

An End to Sin

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[0 : 0 0] Good morning. My name is Matthew Capone, and I'm the pastor here at Shine Mountain Presbyterian Church, and it's my joy to bring God's Word to you today. It's good to be back with you all. I'm sad that I wasn't able to be here last Sunday, but I appreciate all your prayers, and I'm grateful to say I never got COVID, so praise God. We are continuing together our series in the book of Daniel, and you'll remember that the book of Daniel takes place in the late 7th century, in the 6th century, and it tells the story of a man named Daniel. He was a faithful Israelite living in exile in Babylon, and so that's my brief summary. Of course, as I've mentioned before, the book also provides its own summary. In Daniel chapter 11, verse 32, we're told that the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action, and so our hope as we look at this book is that we would stand firm and take action as well. You'll remember that the book has two purposes. First, to encourage

God's people that no matter what happens, no matter how bad things get, God is still in control. He still rules and reigns over the nations. The book is not just to encourage us, though it's also to instruct us how we live faithful lives in a foreign land, and so it's with that we're picking up in Daniel chapter 9.

The last time we were in the book of Daniel, Mark Bates came, and he started chapter 9 for us, preaching the first half, and you'll remember he asked this question, what's our motivation to pray? And he gave two answers. We're motivated to pray by our need, and we're also motivated to pray by God's mercy. Our motivation, though, for prayer, our need, and God's mercy is only the first half of the story. We're now looking at the second half where we see not the prayer itself, but God's answer to that prayer. If you'll remember in chapter 9, the beginning, Daniel's request was that God would restore him, his people, the people of Israel, and he'd also restore Jerusalem. Of course, if you've been a Christian for any length of time, you know that's similar often to our request. We also long and pray for God's restoration. We look for his restoration in all sorts of places where we want him to heal what's been lost and destroyed by sin in our lives, in our world, in our families. And so we know what it's like to plead with God in prayer, much like Daniel knew. We know what it's like to plead for the church in America or around the world, or maybe our church. We know that it could be so much more, and so we ask that God would restore it and strengthen it. We know what it's like to pray for restoration when our marriage is a mess, asking that God would come and heal what we can't heal for ourselves, that he'd repair what's been twisted and distorted. We know what it's like to pray for family and friends when our relationships with them are strained, maybe even more than strained, we're estranged from them. And we know what it's like, many of us, to pray for our adult children, whether they are actively making foolish decisions or whether other sin is coming in and threatening them. And of course, we know what it's like to pray for restoration for ourselves, for restoration from addictions, maybe our struggle with anger. We, like Daniel, in other words, look for everything in this world to be made good and right and perfect again. And so that's our big question this morning. How does God answer our prayers for restoration? What does God's restoration actually look like? That's Daniel's prayer in this passage, our prayer as well. We're going to see God's answer to Daniel. We're going to see how that looks in our own lives. Now, I mentioned that Mark Bates, when he preached, had two points. He also had, you might have picked up on it, a secret third point. And his secret third point was just his joy and delight in the fact that I would be the one preaching the second half of

Daniel 9. Now, he was correct in the fact that this is one of the most complicated and controversial passages in all of the Bible. And so here's our strategy going in. I am not going to untangle every knot for you. Okay, there's things in here that have been debated throughout the history of the church.

I'm going to keep us focused on this question of healing and restoration. So we're not going to go down every bunny trail. I'm not going to give you every possible interpretation for this throughout the history of the church. I know for some of you, that's a relief. For others of you, you're disappointed in this moment. If you want to dig more into all the details of Daniel chapter 9, there's a variety of resources that you can look into. One of them that I recommend is the section in the ESV Study Bible about this passage. And so it's with this, remember our question, what does God do when we cry out for his mercy, much like Daniel did? And with that, that I invite you to turn with me to Daniel chapter 9, starting at verse 20. You can turn in your physical Bible, you can turn near the end of your worship guide, of course you can turn in your phone as well. No matter where you turn, remember that this is God's word. And God tells us that his word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. In other words, God has not left us to stumble alone in the dark, but instead he's given us his word to show us the way to go. And so that's why we read now, starting at verse 20.

