

Every Word of God is Pure

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[0 : 0 0] sake. Amen. We look this evening at verses 5 and 6 in chapter 30 and the context in which that is found. Verses 5 and 6 of Proverbs 30. Every word of God is pure. He is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee and thou be found a liar. Now here we have a statement in the Proverbs. Now these are not, this particular section of the Proverbs is not explicitly the words of Solomon. Although the book of Proverbs as a whole as we see in chapter 1 verse 1 is described as the Proverbs of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel. But these are the words of Adir, the son of Jacob, even the prophecy. And so we have again also in chapter 31 the words of King Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him and so on. So there are in these closing chapters Proverbs coming from other individuals, other sources still inspired of God. But we see also here something of the questioning and the seeking which perhaps Solomon himself might not have expressed in exactly the same way. We have for example at verse 3, I neither learned wisdom nor have the knowledge of the holy. Well Solomon himself expresses in chapter 1 where he says and understands the knowledge of the holy is coming. Likewise in chapter 9, he says in chapter 1 verse 7, the feet of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge that fools despise wisdom and instruction. And again in chapter 9 at verse 10, the feet of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and the knowledge of the holy is understanding. And he is eager saying he neither learned wisdom nor have the knowledge of the holy. So there is a seeking, whether it is with Solomon who is further along the journey but obviously loses his way somewhat toward the end of his life as we know from the books of Kings and Chronicles. But also here we have this inspired writer, Adair, likewise seeking that knowledge. I neither learn wisdom nor have I the knowledge of the holy. And there is this question, who has ascended up into heaven and so on, who has descended? But he reaches this statement, this conclusion, every word of God is pure. He is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Now of course we know that when scripture states the truth, it usually is backed up by somewhere else in scripture itself. You know, in Psalm 84, in thy courts, one day excels a thousand rather in. My God's house will I keep a door than dwell in tents of sin, for God the Lord's a sun and shield. He of grace and glory give and will withhold no good from them that upright they do live. He is a shield unto them that put their trust in them. Every word of God is pure. So if we have here this purity, if we have this strength of God's word here, we are not to, it says, add unto his words. Why not add to his words?

Well, because if you're adding, you're implying that there is that which is imperfect, that which could be improved upon. It is like if, say, someone were to give you the collective works of Jeffrey Chaucer or William Shakespeare and say, well that's not bad, but you know, actually, I could just write the ending a wee bit different there. That'll improve it. That'll make it better. I'll just add that wee bit to it and that'll just make it perfect. Or a master chef is preparing a beautiful, beautiful dinner and so on. You think, well, actually, I think you could even just improve that by adding a few chips around there and a wee bit of tomato sauce in there. That would just make it perfect. In fact, I would just redesign the recipe myself or looking at a work of Rubens or one of the great, Rembrandt, one of the great artists, say, well actually, you know, if you just add a wee bit in there in the corner, that would make it so much better. If there is that which our master has produced, we do not presume to add to it, to improve it. How much less then with God? Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar. But in these verses 5 and 6, there is a wider context. In this context,

I would suggest to you, is verses 3 to 9, where Edgar is saying, I neither learned wisdom, nor have I the knowledge of the holy. We've established that Solomon knew something of the knowledge of the holy.

Who hath ascended up into heaven or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name? And what is his son's name, if thou canst tell? Now these are properties which can only be ascribed to God.

And yet here in the depths of the Old Testament, we have this recognition that God has a son. There is a son of God, sort of there within the Godhead. Jesus has not yet appeared in the flesh, but there is this sense within the inspired writers. What is his name? What is his son's name?

[5 : 23] Since when does God have a son? From all eternity. There is a son of God. And God has planted this way back in the Old Testament in the words of his inspired writers. Every word of God is pure. He's a shield to them that put their trust in him. Add thou not to his words.

And then we've got these verses 7 to 9. Two things have I required of thee. Deny me them not before I die. Remove far from me vanity and lies. Give me neither poverty nor riches. Feed me with food convenient for me. Lest I be fool and deny thee and say who is the Lord.

Or lest I be poor and steal and take the name of my God in vain. Now, we would read these verses in isolation and say, oh well, this is somebody saying he doesn't want to be so poor he has to steal for his bread.

