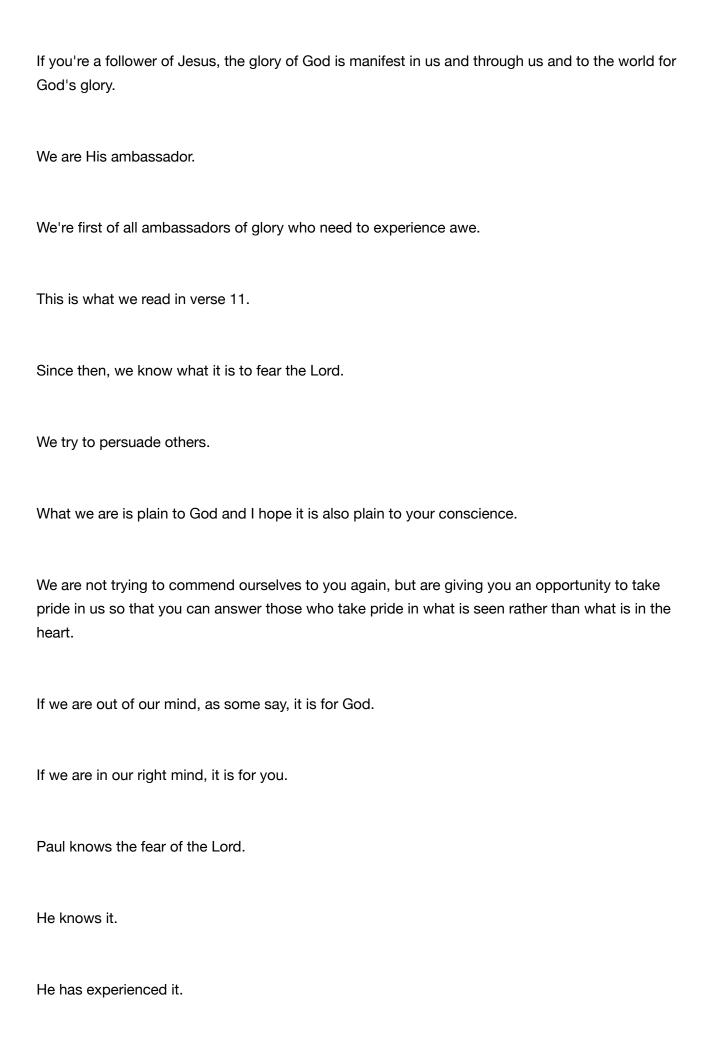
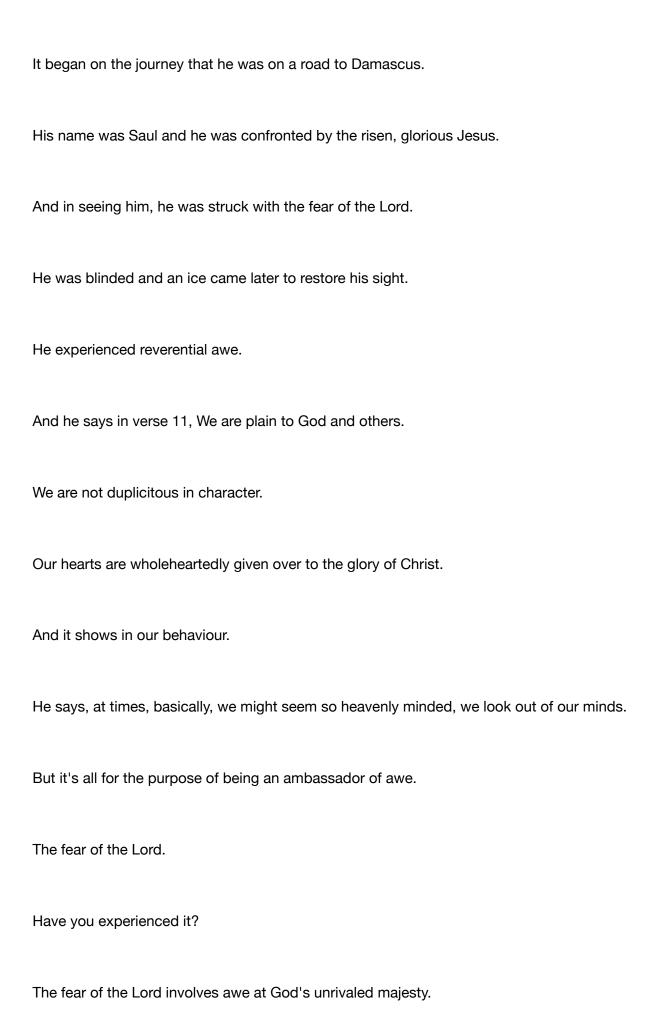
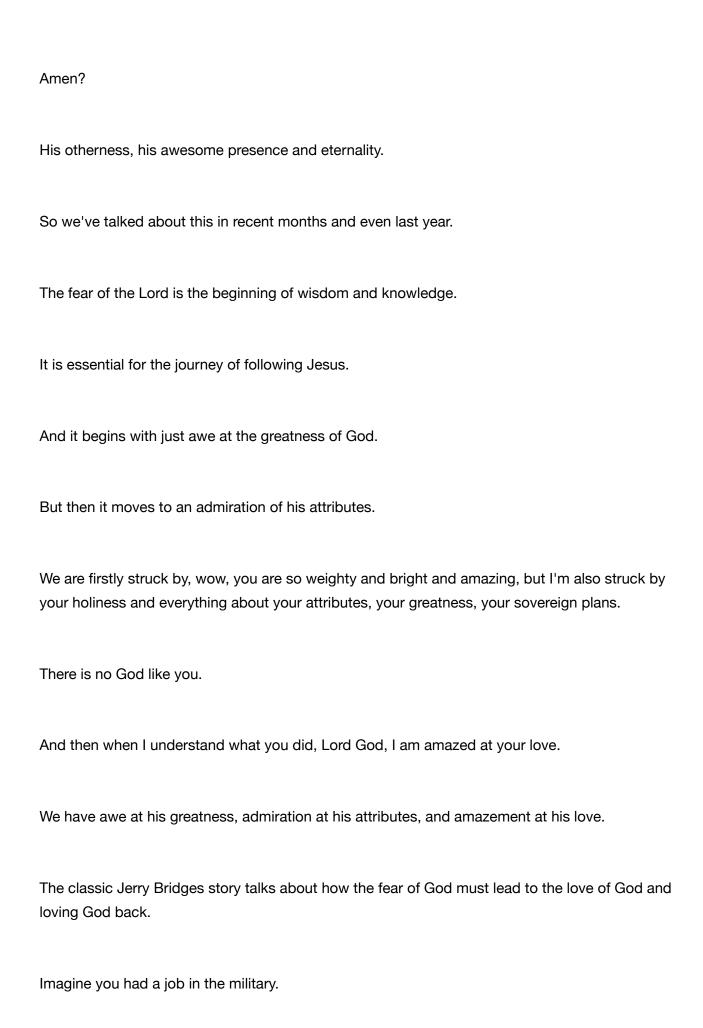


I go through his journey because we all have a journey as an ambassador. That was Kevin Rudd's journey, or some of it, but Paul says that if you are a follower of Jesus Christ, like so many of us in this room, you are his ambassador, and that is a privilege, amen? We are ambassadors of Christ of glory, his glory. We bring something of the kingdom of the heavens wherever we go, so that people understand who we represent. So this morning, we are going to look at what Paul says about the ambassador's journey. As I said before, if we are followers of Jesus, we are ambassadors, and we are ambassadors of glory. We are on a journey from awe to love to transformation to mission. From awe to love to transformation to mission. 2 Corinthians is Paul's great letter about glory. He unpacks the glory of God from all sorts of different angles. We've seen in the series that glory in the Old Testament was a word that represented weightiness. It was God's weight, his grandeur. And in the New Testament, the word for glory means more brightness.