[5 : 18] While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my plea before the Lord my God for the holy hill of my God, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, who I had seen in the vision at the first, came to me in swift flight at the time of the evening sacrifice. He made me understand, speaking with me and saying, O Daniel, I have now come out to give you insight and understanding. At the beginning of your pleas for mercy, a word went out, and I have come to tell it to you, for you are greatly loved. Therefore consider the word and understand the vision. Verse 24. Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place. Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and a moat, but in a troubled time. Verse 26. And after the sixty-two weeks an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed, and he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week. And for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abomination shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator. I invite you to pray with me as we come to this portion of

God's word. Our Father in heaven, we thank you again for the gift of your word to us, that you care so much about us, that you want, like a loving Father, to speak carefully and lovingly, to tell us how we're to live in this world because of your love and your character. And so we ask that you would do that again and that you would help us to understand your word, and you'd help us to believe it and know it and live it. And we ask these things in the mighty name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

When I was growing up in southern Maryland, right outside Washington, D.C., we had a two-story house, no basement, and all of the bedrooms in the house were in the upstairs except for one. And that ended up being my bedroom, which was in the downstairs off in one corner. And I remember one day coming into my room, and there on the carpet in one corner of the room, there were these just insects on the floor. They didn't look like insects that I had seen before. They seemed to be coming out of the baseboards potentially, and over time they increased. There were more of them. And so I went to my parents, and I told them, hey, there's these strange insects on the floor. What do you think's going on here? Well, turns out we had the gift of an infestation of termites in our house.

And the great joy. And so when you have termites, thankfully it wasn't very bad. It had not progressed very far. And so what do you do when you have termites? Well, you call someone. There's actually one of our neighbors who specialized in this. And so he came, and you set up these traps for the termites. So they make this hole in the ground. You have this hole system. You have this sort of fake wood, I think, that makes the termites think they're eating your house, but actually they're eating poison. And so all these were set around the perimeter of our house, and we dealt with the termite problem. Now, only problem is you don't really deal with the termite problem. You just manage it. And so after this point, we had to have this man on a regular basis come out and check the traps, replace the poison as it needed to be replaced. It's this ongoing thing, right? You're always on guard after this point to make sure there's no longer termites eating your house, in part because it's so destructive, right? Thankfully, we found out about it when we did. It could have been much, much worse.

So there was nothing in the house that really needed to be repaired or restored. We just needed to get rid of the termites. But it was ongoing, right? It became sort of a chronic thing. Now, I want you to imagine sort of a different scenario. Imagine that instead of just coming and setting the traps and taking care of the termites that were there, the termite eliminator, the man who took care of pests, I want you to imagine he came to my parents and he said this, look, yeah, that's true. There's some termites here and, you know, we're going to take care of those. But that's actually not what I'm really interested in. I have kind of bigger visions here. So actually what I want to do, we will do that. We'll take care of that. But I actually want to raise your house down. I want to destroy the whole house. And then I want to rebuild it. We're just going to, you know, you just imagine your dream house and we're going to make it for you. And then, you know, you have these termite problems that you're managing. I think I have kind of a solution to it. Instead of us setting these traps, how about we team up? We'll just get rid of termites, all termites. We will eliminate termites as a species just around the world. They'll no longer exist. So you won't have to worry about it anymore. And, you know, while we're at that, I think it would be a good idea for us to eliminate not just termites, but all pests. You know, because why should I have to transition from termites to something else? So let's get rid of hornets while we're at it. Just all hornets are gone. Okay. Maybe we should get rid of all mice. They're kind of pests, right? Let's just get rid of all of it. I mean, this is just kind of like a small thing, right? It just feels like we're not doing enough to get rid of the termites around your house. Now it's going to take a long time. I kind of have like a 10, 20-year vision for what this is going to look like, the elimination of the termites as a species and the redoing of your house. But you know what? It's going to be worth it. It's going to be good. Well, what would my parents do at that point? What would you do at that point? Probably be in shock, right? I think this person's crazy, right? They're suggesting something that's impossible. How in the world would you be able to get rid of all these things? Well, as we come to this passage this morning, that's similar to what is happening right now between Daniel and God. Daniel, remember, was reading the book of Jeremiah. He knows that the exile is coming to an end, and so he's praying to God that he'd restore the people from exile. God comes back to him and says, you know what? That's great. I'll restore you from exile.

[11 : 49] Also, I have much bigger dreams than that. I'm going to tell you not about what's going to happen at the end of 70 years. I mean, yeah, the exile is coming to an end. That's true. We'll bring you back. But let's actually talk about the history of the rest of the world. And you know what? There's some sin, right?