And he doesn't want to be so rich and he's full and he's absolutely stuffed and he says, oh well, I've got everything I need. Who is the Lord? But in real terms, in practice, we know ourselves, after a great big filling meal, you don't say, oh well, that was so fantastic. I'm so full.

James, who is God, you know, that he should be so great when I am so well. That doesn't ring true, does it? It is perhaps true that if somebody is trying to live a godly life but is so poor and starving that they have to steal in order to feed themselves then.

[6 : 47] Yes, that is to an extent the denial of the Lord's truth. But I would suggest to you that these verses 7 to 9 coming where they do are a direct reference or apply directly to the preceding verses about the word of God.

This is the context, I would suggest here, which they are uttered. And the inspired writer, Egil, here is saying, two things have I required of thee, in other words, of the Lord.

Deny me them not before I die. Now that's quite heavy, that all his life, before he ends his life, he should be able to have these things. What does he want?

He doesn't want vanity, empty words that are meaningless. He doesn't want lies, words that are untrue. Give me neither poverty, whereby I haven't got enough, nor riches, whereby I think I've got too much.

In other words, feed me with food convenient for my soul. If this is applied to the previous verses, then having, as it were, riches and overabundance would imply, I've got so much I've added on to the word of God.

[7 : 53] And I've got so much now that what has been added on is just vanity. It's just meaningless, because we've mixed in, we've muddled in God's word with all the words of men.

We've put the words of men on a level with the words of God. We've diluted it in other words. We've created that which is not the truth, it is vanity, emptiness, haute act. Or else that which denies the word of God, which will be lies.

Remove from me vanity and lies. Give me neither poverty, whereby I don't have enough of God's word to know what I should do, or riches, whereby I think I know it so well that I don't need to bother with it.

Feed me with food convenient for me. Give me that which is right, that which is enough. Day by day, a portion of thy word. You know, if somebody would have sat before you all the food that you would eat in a month, and spread it all huge in a table, said, right, sit there and chow down, get eating, don't stop until you've eaten a whole lot, you wouldn't be able to physically do it.

You'd be sick. You're just not because there's anything wrong with the food, but you just don't have that capacity. Your digestion cannot cope with it. Whereas if they say, right, here's the food for today. Eat that, space it out, you know, morning, afternoon, evening, night, time and night.

[9 : 13] Then you can eat a little bit each time, give it time for digestion, drink plenty of water with it, rest, let's take a leg of digestion. But then tomorrow, have another little piece. Convenient for your body.

Food which is convenient for my soul will be that by which I'm given a portion day by day. This is one reason why ministers and preachers and others are always trying to encourage people to read a portion of God's Word.

Morning and evening, day by day, little by little. Food convenient for your soul. Nobody's going to say, right, it is 66 books in the Bible.

Before you go off to work in the morning, you start. If you haven't got time, get up at 3 o'clock in the morning. And keep going from Genesis until you hit Revelation. Then you can go out to work. And then when you come home at night, start again.

No. Nobody's going to be able to take it in for a start. Nobody's going to be able to cram their head with 66 books in the whole Bible at one go. That's too much.

[10 : 13] It's so much riches of the Word of God. It's like eating too much rich food at one go. It will make you sick in your body. And that will make you sick in your head. Not because there's anything wrong with it.

It's just too much of a good thing at one go. Nor should you go to the other extreme. And be so filled with the affairs and concerns of this Word.

That the Word of God doesn't get a look in. That you never pick it up. You never open it. You never read it. Oh, so short of time. I'm going to get my shower. I'm going to get out the door. Oh, I'm going to do work. I'm going to come back in. I'm not flicking now.

Oh, no time for God's Word. Or else, last thing at night. Oh, this morning, a little lead just passed. Oh, I'm sure. Oh, never mind. Just close the book and put it away. That's not honoring to the Lord. And it will cause your soul to starve.

It will cause you to be so weak in the things of the Lord. That having this poverty, having this need. Instead of taking that which is convenient for your soul.

[11 : 12] You'll probably content yourself with stealing. What does that mean? Us people taking that which is not your own. In spiritual terms. In terms of the Word of God. It probably means reading something like.

Something extra. Something vaguely religious. That will do instead of the Bible. Now, there's nothing wrong with reading a devotional aid. Or that which may open up a passage of Scripture to you.

Or something which may cause you to think on a verse or a particular thing. But these devotional aids. They are in as well as they're not in instead of. It is not enough to take something which is not of the Word God has given you of itself.

And pretend that it is. That's effectively stealing from God. It is to take that which God wants to give you. The good food for your soul. And yes, what do you think? It's okay. But it's not actually his which he's giving you.

As an aid. As an as well as. As a help to open God's Word. It's fine. But not as an incentive. That is such poverty. As is causing you effectively to steal from God.

[12 : 15] To overdo it on the other hand. As such riches. As to make your soul unwell. And this I would suggest to you is the context in which verses 7 to 9.

Could be understood. Two things have I required of thee. Deny me them not before I die. Now you see this is the importance of having food convenient to our soul.

Before we die. Once we leave this world. We are in eternity. And there is no return from that eternity. There is no coming back again. There is no sort of second chance at life.

The Lord knows in his perfect wisdom. That the use that you make of this life. Is the use that you would make of a hundred lives. If you were given a hundred. The use you would make of ten.

Seven. Five. If you were given them. You would fill them up. With the things of the world. Or itself. Or whatever. Or. You would fill them with the things of the Lord.

[13 : 14] You would seek the Lord while there was time. If you had ten lives. If you had a hundred lives. So he's not going to multiply lives to you. He's going to give you one. He's going to make it simple. And he's going to say.

Look. There's not a hundred and fifty different gods to choose from. There's one God. You choose for this God. This word. This message. Or. Not.

It's not a multiple choice. Where you can pick the wrong answer. It's not. Umpteen different gods. Going to find the right one. Oops. Got it wrong. No. There's one God. One saviour. One mediator. Between God and man.

The man Christ Jesus. That is the salvation. The freedom. The forgiveness. That is freely offered to us. And he has revealed himself. Not only in creation. And providence.

He has revealed himself. In his own written word. Every word of God. Is pure. Insofar as it is from him. Not simply for what is said.

[14 : 10] But for who has said it. Sometimes people think in terms of. They say. Oh well now. Is God will something. Because it's good. Or is something good. Because God wills it.

If God says it. Or does it. Is that what makes it good. Or does he choose to do it. Because it is good. How on earth do you define good. Outside of God. If God says it. It is by definition good.

If God does it. It is by definition good. If God speaks it. It is by definition. Pure. Because it is coming from him.

Who is the source. Of all purity. And we can tell. When something is from God. Because it is there. In his word. Or if it is something that. You know. Sometimes you do.

Almost as it were. As though God was speaking. Into your very head. You think. I didn't come up with that. Where did that come from? If it is in line with his word. If we are praying for his guidance. And we are asking for his help.

[15 : 04] And we genuinely don't know. Which way we should turn. And there is nothing in his word. That deals with our particular problem. There may be guidelines. There may be some principles. Nothing for this particular issue.

Then he may either present. A verse to our memory. Or he may guide us. With some knowledge. Or words. Or voice. Or whatever you might hear. Or you might think. God is speaking to you.

If it is of the Lord. It will always be consistent. With his word. It will always be in line. With his word. He will never go against. His own word.

Or to put it in another way. The word of God. Will never contradict. The spirit of God. Now that is something. Which the church. In this present day. Could so easily.

Have applied. And so easily. Have recognized. As guidance from God. It is never going to be. The Holy Ghost. Which is going to be. Leading God's church. In a direction. That is.

[16 : 00] The opposite. Of what his word says. The spirit of God. And the word of God. Do not contradict each other. Every word of God. Is pure. And we say.

Well. How do we know that's him? It's him. That is in line. With his word. He is a shield. Unto them. That put their trust in him. And they know. Well if I do this. What will happen to me? The Lord.

Will protect. Guide. Lead. Those who are his own. Add thou not. Unto his words. How can you possibly. Improve. Upon the word of God. Oh well.

If God hasn't said something. About this issue. Or that issue. Whatever. Then. You don't need to worry. You've got enough. To go on. You apply his word. You apply his principles. Oh I'm afraid.

I might be doing something wrong. If God hasn't forbidden it. Then it won't be wrong. If God has said. Do it. Then not to do it. It's wrong. Add not.

[16 : 53] To his words. I think you know. With 66 books of the Bible. Was it 1189 chapters. I think we've got enough. To be going on. I don't think we have to embellish.

Or sort of add little bits. Or invent new pieces. And add vanity to it. Remove far from me. Vanity. Vacuous additions. To God's word.

We don't need that. And lies. Things which will contradict. God's words. Add not unto his words. Lest ye reprove thee. And I'll be found a liar. Two things.

Have I required thee. Deny me them not. Before I die. We need the truth of God. Before we die. We need to lay hold upon the life.

That is revealed. In his word. In the Old Testament. And in the New. Before we die. Because once you die. There's no more opportunity. You have the life. You have the opportunity. You have his word.

[17 : 48] You have the truth. Proclaimed to you. Well. Oh. Well. Some people didn't. You know. So that's not fair. Well. The Lord has that too. Under control. In Luke chapter 12.

Remember what Jesus says. To his disciples. He says. That servant. Which knew his Lord's will. And prepared not himself. Neither did according to his will.

Shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not. And did commit things. Worthy of stripes. Shall be beaten with few stripes. But unto whomsoever much is given.

Of him shall be much required. And to whom men have committed much. Of him. They will ask the more. In other words. If we sin against the Lord. Then yes.

There will be punishment for it. But the Lord recognizes. That a distinction. There is a distinction. Between those. Who never knew. Never heard. They spent their lives. Worshipping false gods.

[18 : 42] Or false prophets. Or whatever. Because they never knew any different. And they. You could say. Humanly speaking. Never may have had a chance. And they will go to a lost eternity. Yes they will.

But the Lord will know. To have. A measure of mercy. And a measure of compassion. In the midst of their judgment. Their judgment. Will be less severe. Than those who had.

The truth of the gospel. They had. The unadulterated word. They had the truth. They had the opportunity. They had the time. And they chose. To let it go.

The Lord of that servant. Will come on a day. When he looketh not for him. And at an hour. When he is not aware. Nor cut him in sunder. And appoint them. His portion. With.

The unadulterated verse. Because if we have had. God's wonderful truth. If we have had. The mercy of Christ. Him crucified upon the cross. And we say. Well thanks very much.

[19 : 38] But you know. That's not for me. Then there will be. A greater requirement. To answer. Than for those. Who never knew. Yes. It will be a lost eternity. Regardless.

If we do not have Christ. To our saviour. But the Lord knows. The distinction. And he recognises. Mercy. Compassion. And justice. Even in the midst. Of judgment.

All through. Scripture. There is this recognition. That men are seeking. For the truth. They are seeking. For wisdom. You know. In what is probably.

The oldest book. In the Bible. Job. Puts it this way. In chapter 28. Verse 12. He says. But where shall wisdom.

Be found. And where is the place. Of understanding. Man knoweth not. The price thereof. Neither is it found. In the land of the living. The depth. Sayeth it is not in me.

[20 : 35] And the sea. Sayeth it is not with me. It cannot be gotten. For gold. Neither shall silver. Be weighed. For the price thereof. It cannot be valued. With the gold. And offer. With the precious onyx.

Or the sapphire. The gold. And the crystal. Cannot equal it. And the exchange. Of it shall not be. For jewels. Of fine gold. Verse 20. Whence then cometh wisdom.

And where is the place. Of understanding. Seeing it is hid. From the eyes. Of all living. And kept close. From the fowls. Of the air. Destruction. And death. Sayeth. We have heard the fame.

Thereof. With our ears. God. Understandeth. The way thereof. And he knoweth. The place thereof. For he looketh. To the ends of the earth. And seeth. Under the whole heaven.

To make the weight. For the winds. And he weigheth. The waters by measure. When he made a decree. For the rain. And a way. For the lightning. Of the thunder. Then did he see it. And declare it. He prepared it.

[21 : 30] Yea. And searched it out. And unto man. He said. Behold. The feet of the Lord. That is wisdom. And to depart from evil.

Is understanding. Where shall wisdom be found? This is what men do. Isn't it? They say. Oh well. You know. Whatever we were taught. When we were children. We were at Sunday school. It can't be as simple as that.

You know. It's going to be far more complex. And sophisticated. So we'll travel the world. Investigating the depths of the sea. And the heights of the stars. And look and search for wisdom.

And knowledge. And the answers to the universe. And by the end of it all. When we have exhausted the years of our lives. And when we have searched from one end to the other. What do we end up concluding?

Solomon was one himself. Who had the rare opportunity of such wealth. And riches. And power. To explore all the possibilities. He tried vanity.

[22 : 27] He tried pleasure. He tried building gardens. And palaces. And so on. He tried to find out all the mysteries of everything. And what does he conclude? At the end of the book of Ecclesiastes.

Which is the sort of account of all his investigations. And all his trials. And he finds emptiness in this. And vanity in that. And what on earth is the answer? Well we read.

In verse 12. Of chapter 12. In Ecclesiastes. Further by these my son be admonished. Of making many books there is no end. Finding out with them. Writing it down. Reading it all up.

All in knowledge of men. Of making many books there is no end. Much study is a weirdness of the flesh. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter. Fear God and keep his commandments.

For this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment. With every secret thing. Whether it be good. Or whether it be evil. And that is the conclusion of the matter.

[23 : 24] And we think. Oh it can't be as simple as that. It's got to be more complex. It's got to be more sophisticated. All the efforts that we have expended. As a human race. To find out knowledge.

And to explore the universe. And dig down into the depths. And the more knowledge we find out. The more we realise we don't know. And how could enough lifetimes ever be enough. To find out all the knowledge.

Well it isn't of course. You will never exhaust the depths. Of the knowledge of what God has created. But one of the. One of the. The great.

Well I don't say great theologians. But one of the famous theologians. Of the 20th century. Called Karl Barth. Who was a Swiss theologian. Who worked in Germany. For most of his life.

A lot of people thought he was great. Some of his theology. Was a wee bit on the dodgy side. But he was certainly a very erudite. And intellectual capable scholar. He wrote scores of books.

[24 : 19] And his theology was widely respected. By a great many people. In the middle part of the 20th century. And beyond. And towards the end of his life. When an interviewer said to him. You know.

When all that you've written. All you've investigated. How would you. How would you sum it all up. All the things you've learned. And he quoted the words. Of this 19th century. Jesus loves me.

This I know. For the Bible tells me so. That's what it all. Boiled down to. This man with so much knowledge. And so much. Exploration of all the detail.

And the intellect. And the languages. In which the Bible had been written. Exploring the theology. This is what it boiled down to. Jesus loves me. This I know. For the Bible tells me so.

Every word of God. Is pure. He is a shield unto them. That put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words. Lest ye reprove thee.

[25 : 16] And thou be found a liar. Now man's vanity thinks. Oh that can't be as simple as that. It's got to be more complex. But the Lord has made it. So simple that a child can grasp it.

That somebody without a huge intellectual capacity. Perhaps somebody isn't as bright as somebody else. Or perhaps somebody maybe mentally constricted. Or disabled mentally.

But still. They can grasp this truth. The simplicity. Of God's word. You see I could say. I could make a truthful statement. And say. In the one and only time I have ever visited the country of France.

But I have. I've got to the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea. And you say. No you haven't really. Yes I have. Because. A couple of different beaches. I went and paddled.

And I paddled on the shores. And I put my foot on the seabed. And the freezing water swirled around my ankles. Now. I was standing at the bottom. On the lamp.

[26 : 13] With the sea coming in. That's. That's as far deep as you could get there. I was at the bottom. And the sea was up above. And I stood on the seabed. Yes I did. It's the truth. But the fact of the matter is.

There's an awful lot more of the Mediterranean. That I stood in. And it goes an awful lot deeper. That I could wade out into. There's an awful lot more water out there. That I couldn't explore. Yes a child may paddle in the shallows.

I wasn't a child at the time. But a child can paddle in the shallows. Of God's grace. And it will be sufficient to say. Yes they've touched the bottom. Yes they've reached what they need. But there is such a vast amount of knowledge.

And depth out there. As man can never exhaust. God is always going to have more than that. Where shall wisdom be found?

The fear of the Lord. Is the beginning of wisdom. You search the world. You travel the globe. You explore the heights of the stars. And you come back to this.

[27 : 17] The simplicity. Of the fear and love of the Lord. That is what it boils down to. You could save yourself. A lifetime of chasing the wind.

By focusing on that. Which will always be. The ultimate truth. Every word of God is pure. Agur says. I neither learned wisdom.

Nor have the knowledge of the holy. But God already reveals. In an older book than Proverbs. The not fear of the Lord. Is the beginning of knowledge. And Solomon's we've already seen. He mentions that.

In Proverbs 1. Chapter 1. Verse 7. Chapter 9. And verse 10. And so on. It's there. It's sufficient. He is a shield unto them.

That put their trust in him. He don't need to add to his words. The two things we acquire. We acquire. The poverty. Nor riches. We don't want so much of it.

[28 : 11] That we can't digest it. Just a portion. Day by day. That it will nourish us. That it will feed us. That it will strengthen us. We don't want such poverty.

That we. As if we were to starve our bodies. By not feeding them. Morning and evening. So don't starve your soul. And then be tempted to steal. And bring other things in. Instead of God's.

Holy and inspired word. Yes. You can have other things. As well as. But you're going to have a foundation. As we're looking at this morning. You can build whatever kind of house you like. But you've got to make sure it's on the rock.

Before you start. Two things have I acquired. The deny me not them not. Before I die. And move far from the vanity of lies. We don't want empty.

Vacuous words. Pretending to be God's word. When they're not. We don't want lies. That contradict God's word. I want the truth. The food convenient. To our souls.

[29 : 08] Lest I be fool. And deny thee. And say who is the Lord. Lest I be poor. And steal. And take the name of my God. And vain. You see. This is what men do. When they think they have more knowledge.

Than God. They say who is the Lord. As Paul wrote to the Romans. You know. It says. Chapter 1. Verse 22. Professing themselves to be wise. They became fools.

And changed the glory. Of the uncorruptible God. Into an image. Made like the corruptible man. And wasn't that. What we were talking about this morning. How the stupidity. And vacuous nature.

Of some of the comments you get. When celebrities die. As though they're in some kind of. Supposed heaven. Where they're just. Carrying on. Doing the same stuff. As they did down here.

As though they're in heaven at all. Now maybe some are. If they trusted in Christ. Before they left this world. Many I suspect. Are not. Professing themselves.

[30 : 04] To be wise. They became fools. And changed the glory. Of the uncorruptible God. Into an image. Made like. To corruptible man. We recreate it.

What we wanted to call God. What we wanted to call heaven. And we just forget about hell. In our own image. As though we ourselves. Were what was to be projected.

Into the afterlife. Heaven is all about God. Hell is all about the absence of God. Earth is where we have the opportunity.

To choose. Where we have the time. The brief few years. To receive God's truth. To close in with Christ.

Now if we end up leaving this life. Never having known anything of Christ. Yes it will be a lost eternity. It will be slightly less bad. Than for those who knew. About Christ.

[30 : 59] But rejected him. But. A lost eternity. Is a lost eternity. You know. Sometimes when you're in the midst of misery. And suffering. And so on. It might be comfort to be told. Well you know.

It's an awful lot worse off than you are. And that may be true. But you're still suffering. Whatever it is you're suffering. A lost eternity. In a place without God.

Out of darkness. However we describe it. Whatever the flames. Or whatever the suffering. Or the torment will be. We cannot imagine. A place without God. Because we've never lived in one.

This world is not hell. This world is one where God is at work. Where his people live and dwell. Where they breathe. Where they talk.

Where they intermingle with others. And even if those others hate them. And even if they seek to destroy them. As is happening in many parts of the world. Even if they seek to slaughter them. And martyr them.

[31 : 53] Yet they are there. As a witness. God is seen to be at work. In every individual Christian. In every church that gathers. The Lord is staying. My presence is here.

And his mercy is at work in the world. And such kindness and goodness. As is to be found in the world. Or traces its origin. Back to the spring.

Of God's mercy and love. We have never known. A place without God. We have never known a world. In which God was not at least somewhat.

At work. Some places. And some times in world history. Have been much much darker than others. But that darkness. Is usually in direct correlation.

To the extent to which the living God. Is worshipped and acknowledged. Or rejected. And banished. We have never known. A place without God.

[32 : 52] But if we depart this life. Without him. Then that is all that we shall know. Forever and ever afterwards. The two things have I required of thee.

Deny me them not. Before I die. That is the cut off Bible. We don't know when that is. We don't know when that day is going to come. We don't know when that hour is going to appear.

The urgency is for now. Now it's. You don't have to take the Bible home with you. Is it right? Going to read the whole lot now tonight. Because that's what he was talking about. No. You take a portion. Convenient to your soul.

You take a small amount. You read it. You think on it. You digest it. You pray over it. And then in the morning. You read another bit. Maybe you take maybe an Old Testament at one end.

And a New Testament at the other time. You take maybe a chapter. If the chapter is too long. Take a portion of the chapter. But the important thing is to keep reading. Keep reading. Keep praying about it.

[33 : 49] Keep asking the Lord to open it to you. Not all portions of scripture are equally easy to understand. Some are very difficult. Some we think. What are all these listenings for?

What was that all about? What was that particular plot on for? I don't know why God wanted that in his work. Think about it. Ask him to open it to you. Ask him to show you some other portion of scripture that speaks more clearly.

Where the same principle can be seen to be at work. Because nothing is wasted with God. Nothing is for nothing. Vanity is not something God does.

Emptiness. Vacuous works. He doesn't have any of those. Lies. He does not know how to do. If we can say that readily. You see.

There's some. I was reading this morning. In a certain book about a woman who was a believer. And somebody said to her. You know. Supposing it wasn't. Supposing it wasn't true.

[34 : 45] What you're reading in God's word. Supposing your soul wouldn't be saved. At the end of the day. And she is reputed to have said. If I end up lost.

Then I only lose my soul. God stands to lose so much more. Because he will have denied himself. He will have denied the truth of his own written and revealed work.

He will have denied his own promises. Effectively he would cease to be God. And he is not going to do that. Yes. I may lose my life.

My soul. My spirit. But God would have lost so much more. He cannot deny himself. He cannot be untruthful.

He cannot be less than pure. Every word of God is pure. And when we are. If we are the children of God.

[35 : 42] We know when he speaks. It's just like if you were to hear. See in a tape recording or something. You hear. Oh that's my mother's voice. So. And that's my father. And you recognize. And then you hear somebody else speaking.

And they want to say. Well. Is that voice different? Yeah. Yeah. The voice is different. Explain how it's different. Now that's not so easy is it? I mean you could tell how. Say somebody had a glass region accent.

As opposed to a Lewis or Harris accent. You maybe could tell somebody. Somebody had a French accent. When they're speaking English. Or an English accent. Or whatever. But if somebody was say. Two people from the same area. I say.

Well I recognize. That's so and so's voice. I recognize it. I say. And that's somebody else's voice. I recognize it. They're quite different. And you say. Well. How are they different? How are the words after different? What's the difference in the sound?

And you would know. But you just can't explain it. And when the Lord speaks into your heart. When the Lord works in your heart.

[36 : 36] You know that something is different. You know that the words you're reading now. They're coming alive. But you can't put into words. How it is different.

It's like hearing the voice of your mother. And your father on the one hand. And the voice of a stranger. Or a neighbor on the other. You know there's a difference in those voices. It's not about what they're saying. It's just that you know who this is coming from.

But you can't explain how the voice is different. You can't explain why the words that you're reading now. They're coming alive. And they're speaking to you. In a way that maybe they weren't before.

You can't put that into words. But you know that it is happening. You know that it is true. There is no vanity with the Lord. There's no emptiness.

There are no lies with the Lord. Every word of God is pure. He is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. And are not unto his words.

[37 : 32] Lest he reprove thee. And thou be found alive. In other words what God does. Is sufficient. How is it? That that which is of God.

It's good for one person. And it's bad for another. The way of God's love. It's as much a mystery as human love. You know we say there's no accounting for taste.

You know what draws two people together in love. And makes this person want that one. And that one want this one. And somebody else will say. I don't know what you see in them. That may be fine people.

No thanks. Oh I'm in love with this person. And they will say. Oh whatever you like. But you know it's not for me. You know as it says. We read. The three things which are too wonderful for me. Four which I know not.

The way of an eagle in the air. The way of a serpent upon a rock. The way of a ship in the midst of the sea. And the way of a man will be made. The way of love in the world.

[38 : 26] We can't explain it. We can't put our knowledge to it. Say oh yeah we've sorted it up and all that. We understand it perfectly. The way of love you cannot explain or understand.

How much less than the way of love of God. When he reveals himself to people. We are unto God. Paul writes to the Corinthians. A sweet saviour of Christ.

In them that are saved. And in them that perish. To the one we are a saviour of death unto death. And to the other a saviour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things.

For we are not as many which corrupt the word of God. But as of sincerity. As of God. In the sight of God speak we in Christ. You see what he's saying there. The way of love of the love of God.

We can't understand why some people accept Christ. And some people reject. It's the way of love. What makes one person. That somebody would just die for love of. And others think okay well.

[39 : 21] That's what you like. But no thanks. They're not for me. I have somebody else. The way of love we cannot explain. And the way of the love of God. Is beyond us in a sense.

But it is all bound up with the word of God. Because he goes on to say. A saviour of death unto death of one. Life unto life of the other. Who is sufficient for these things. We are not as many which corrupt the word of God.

But as of sincerity. As of God. In the sight of God. Speak we in Christ. You see how the love of God. The word of God. The calling of God. The witness of God.

In creation. And providence. And his written word. And his coming in the flesh. It all fits together perfectly. It is that which the blinds.

Scrabbling. After man's knowledge. Man's understanding of the universe. Of science. Of earth. Of the sea. Of the stars. You know. You can spend umpteen lifetimes. And you'll never exhaust it.

[40 : 19] I can paddle out into the middle of the Mediterranean. And my feet will no longer touch the bottom. I can suck up all the ocean. I'd be dead before I'd exhausted it. You could take however many.

Six or seven billion people that are in the world. You could stand them. One on top of the other. You could fill the Mediterranean. With all the people in the world. And they could all drown in it. Because it's too much.

For them all to exhaust. So likewise with the things of God. It's shallow enough. At the edge. For a child to paddle in. And to know. They've got their feet wet.

They've understood. The mercy. The love of God. It's so deep. That all the human intellect. Of the world. Cannot exhaust it. Such is the love.

And mercy of God. It is all bound up. With the word of God. It's not just. This is what is written. That is what God does. It all fits together. Jesus is the word.

[41 : 14] Made flesh. That dwelt among us. And we beheld his glory. Glorious and the only begotten. Of the father. Full of grace. And truth. Truth. Every word of God.

Is pure. He is a shield to them. That put their trust in him. Add thou not to his words. Lest ye approve thee. And thou be found a liar. Sometimes his word is hard.

It is difficult. Sometimes it pierces us. Like a thorn. Paul wrote about that again. Later on to the Corinthians. Lest I should be exalted above measure. Through the abundance of the revelations.

There was given to me a thorn in the flesh. To messenger of Satan. To buffet me. Lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice. That it might depart from me. And he said unto me.

My grace is sufficient for thee. For my strength is made perfect in weakness. Now if you are conscious of your weakness tonight.

[42 : 15] If you recognize that you have not plumbed depths of knowledge. I neither learn wisdom. Nor have the knowledge of the holy. Who is ascended into heaven. Or who is descended.

Who has gathered the wind in his fists. Who has bound the waters in a garment. Who has established all the ends of the earth. What is his name? What is his son's name? If I can still. His name is the Lord.

Lord. I am that I am. And his son's name is Jesus. It boils down to that which was always there at the outset.

You can travel the world. You can exhaust the decades the Lord gives you. And it will come back again. To that which was already for many of us. There at our mother's knee.

There in the fireside of the home. There with the Bible on the shelf. There in a family worship. All the doing of books. That we turned our backs on perhaps. Because we were bigger than that.

[43 : 13] We were more sophisticated than that. We wanted to go out and find what was there in the world. And when you found it all. Or a portion of it. It will never be enough.

It will never satisfy. It will bring its share of thorns. And suffering and thistles along the way. But my grace is sufficient for thee. Says the Lord.

Who is sufficient for these things? Says Paul. We are not as those who corrupt the word of God. But rather his grace is sufficient. And all of his providence. All of our sufferings.

All of our joys. They are all that which the Lord uses. And unites in this one thing. Psalm 12. Which are the words of God.

Our words most pure. They be like silver tried. And earth and furnace seven times. That hath been purified. Every word of God is pure. You can trust God's word.

[44 : 09] You can trust what it says about Jesus. You can trust what it says about the Old Testament. You can trust what it says about the way of salvation. You can trust. That his grace is sufficient.

Even for you and for me. You can travel the world. You can investigate all the manner of the making of many books. Of which there is no end. And it will always come back to this simplicity and truth.

Don't add to God's word. Be content with what he has given. And set yourself to read it. To feed upon it. To digest it.

Little by little. Day by day. Neither poverty nor riches. But rather that which is sufficient. For thee. Let us pray.