So we have this idea from Scripture, Old and New Testaments, that God is incredibly weighty in his grandeur and so bright, so holy.
Paul says in 2 Corinthians a whole lot about glory, and so he says that Christians reflect the glory of God to the world.
In fact, it says that when it's happening the way it should be, his glory is perfectly reflected in us.
The Scripture says in 2 Corinthians, we are being changed from glory to glory in the image of Christ.
Paul says our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.
He says, light has shone in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory in the face of Christ.
So many quotes about glory.
Does anyone get a little bit bamboozled by them?
They're wonderful, but it's sometimes hard to get your head around exactly what it means.
I think we could summarize it to say it's wonderful.
Amen?





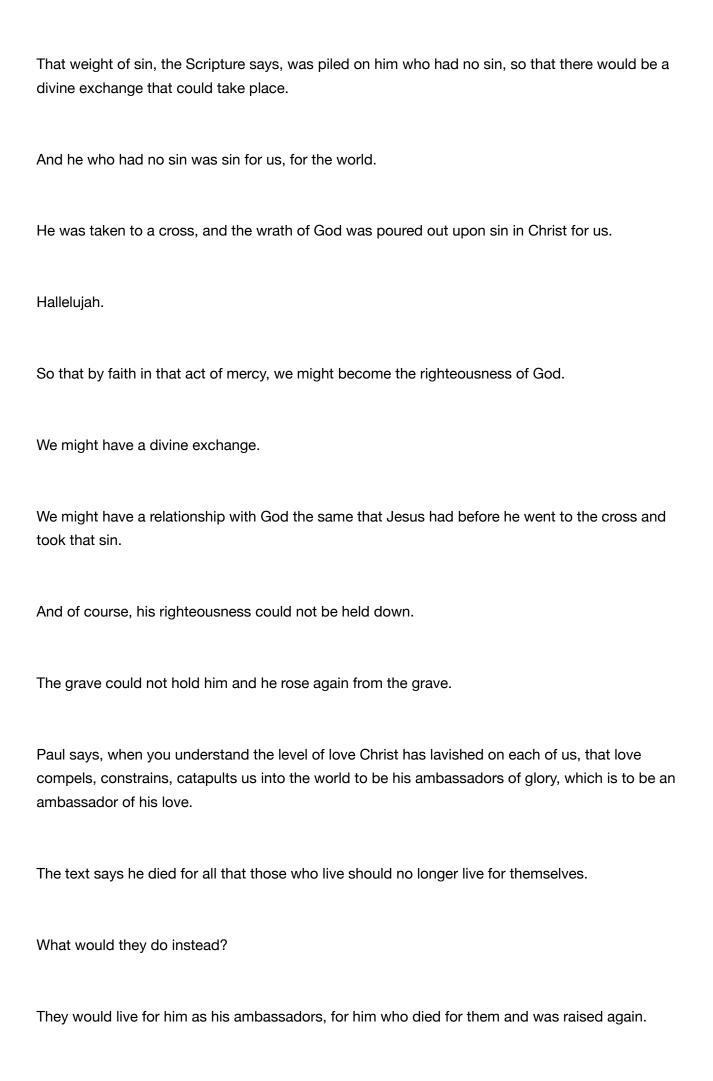


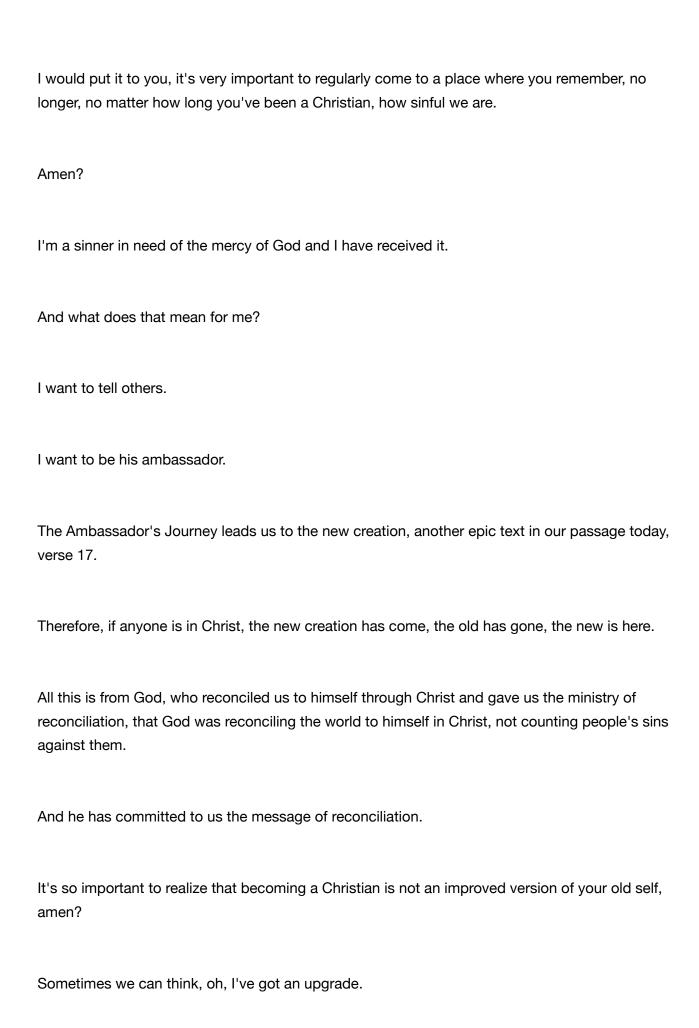
You were a private, a first assistant to the general.
And when you were up close, you saw how extraordinary the power and authority was of this man.
So you're working for the general in the army, and you're just struck by his power.
You're in awe.
But as you start to get to know his character, you're drawn to admiration.
This man is not just powerful.
He has an amazing and godly character.
But it's not until, in this illustration from Jerry Bridges, it's not until the private is in the heat of battle, and he happens to be in a jeep with that same general, and they come under fire, and the vehicle is turned over, and the private, his life is at risk, and the general risks his life to save the young private.
Suddenly the young private not only sees his greatness and his attributes, but he's struck by what?
His love, his love.
And this is the fear of the Lord Paul speaks of knowing he is in awe of God's unrivaled majesty.
He has admiration for his marvelous attributes, and he has appreciation of God's matchless love.

And as he shares these aspects of his revelation of God, he is an ambassador of glory, pointing others to acknowledge the same awe that he has experienced.
Do you follow?
When we experience the fear of God in its fullness, we can then take that and we're meant to share that with others.
So let me ask you, do you point people to the glory of God through your life example of living in the fear of the Lord?
Are you an ambassador of his glory from how you live?
The ambassador's journey takes us via awe and then into a deep revelation of Christ's love.
This passage is just so wonderful, isn't it?
Verse 14.
For Christ's love compels us because we are convinced that one died for all and therefore all died.
And he died for all that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but for him who died for them and was raised again.
So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view that we once regarded Christ in this way.

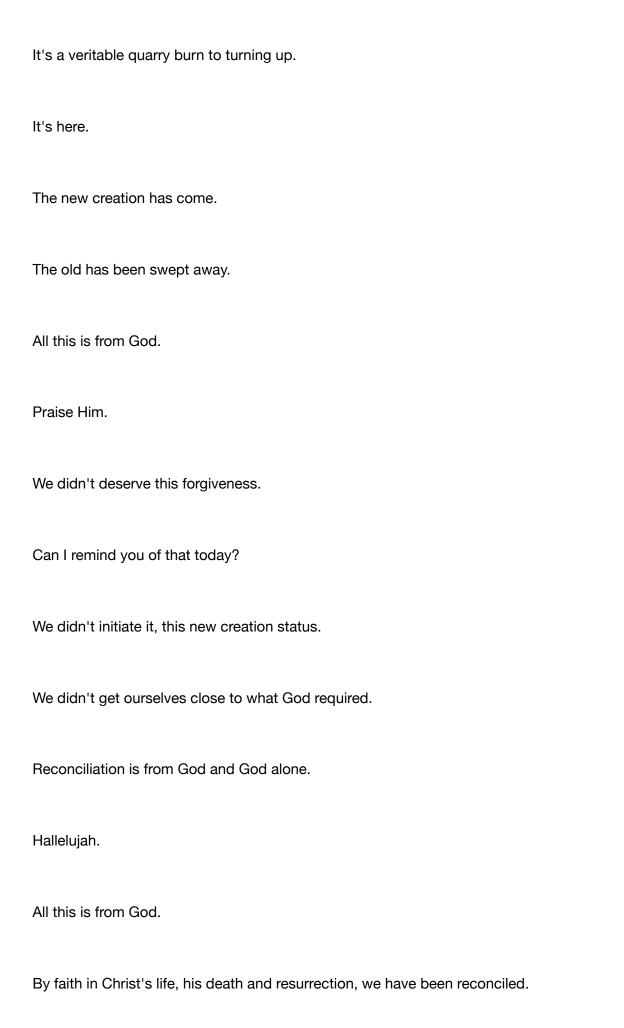
And of course, the Pharisees find this a bit disturbing because they know that this is not a woman that a rabbi should know or have anything to do with.
And it seems like Jesus doesn't really mind.
And so Jesus tells a story in Luke 7.
And it's a story about debt.
And he tells a parable that explains basically, if you've been forgiven much, you'll love much.
But if you've not been forgiven much, you don't have a revelation of what has been done for you, you won't love much either.
He says, I tell you, her many sins, this woman's sins have been forgiven as her great love has shown.
But whoever has been forgiven little loves little.
Do you know how much you are loved by God this morning?
Do you know how much, how far he has gone to show you his love in Jesus?
Paul says, we are convinced that one died for all.
Isn't that a beautiful statement?
Anybody?

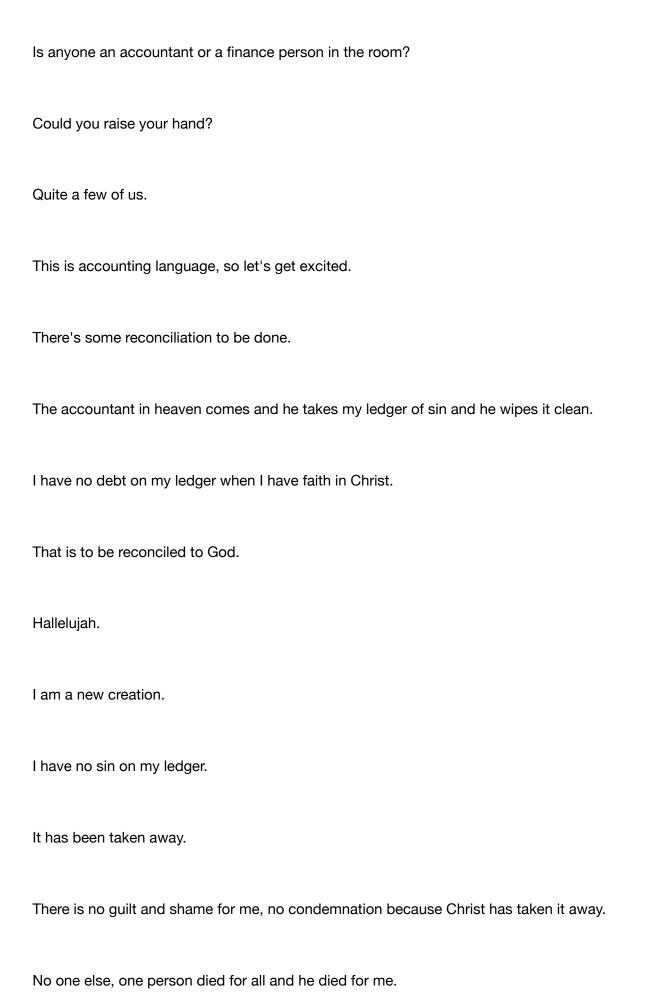
One died for all.
This is the great exchange, the divine exchange of the Gospel, that instead of all of humanity being judged for their sin, one representative from God, the Son of God, perfect, in every way, went to that cross.
And he who knew no sin, as Paul writes in the end of chapter 5, verse 21, became sin for us, that in him we might, all who put faith in Christ may become the righteousness of God.
What an extraordinary idea.
How long has it been since you've thought about what this means?
One died for all.
The sin of the world, that rolls off the tongue, doesn't it?
The sin of the world was poured on him, that the wrath of God might be unleashed on that sin.
That's that incredible, terrible disobedience that Adam and Eve did.
And then the murder that their son Cain did to his brother Abel.
It's every despicable act of abuse, of violence, of injustice, every massacre that has ever happened on this earth, every thought that is evil, every lie, every expression of sin.
That's weighty, isn't it?

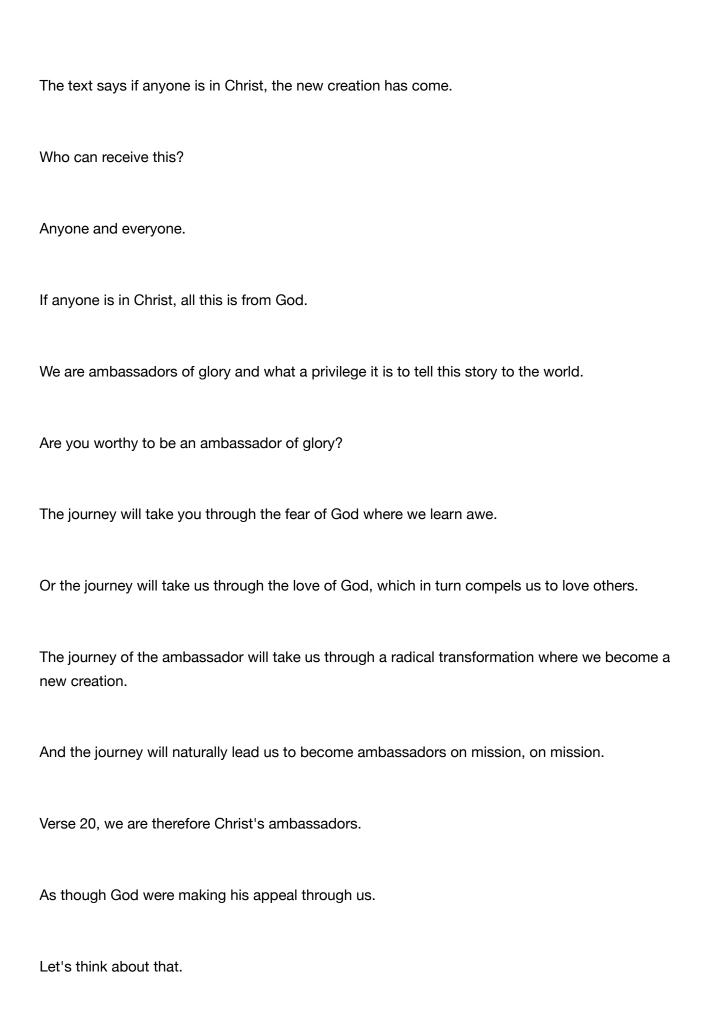


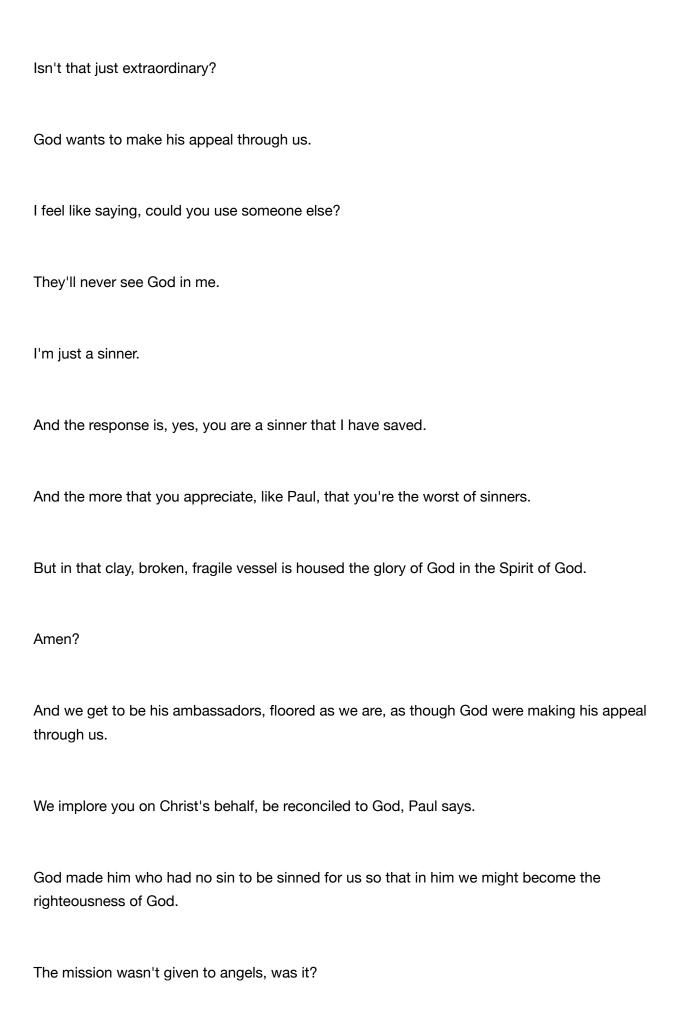


What upgrade did you get?
I've become a Christian.
They bolted something onto me.
It was called a life upgrade.
I'm now going to heaven.
I've got this ticket.
It's a golden ticket.
I basically feel like the old version of me, but apparently I've got a bolted on addition.
It's this upgrade.
That's not the language that Paul uses.
Praise God.
He says, you are a new creation in the Greek.
The new creation has burst in.

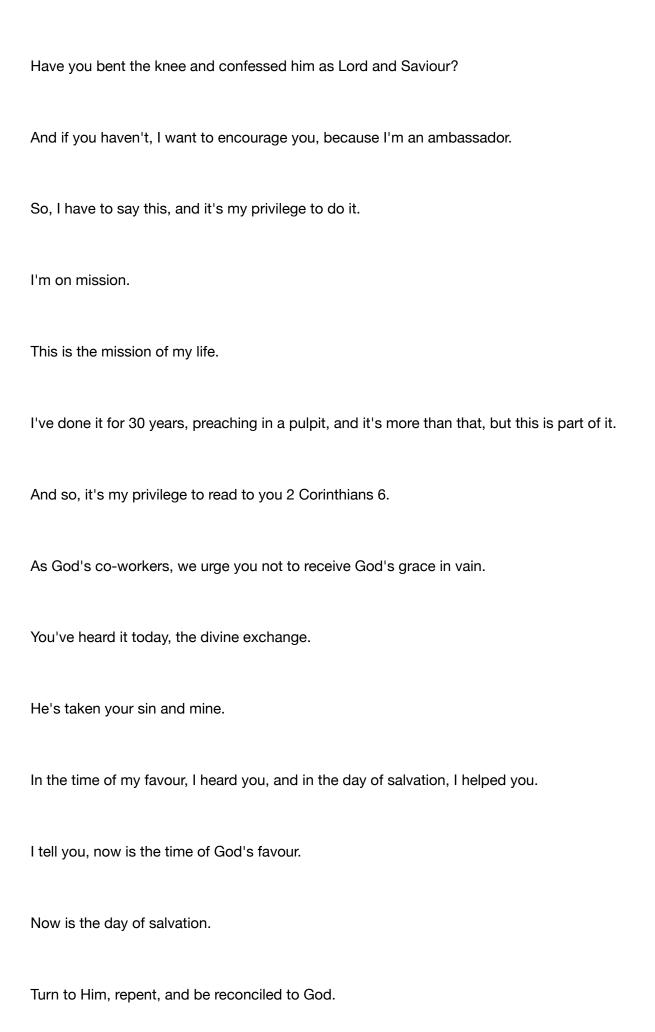


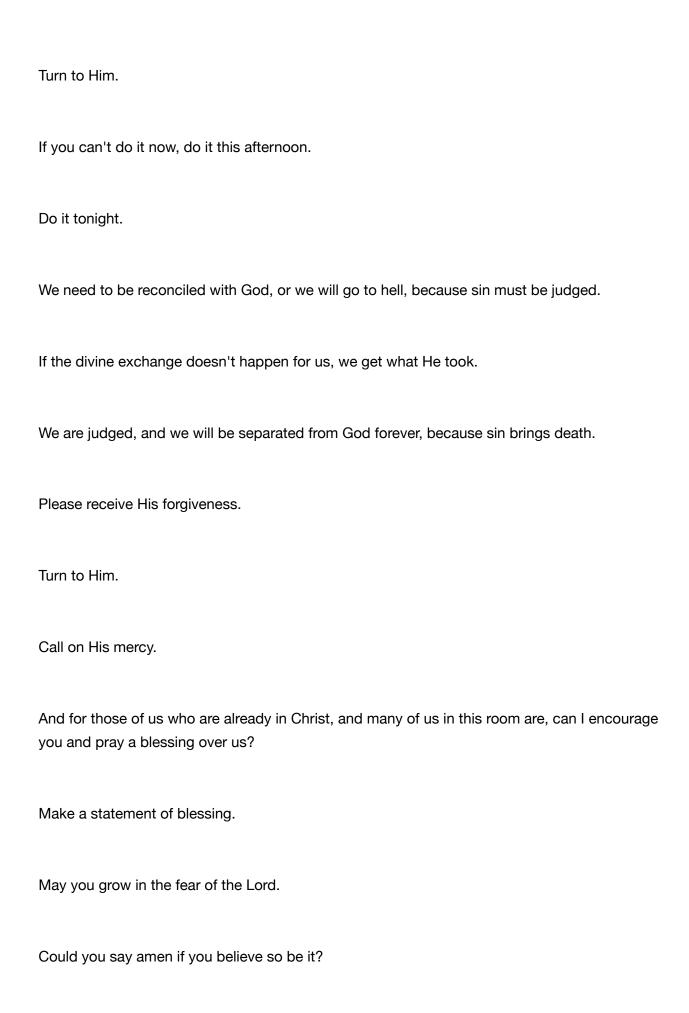












May we grow in the fear of the Lord.
May we grow in our understanding of Christ's love for us, and let it compel us to love in His name.
May we grow in our wonder and freedom of being, new creations.
And may we grow in our capacity for mission, the mission of Christ that He has decided to carry out in and through us.
Are we doing it the way we would dream of doing it?
That's a genuine question.
What a privilege, friends.
It is that we have been transformed into new creations, set free from sin.
And with that message, we are charged to go and tell the world.
Represent him for all to see.
Lord God, we thank you for the blessing of the gospel, the power of the gospel, the mind-blowing love of Christ who died in our place, that we might be the righteousness of God, we might be ambassadors, that we might set up embassies, local churches, expressions of community, where Christ is Lord and may it happen all over the world.
Lord, for some of us, we have been stuck in guilt.

We didn't talk about it, but in 2 Corinthians, Lord, we know you say, through Paul, that we are not unaware of the devil's schemes, that he masquerades as an angel of light and he brings deception.
And yet, you also say in 2 Corinthians, Lord God, through your spirit prompting Paul, that we have weapons that can pull down the powers and take captive every thought and make it obedient to Christ.
We know, for many of us, we're in a battle.
We suffer from habitual, powerful bondage to sin.
But you have done enough to break us free.
And I pray, Lord God, that you might empower us to step out of the darkness and into the light, your glorious light, the freedom of the saints.
In Jesus' name.
Amen