Sin has caused you to be in this exile. Let's just get rid of all sin. How about that? There's this overwhelming message that God gives here that is much greater than what Daniel is looking for or expecting. Yes, I'm going to grant your request. I'm going to answer your prayer.

And I'm going to give you so much more. Here's the catch, though. And this is where we're going to come. We're going to stay focused on these two points this morning. It is going to be much longer than you expect, this answer that I'm giving you.

It's also going to be much better than you expect. It's going to be much longer than you want or expect. It's going to be much better than you want or expect. I am giving you what you've asked for and so much more. And so first of all, it's going to be much longer than Daniel expected.

And I remember Daniel's praying here. Verse 20, we're given a summary of his prayer. He's confessing his sin and he's pleading before the Lord for the holy hill of Israel or the holy hill of my God. In other words, he's pleading for Jerusalem that God would restore them there. And he doesn't just receive an answer. He actually receives a messenger. So Gabriel comes to talk to him and tell him about what's going to happen. And he gives him in verse 24, this number, 70 weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city. Now, there's been a lot of debate about what's going on with the 70 weeks. And I'm going to present it to you in this way. Remember, as we come to the end here, Daniel 1 through 6 is the story of Daniel's life. Daniel 7 through 12 are Daniel's vision. So we're dealing with what's called apocalyptic literature. We're dealing with literature that talks often about the end of the world, how God's going to restore his people. And so when we come into this type of literature, we expect to find numbers that are very symbolic. In fact, I believe what's going on here in this passage is a symbolic number. So he's telling him there is going to be 70 weeks. Some people interpret this even to be 7 times 10. And if you take it as a week, then in terms of days, it's 7 times 7 times 10. So 7 is a perfect number. 10 is a perfect number. You're coming up ultimately with 490 days.

[14 : 16] Some people think it's 490 years. And if you're suspicious with the idea of numbers being symbolic or the idea of prophecy, the idea of numbers working in this way, I want you to remember, and many scholars point to this when they talk about this passage, Jesus uses this same kind of math.

And he does it in Matthew chapter 18 when someone comes and asks him, How many times must I forgive my brother? Do I forgive him 7 times? And Jesus says, No. You forgive your brother 70 times 7.

So Jesus is saying you forgive your brother 490 times. Now everyone who reads that passage knows Jesus is not saying that you pull out a sheet of notebook paper and you start making check marks every time you forgive your brother.

Right? If you live with your brother, kids, you know this, so 490, if you forgave your brother once a day, you would be finished with all your necessary forgiveness in under two years. And at that point, you don't have to forgive your brother anymore. Right?

You're done. You can just condemn him. Well, of course, that's not what Jesus is saying. Right? He's giving us these symbolic numbers to say there's a complete forgiveness that you have to give.

[15 : 26] Okay? So we know that we're familiar with that in the New Testament. I want you to take that familiarity and bring it over into the Old Testament with me. Okay? Then this vision, God is saying to Daniel through Gabriel, all of these things are going to happen in a complete period.

These things are, in other words, going to take the rest of the history of the world. You're concerned with the fact that the 70 years of exile are coming to an end and you're looking to return.

That's interesting and we'll deal with that also the rest of world history. Okay? And so he breaks the rest of world history down into these three different periods of time.

Right? You want the restoration of Israel. I want to talk about the rest of time. So I'm going to tell you a story about what the rest of time looks like. And that's what we're going to see in these next few verses. And it's broken up into three units.

I'm going to go through this with you all very briefly. Remember, our goal is not to unravel or untangle every knot. But we see in verse 7, there's seven weeks. This is period one. And these seven weeks, what I believe is going on here, is he's talking about their return from exile and rebuilding the temple.

[16 : 37] Okay? That's what Daniel's interested in. So, hey, Daniel, your prayer that you're interested in, we'll take care of that in the first seven weeks. Okay? But we have this whole other series of time we need to go into. So verse 25 again, now we have period two, 62 weeks.

This is the period of time Israel's under the rule of foreign nations. Okay? Including Roman rule. So that's what we understand to be happening when we're told that it's going to occur in a troubled time.

That's the very end of 25. And then in verses 26 and 27, Oh, Christ is going to come. There's going to be the end of evil. So look with me quickly. Verse 26, An anointed one shall be cut off.

Okay? So this is Jesus. His cutting off is the fact that he's going to be killed. He shall have nothing. Of course, we know this is true of Jesus on the cross. Right? He has nothing. All his clothes are taken away from him. And then we're told after that, some things are going to happen.

Verse 27, We see then the end of the world, the end of evil. Verses 26 and 27. So we have all of world history broken into these three points. Return from exile, time after exile until Christ, time of Christ until the end of the world.

[17 : 49] Okay? I've just gone through about 300 pages of academic articles for you. There's a vision of the world here. This is what the rest of history looks like. And so for us this morning, as we look at God's answers to prayers for restoration, the point is this.

Full healing, full restoration takes time. Okay? Full healing takes time. In fact, we know this intuitively. Right? There's a principle that you can manage the symptoms of something much faster than you can deal with the disease.

So I'll give you an example. I have terrible allergies. Terrible. In fact, one time I went to get tested and the person who tested me told me, you should not lie down in grass.

And I asked him, well, what would happen if I lied down, lay down in grass? Well, you might die. Okay? I can manage those symptoms very easily. I can manage them in a matter of minutes. I take a Zyrtec, do some nasal spray.

I go on with my day. Okay? Symptoms are not challenging often. Now, what if I wanted to eliminate my allergies forever? Years.

[18 : 55] Right? It would take a long time. The more, the fuller the healing, the longer the restoration. Okay? The more serious the disease, the longer the restoration.

I can get over a cold in a matter of days. Right? You come to me tomorrow, you tell me I've been diagnosed with cancer. That's a very different situation. Okay? So there's something that we know intuitively in life.

The same is true for God's restoration of this world. He is looking for a larger and greater and bigger restoration than we can want or imagine.

It will take more time than we want or expect. God's healing takes time. We want evil to be fully destroyed.

It's going to be better than we imagine and longer than we want. Same is true for us in our individual lives. It's transformation and change are a long-term process and proposition.

[19 : 54] You know this if you've been a Christian for any amount of time. Struggle with sin is real and ongoing. We see growth and we see it slowly.

There's a reason that we're sanctified, that God continues to change us throughout our lives. And so for us, don't lose heart. Be patient with yourself.

Be patient with others. Be patient with God. Be patient with others. Now, I'm not trying to hyper-individualize something that Daniel's receiving here as a picture of the world.

It's true for us as individuals. It's also true for what Daniel's looking for, right? We live in a world with oppressive and evil and wicked systems, right, and governments.

God's at work. And he's not going to work on our timetable. God is bringing full and final healing. It's going to take longer than we want, right?

[20 : 55] He is changing us. He is changing the world. He is making right what is wrong. And we have to wait. 70 weeks, right, the rest of world history.

You want God to judge the wicked? It's going to take time. You have a friend or a family member who has walked away from the Lord, and you're praying for God to bring them back. It's going to take time, right?

You want freedom from the addiction in your life. It's going to take time. God's time is not our time. I read an article, I think it was yesterday, about the pressure that a lot of individual retailers are feeling, especially small businesses, because they're in competition with Amazon.

And Amazon has set this expectation for consumers that you need to receive something the next day or in two days. And so now our demands have changed. You know, if you ordered something in 1995 and you had to wait two weeks to get it, I mean, yeah, that's kind of what you expect, right?

Well, now everyone demands it has to be two days. And so these small businesses are trying to figure out, what in the world are we going to do to compete with Amazon? Right? We want things fast. We want it now. Brothers and sisters, God is not trying to compete with Amazon.

[22 : 13] He does not provide two-day shipping on healing and restoration. Okay? His timetable is unaffected by the expectations of our world.

God doesn't care. I mean, he cares about you and us, right? But he is not, he doesn't care about what Amazon's doing with two-day shipping. He's not changing his pace based on that. Okay? The Lord is in heaven.

He laughs. And yet we have to remember, we are people who live in that culture. We're affected by that expectation. And so more and more, we live in a Western world that wants two-day shipping, and God says instead, it'll be 70 years.

It's going to take the rest of world history for me to accomplish my purposes. And so when we look to God and his healing, it is going to take longer than we expect.

Of course, all of this is pointing back for us to verse 24, because it's not just going to take longer than we expect, it's also going to be better than we expect.

[23 : 14] It's not just going to take longer than we expect, it's also going to be better than we expect. Many of you, I'm sure, are familiar with the concept of a bucket list. And a bucket list is just a list of things that you want to accomplish before maybe a certain period in time, maybe a certain age, or you just want to accomplish before the rest of your life.

So it's popular these days for people to come up with what's called a 30 before 30 list. And that's for extremely young people to figure out what it is they want to do before their 30th birthday.

And so I'll give you some examples. I searched for popular ones, and these appeared over and over. Things people want to do before they turn 30. Adopt a puppy. Apparently that's popular. Learn a new language.

A big one was skydiving. Hiking the Grand Canyon, apparently, is a big one. And then, and I'm not sure why this is on there, because you can accomplish this well before 30, karaoke.

I mention that because verse 24 is God's bucket list before the end of the world.

[24 : 19] God is telling us in verse 24, not what he wants to accomplish, that's what our bucket lists look like, but what he will and has and continues to accomplish.

God, in other words, has a bucket list. God has a clear list of goals for his people and this world. Okay, so going back again to Daniel's prayer.

You want restoration of the city of Jerusalem? That's great. But you know what? My bucket list is a lot longer. And here it is, verse 24.

Why do we need 70 weeks? What's going to happen? Well, we need to finish transgression. We need to put an end to sin, to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to steal both vision and profit, and to anoint a most holy place.

So finish the transgression. Put an end to sin are both ways of talking about God's work to make sure that sin is no longer a problem in this world.

[25 : 22] Sin, when God and as he accomplishes his list, will not be a thing anymore. There will be no more sin. Okay, this is the same as saying, we're just going to get rid of termites as a species and all other pests.

Okay, it's easy to read, hard to do. Not only on God's list, though, is he going to put an end to sin, he's also going to atone for iniquity. This is a way of saying, well, of course, it's easy to talk about eliminating sin.

What do you have to do, though? You have to pay the penalty for it. Sin is expensive. It's costly. Atone here is a payment word. It's not just that God's going to put an end to sin, but he's going to do it by paying for it.

He's going to atone for iniquity. Similar, right, to someone saying to you, I'm going to put an end to all debt forever. What are you going to have to do to make that happen? Someone's got to pay.

Right? So he's going to put an end to sin. He's going to pay for it. And then, to bring in everlasting righteousness, well, what's it going to look like when there's no more sin in the world?

[26 : 33] It's going to look like what we pray for in the Lord's Prayer. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Remember, Jesus tells us he's bringing in the kingdom. So there's going to be this world that's going to continue forever where there's no sin.

Sin has had an end put to it, and it's been paid for. It's been atoned for. There's a variety of ideas about what's meant here by sealing both vision and prophet. Some people think this means that it talks about the end of prophecy at Christ's coming.

Some people think it means the fulfillment of these prophecies. Regardless, it doesn't change the context of what's come before. And many people think here to anoint almost holy place is actually referring to a person.

So I'm not going to parse all of that for you, but the big idea here is that God's goal, his desire, his work, is to finish sin forever in the world, and then to bring in the perfect world, the world without sin.

And so again, this is something that is better than we expect. When Daniel's praying, he's not thinking in these terms. He's not thinking, oh, sin is never going to be a struggle forever.

[27 : 43] God, however, is thinking in these terms. And of course, as people who live in the time of the age of the church after the New Testament, we understand how these things have been fulfilled.

We know more than Daniel because we see these fulfilled in our Lord Jesus Christ. It's Jesus who comes to put an end to sin. How does he do it? Well, he's the one who atones for iniquity.

He atones for iniquity by living the perfect life that we should have lived, dying the death that we should have died. He pays the debt of our sin. He pays the price that it takes to eliminate, to put an end to sin.

And so we know this in part now, right? For those who have faith in Jesus Christ, we know that he has paid for our sin. We only know it in part because we still experience sin in the world. This is part of how we know the 70 weeks refers to the rest of the world because we haven't seen all these things fulfilled yet.

We know everlasting righteousness is not going to happen until Jesus returns again. It is at Jesus' second coming that we will see every item on the bucket list checked off in red.

[28 : 52] And so that's our hope and our longing as Christians. And so as we look at all the details and all the things here in Daniel chapter 9, the point ultimately for us as Christians is this.

Hold on. The people who know their God shall stand firm and take action. Hold on. Take hope in the fact that this too shall pass.

It's going to take longer than we want. And God's going to put an end to it. Take hope in the fact not just that it is going to come to an end, not that this too shall pass this current age, that all evil will come to an end.

God is indeed going to put fully and finally sin to an end. We don't see it all now. That doesn't mean God isn't still at work.

God is working on a different timetable than we want. So God is reminding Daniel and us, we stay patient and we stay hopeful.

[30 : 04] We know as slow as it seems at times, God is still working in this world to bring all these things true. If you're not a Christian, God is promising something here that everyone longs for and only he can deliver on.

Everyone wants evil in this world to end, right? And everything that we've looked to as a world to end evil hasn't worked. Technology hasn't solved it for us.

Education hasn't solved it for us. Human progress has not solved it for us. Science has not solved human evil. Only God can bring us what we long for as humans.

Only he is going to be able to bring in everlasting righteousness. Only he can put an end to sin. Only God can bring full and final justice.

He has and he will put an end to evil forever. Not just the evil in the world, the evil inside us. Because remember, Daniel's prayer was a prayer of confession and repentance.

[31 : 11] He was confessing the sins of Israel, his own sins. He recognized that he was part of the problem of the world. And that's the catch here as well. We have to remember that we are part of that sin that God is putting to an end.

We are complicit in the wickedness and evil and injustice of this world. And so that's why we have to have what verse 26 talks about.

We have to have an anointed one who will be cut off. And as we know, it's our Lord Jesus who makes this true for us. We're told in Matthew chapter 27, verse 46, that Jesus cries out on the cross, My God, why have you forsaken me?

Well, God forsook him because someone had to be cut off. That's the way that this debt of sin was paid for. We're told that there's going to be an atonement for iniquity.

That's on God's list. Well, we're also told, Matthew chapter 26, when Jesus is serving the Lord's Supper, he says, this is the blood of my covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. It's Jesus' blood that fulfills this prophecy of atoning for sin.

[32 : 18] And then everlasting righteousness. We know, as I mentioned before, Mark chapter 1, Jesus comes preaching, and he says, the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel.

And so we know that it's our Lord Jesus who brings the healing and the restoration that we look for. He is the one who makes things new. He brings it longer than we expect, and he makes it better than we expect.

Now, if you'll remember, all the way back to 2020, when we were in the midst of COVID, and there were all kinds of things that stopped and shut down, you'll remember with me that there's one thing that didn't stop.

Trash collection. No one ever discussed whether trash men, trash women were essential. We know trash has to be gotten rid of.

We know how to get trash outside of our house. We don't know how to do with it after that. And, of course, we have, as you can expect, we don't think about it very often, but we have a huge trash problem in our world.

[33 : 26] The trash per person in the globe is on the rise, so people are producing more and more trash every year. Trash ends up in the sea in these things that we call garbage patches.

So there's just big portions of the oceans that have these huge trash deposits. They're whirling around. And there's also trash that's on the floor of the sea. And then we have growing landfills around the world, right?

Our problem with trash in this world is nothing compared to how bad our problem with sin is. And you would be foolish, anyone would be foolish who proposed that they would be able to solve the problem of trash in this world, right?

The man who discovered part of what was going on in the sea says this. He said, cleaning up the garbage patch would bankrupt any country that tried it. Brothers and sisters, we don't know the solution to solving trash in our world.

Even more, we don't know the problem to solving sin, but we do know this. Our Lord Jesus chose to bankrupt himself to solve the problem of sin.

[34 : 35] He bankrupted himself so that he could put sin to an end. He was the one who atoned for our iniquity. And so that we know that God does it.

God does it. He puts an end to sin. He takes longer than we expect. And he does something greater and more beautiful than we expect. And he does it through the death of his son. And so when we look and ask about God's healing and his restoration, we can look to the words of Ephesians 3, verse 20, knowing that God is him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we can ask or think according to the power that's at work within us.

Please pray with me. Our Father in heaven, we thank you for the encouragement and the challenge of your word. We ask that you would give us patience, that you would help us to wait well, knowing that even when we don't see anything happening or changing, you are at work in this world, bringing your plans to completion.

And Father, we ask that you'd give us the humility that Daniel had, knowing that the problem of sin is one that we are caught up in and a part of. And so that we would look to Jesus and not ourselves as the one who can heal and restore and atone for us.

He can pay the price that would bankrupt us. And so we ask all of these things, knowing that we can't afford it, but we ask it in his mighty name. Amen.