is soon to break. You know, and he was quoting these words, he said, I'm waiting on his mercy that will swallow every ache.

Imagine that. Could you say that? He could. He could. Your suffering may seem unbelievable right now. But Ezra 1 would remind us, there's no struggle, no loss, no exile that is wasted.

God in his sovereign care has been working on Israel all these years, right? until they're prepared to return home. And if that's what he's done there, then he can lead you out of your suffering.

The same God who brought you into your valley right this moment is the one who says, lift up your head. Your redemption is coming near. He's working in our sorrows.

No trial he gives us will be wasted. And then finally, briefly, our sovereign Lord is abundant in his salvation. Look at all those treasures, right?

[37 : 57] Not one of them lost. Imagine you were Shezbazar. Not only do you have a cool name, but you get back all the temple treasures that were thought to be lost forever.

Each gold and silver vessel accounted for down to the number. What confidence that would have given God's people as they started to tug it back home.

That's a lot of treasure to tug back, right? I think they would have needed a lot of camels. But they would not have mistaken God's abundance, generous salvation and rescue as they walked home. Every step, right? A reminder. I'm carrying back with me evidence that God, he is abundant in his salvation. And so I don't know what your mission field is.

It could be your workplace. It could be your families. It could be at school. You and I will face hardship as we try and bring the light of the gospel, of Jesus to them.

[38 : 55] We might face uncertain days because we feel the heaviness of suffering. And yet we do it knowing that we cling on to this truth. Our sovereign Lord is abundant in his salvation.

There are far more treasures than 5,400 in God's kingdom. Eternal treasures. God's people, chosen, restored, redeemed, forgiven. And they come from every tribe and tongue, every people group.

And they are among us. So let us be confident in that. The Lord is so abundant in his salvation. Not one of his precious chosen people will be lost.

So church, unbelievable freedom. It's so good, isn't it? Offered to us in the Lord. The sovereign Lord. Will you believe it? Will you trust and follow this sovereign Lord?

Will you let him rule over not just history but your story as well? And move you, stir your heart to go find those treasures among the nations. Let's pray.

[40 : 04] Lord, we thank you. How unbelievable it is that you would give your son, your only son, as a ransom for many.

Lord, I pray for anyone who is still considering the claims of Jesus. Amidst all the turbulence of this world, would you give them a settled hope? Give them greater certainty that the God of the universe can be trusted.

That they can entrust their lives to him. Even if not all the answers come straight away. Father, I pray this for people even here. I pray this for people watching online.

I pray this knowing that, Lord, you are abundant in your salvation. You love restoring people and redeeming them, bringing them home to worship you.

And Father, would you do that even today for your grace and glory. We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen.