

# God Controls It All

## By Steve Farrar

All right, how many of you guys were here last night, I see your hands. All right. Well, we talked about last night, if you weren't here, we talked about the central question of life is why do you exist? Why are you alive? Why are you on the face of the earth? Why why are you walking the Earth now? Why would you why were you not walking the Earth 300 years ago? Why would you not be walking the Earth 300 years from now?

We went to someone one thirty nine because I'm someone thirty nine. Verse 13. David begins to answer the question, why am I alive? Why do I exist? Why am I here? What is my purpose? And there is a purpose. You are not here by chance. You are not here by the Darwinian hypothesis coming to fruition, which is time and chance. And that equals nonsense. You were here. By some amazing things, and last night we talked about the fact and we'll just do a little we'll just do a little review here real quick.

And again, this is all out of on thirty nine because it's almost one thirty nine. He talks about the fact that God put him together in his mother's womb. He says, I'm fearfully and wonderfully made. God crafted him. God formed him. If you're good at math, it's because God made you good at math. If you're good with people, it's because God made you good at people. If you're good with your hands, if you're a craftsman, it's because God gave you that gift and the purpose that God has for your life in some way, shape or form.

Those gifts that He has given you will contribute to your purpose and he'll reveal that to you at some point. There are chapters in our lives. We're on a trail. We are we are moving down a destination. Jesus spoke of two trails. Jesus said Broad is the road that leads to destruction, but narrow is the gate that leads to life. Most people are on the wrong trail, going the wrong direction. They're headed for destruction, she said. There was the gate that leads to life if you are those who find it.

We talked about the fact that God put you together and he formed you and you fashioned you in your mother's womb, and we ask the question, if your father had not have married your mother, would you be here? And the answer to that question is, no, you wouldn't be here, would you? I threw this out to you, if your dad had married that cheerleader that he had a crush on before he met your mom, and once again, you don't know anything about this, but ask him about it sometime. There's probably some doubt your dad was interested in before he met your mom. But he didn't marry the cheerleader, did he? He married your mom. That's why you're here. If he hadn't married cheerleader, you wouldn't be here because for you to get here, it took a specific sperm and it took a specific egg and the cheerleader didn't have it. Your mom had it, right? I mean, biology majors here. Am I wrong? I'm right.

But you see, God is sovereign over everything. So. So your dad met your mom. That's why you're here. But you see, let's talk about grandpa. What if grandpa had met grandma? What if Grandpa had married that girl from that other farm but he didn't marry the girl from the farm, he married grandma, and then they had your dad and then your dad met your mom and then they got married. Here you are, you see.

Now, what I didn't say last night is and I had someone ask me a great question, Hannah asked me two great questions last night and afterwards one of the things Hannah asked me, something I usually cover, but I didn't cover last night. She said, what happens if someone's illegitimate? I've had guys come up to me and say, Steve, my mom and dad weren't married. I'm illegitimate. And my question to you is legitimate: Does God say you're illegitimate. No, you won't find it in the Bible. What you're telling me is your mom and dad weren't married. Yeah, well, you're telling me is your mom and dad had sexual intercourse and they weren't married, which is sin. Yeah, that's evil. Yeah.

You know, the great thing about God, God is the God who brings good out of evil. And you're the good he brought out of the evil. It's good to know, isn't it? So you got sovereign over everything. He saw over your history, you know what, some of you have ancestors who were slaves - now you immediately think African-Americans. Because that's all often African-Americans got to America. If if you're if you're not African-American, your family members, your ancestors came here by choice. African-Americans were brought here without a choice. But it's just not African-Americans who have slavery in their background, because if you study history, you'll find out most people in this room if you studied your family history, most of us have slavery in our background. Because they were the Gall's. There were the slobs, there were the Saxon's, there were the Normans, if you study history, when Jesus walked the face of the Earth, two thirds of the world were slaves.

Slavery is almost in everybody's backgrounds it here, but God is sovereign over your background, and we asked last night, have you ever thought about what it took to get you here, that for thousands of years God has been overseeing your family background for thousands of years, your family chain, your family tree. God has been overseeing. Man, woman, man. Woman, man, woman. That's wild. And if just one man had missed one woman just once, you wouldn't be here, but you're here. If just one sperm had missed the right egg just once, you wouldn't be here. But you're here. That's an amazing thing.

We ended at someone thirty nine, if you have your Bible, I'd like you to Germany back to Solomon thirty nine. We talked about the fact that it says in someone thirty nine, he makes a statement that thine eyes have seen my unformed substance. God put you together. But someone thirty nine goes on and makes a remarkable statement, and what someone 39 says, and I'm referring to, let me find the verse, what I'm referring to, his verse 16. Your eyes have seen my unformed substance.

I told the story last night about - not a story, it's a fact about the picture on the cover of James Dobson's Focus on the Family newsletter a few years ago. Twenty four week unborn child has spinal problems. They're going to go in and operate on a twenty four week old unborn child, which is an amazing thing. Hospitals are crazy, aren't they, because on one floor, they're saving the life of a twenty four week unborn child on another floor, they're taking their life.

That's the nonsense that we live in, in this culture. This culture has lost its mind. They've lost all wisdom, you know why they've lost wisdom, because the fear of the Lord is the beginning of

wisdom. And when you lose the fear, the Lord, you lose wisdom. When you lose the fear of the Lord, you lose knowledge, don't you?

God owned science, God run science, Copernicus, the great, great scientist, had a friend who was an atheist and they would converse and they would have tea. And one of the things Copernicus was doing was that in his atrium, he was building a model of the solar system and it had never been done before like that. And he was actually hanging stuff, you know, on the planets and all this. And it took him a year and a half to put it together. One day he had his atheist friend over and they were having tea and he said, I want to show you something. He walked him into the atrium and you open the doors. And the man looked at this incredible model of the solar system and he was stunned. He almost couldn't speak. Finally, he looked at Copernicus and he said, who made this prediction? Said, No one made it. It just happened [audience laughter]. That's nonsense.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge when you lose the fear of the Lord, you lose knowledge. Don't you see? We know that that's life in the womb. We know it, but we deny it. Why suppressing the truth and unrighteousness, that's what we do, Romans one. Fact of the matter is, that's a baby, that's a baby, and what happened was this baby there doing surgery on the twenty four week old unborn child.

And as they're going in to do surgery on the twenty four week on unborn child, a tiny, perfect little human hand reaches out and grabs the physician's pinky finger out of the womb. And a nurse had the presence of mind to go get a camera and get the shot. That is amazing and Denise

have seen my unformed substance in twenty four weeks, a baby is formed. When David says that I have seen my unformed substance, he's talking prior to twenty four weeks because at twenty four weeks in your mother's womb you were formed, the eyes have seen my unformed substance.

What he's talking about is conception. He's talking about sperm, egg. What did God say to Jeremiah? He said, before I formed you, I knew you. God knew you before you were born. That is wild. He goes on here, it's on one thirty nine, and he says that I have seen my unformed substance and in my book they were all written the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was not one of them. That is a staggering statement. See, that's why you're here. God knew you before you were born, God willed that you would be here.

Before the foundation of the world, God determined - I want you to catch this - before the foundation of the world, God determined the moment of your conception. He sovereignly put your parents together. Married or unmarried, he was over that, - you say, well Steve, that's sin - I know, but he's bigger than sin. He uses for his purposes, he doesn't cause sin, but he's sovereign. What about the devil? The devil is God's devil. He's getting him on a leash. He's got him on a chain, his jumping pit bull that's got false teeth.

You guys getting this? God is big. God is in charge, God runs everything, he is the sovereign God. Before the foundation of the world, you want to know why you're here tonight, before the foundation of the world, God determine the moment of your conception, before the foundation of the world. God determine the moment of your birth. God has already determined the moment of your death. Did you know that Hebrew says it is appointed for a man once to die?

And then comes judgment. The moment of your death has already been set by Almighty God. Now, how else can I encourage you? But that ought to encourage you, because as I said last night, I quoted George Whitfield, the great preacher in England, of the Great Awakening, he would preach out in the fields to coal miners. So you guys studied you studied the Great Awakening in England with Wesley and Whitfield. And the Church of England wouldn't let him preach in the churches because he preach the gospel.

So he went out in open air in the fields and he would preach to the coal miners coming out of the coal mines. And you'd have these white guys. This faces were black with soot from the coal. And as he was preaching in his journals, Whitfield will say the authority came down. The sovereignty came down, the anointing came down. And the reason he knew it was coming down, he could see streaks of white on the coal miners faces through the coal dust on their face.

He speak to 30 or 40 thousand without amplification. It's amazing stuff. You see amazing stuff. And in my book, they are all written the days that were a danger for me when as yet there was not one of them. So when their mobs would beat George Whitfield because they were paid and they they got them drunk to go beat him so he wouldn't preach the gospel and they would beat his face to a pulp and he'd get back up and preach.

They couldn't believe his courage, but would be able to say this I cannot die until my work is done. He knew they couldn't kill him until his appointed time came, you know what? You can't die until you finish the work that God has for you on the face of the earth. No one else can do the

work that God has called you to do. Steve, I don't I don't know what the work is. I know you don't. You don't know yet. That's where he wants you to he wants us at this point to trust him and to walk with him as he sometimes, like, makes sense. But a lot of times you're going to go through life. Let's not talk about the chapters of life because he's in this behind.

And for every one of you, if you ever read a biography, every biography breaks up in the chapters. If you look on your back trail, if you look everything that's happened to you up till now and in this point in your life, if you look over your life up to now, your life breaks up in the chapters just like a biography. Doesn't you can I know you're thinking about the chapters right now, they are clearly marked the chapters of your life, those chapters that are so clear, God has chapters just that clear that he's already written that are ahead of you that you can't see.

And as you walk with him down that trail and as you walk with Jesus every day and give your life to him all over again and don't screw around with sin. And don't choose wrong friends and don't violate the scriptures. Just walk with it, just love him just following him, since, you know, I don't know how to love him. Oh, you know what? You're just getting to know him. Just keep hanging around him, tell him your heart.

We'll see. I don't pray four hours a day who does? I don't. Well, you know, we bring those people, God bless them, I'm all for them, but most of us don't pray four hours a day. That's a that's a calling. That's a gift. Most of us are just going to walk with the Lord, you say. So as you walk with him, you talk with him and you say, Lord, I'm checking in with you, Lord.

You know, you just you know, I'm saying you always got you ever heard of a dedicated fax line? I got a dedicated fax line at my house, that means you send me a fax 24/7, I'll get it, because that line is dedicated. To receive, in fact, what you do in your life, you just pray without saying what you got to dedicate, if that's what you're just talking to him, you know, you're just you're just.

You're on an. He's on Ayim, you guys get what I'm saying? He's walking in, he's letting you know you're just following or wisdom today. This is a Christian life. It's not all these 14 steps to this. The twenty seven steps, this and the six. I can't remember that stuff, can you? I can never get I don't know, I'm going to get this stuff. You love the Lord, your God with all your heart, all your soul. All right, that's what you do during MI six, you guys still there, you guys stay with me, OK? You're very quiet. You can't die until your work is done.

Now we're going to flip to Ephesians 2. Why are we going to Ephesians 2 because Jesus had a conversation with a guy named Nicodemus. And as they had a conversation, Jesus said to Nick, he said, Nick, you got to understand something. You must be born again. And Nick said, well, do I enter into my mother's womb? The second time Jesus said, no, just as you were born physically, just as you have a birthday. Hey, Dakota, what's your birthday? April 1st. What what year? Ninety one. Nineteen ninety two to what? You're 12 years old. OK, how are you doing at twelve. So good. You're good. It's pretty good. I had a good year at twelve. Thirteen wasn't so good for me but twelve was dynamite. So you're twelve years old. You see God determine the moment of your birth. You see he determine that for you man.

And. That's an amazing thing, but God only determines the moment that we're born physically. We all have to be born spiritually, as Jesus told Nick, you remember that? Ephesians two tells - Psalm 139, we were in Psalm 139 last night that tells us how we got here. It tells us how we were born physically. God put us together. Ephesians two tells us how we're born spiritually.

Is said amnesty for reactivations to. You're saying God plan, the moment of conception, the moment of my birth, you're saying God's plan, the moment of my death. Yeah, you're saying God controls everything. That's what I'm saying. What about the bad stuff that happens to me? Because I look at chapters in my life where I've had my heart broken and I've had I've been disappointed and I got some real issues with God because of things that happened in my family.

I thought God was a good God. God is a good God. But you see God solving everything. Then why does all this stuff have. You guys remember Joe? Joe was doing great, things were going great. God was blessing him, God was favoring him, Satan goes to the Lord, he says, hey, the only reason this guy loves you is because you've given all the stuff. Anybody love you. So says you can testing me, only testing this far, so what happens in a matter of minutes he gets all these FedExes that start coming in.

It's almost what happened. And all of a sudden he finds out that he finds out that his slaves were attacked and that they were wiped out and they were killed, and then he finds out that his crops are taken and his camels and, you know, and fire comes from heaven and he gets another FedEx and then he finds out his kids are all eating dinner together and the roof collapsed. And, you

know, because of this storm and all this in about forty five minutes, job, everything he had, he lost.

He was wiped out. Everything was taken from him. You know what Job did? He took his clothes and drove to this. The Lord gives and Satan takes away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. That's not what he said. That's what most of us would say. Wouldn't we? We would say the Lord gives and Satan takes away, Jobe did not say that he lost everything and Jobe said the Lord gives and the what the Lord takes away. That is really interesting.

The old Puritan preacher, Thomas Watson, used to say God often prospers us by impoverishing us. I say it again to you got off and Prosper's us by impoverishing us. What God will do as you go through life, there will be a point in your life and God will take something that's important to you, something that's precious. He'll take it away from you, something you've already had this happen. Some of you divorce has hit your family and it's just broken your heart because it's a never ending death.

I was talking with a student and she was telling me that her dad died when she was a little girl, so when a father dies, you've got closure. But when divorce hits a family, it's a never ending death. It just you never get closure. You have to Malibu, they got the Getty Museum. J Paul Getty at one point was the wealthiest man on the face of the Earth, he had four sons, he spent absolutely no time with his sons.

I recently read the biography of William Randolph Hearst by North San Luis Obispo. Got Hearst Castle. You go in there, the place is unbelievable. The guy had so much stuff, he didn't know he didn't know how much stuff he had. He was looking for a tapestry to put in a new wing at San Simeon and he had buyers all over Europe and they're looking for the certainty that they're looking they're looking five, 10, 15 years. They finally found it. You know where they found it? At his warehouse in Los Angeles. He had a wife, but he also had a mistress. And when his son was eighty two years old and they interviewed his son, his eighty two year old son was still grieving over the loss of intimacy between his father and mother. And the guy is 82 years old. Is that not amazing?

Some of you can relate because you got that pain and you've got that hurt and you say, what are you telling me? I'm telling you got a sovereign over everything in your life, everything. There are no there are no coincidences. There are no accidents, you know, in Vegas right now that some suckers throwing the dice, the gods already appointed. What's going to come up on those dice? Read Proverbs. God is in control of everything you say. Steve, some bad things have happened. Yes, some bad things happen because what God's going to do, God will see God often prospers us by impoverishing us.

You ever heard a testimony like this? Ever heard a guy get up at church and say, you know, this year my company, it's just it's it's growing by 500 percent. We've never made this much money. My wife and I, our relationship has never been this good. We've never had this kind of communication. We've we've never had sex this good in our marriage. He probably wouldn't say that on Sunday morning, but it's been unbelievable. It's been incredible. Our kids are doing great.

Our families. We built a new house and we did. We built a second house at Tahoe and then we built a house in Aspen. It's just unbelievable. I got a new Hummer. My wife's driving a new Mercedes. My daughter is doing great. She's got a 5.3 and a 4.0. She has no complexion issues [audience laughter]. My son just got a scholarship to UCLA. I mean, he just life is so good. We've never had life this good and we've never been closer to Christ than we are right now. Have you ever heard that?

I never heard that. I'll tell you what I've heard. It's been a tough year we've ever had. My wife lost both breasts to cancer. I've got prostate cancer. My business went bankrupt. We had to lose our house. We're living in an apartment. My daughter was going out with the guy, we didn't like this guy, she got pregnant, she had an abortion. It broke our hearts we didn't know about until after the fact. My son's in rehab for the third time, he's a cocaine addict. He was we raised him in Christian schools. He's totally away from the Lord. It's been the toughest, most bitter year we've ever had, but we've never been closer to Christ than we are right now.

Acts 14:22 says through many tribulations, we must enter the kingdom of God. I love that verse where Jesus said, in the world, you will have an easy time. I've got that on my refrigerator. Unfortunately, it's not in the Bible. Jesus in the world, you'll have what? Tribulation. You'll have trouble. Christian life is not an easy life. The Christian life is a hard life. You have these yo yos out there talking about the prosperity theology. They don't know what the heck they're talking about. They need to read their Bibles.

God works through suffering. God works through adversity. But when adversity comes into your life, it has a purpose. We don't suffer randomly, there's a reason we go through hard things, if God's going to take something away, it's because he wants to prosper you. He wants to bring something good into your life. But I'm getting ahead of myself. Let's go to Ephesians two because of Ephesians two tells us how it is that we came to know Christ because you have to be born again.

Ephesians two eight is what I'm referring to. A lot of, you know, this verse in Ephesians two eight. We find out how it is that we come to know Christ and have a spiritual life. Pieces to it says four by grace, you've been saved through faith and that none of yourselves it is the gift of God, not as a result of works that any man should boast. Let's just stop there for a minute. One of my favorite theologians is Yogi Berra. He's one of the great intellects of American history. Yogi Berra was a catcher for the Yankees for a number of years, a great baseball player, very unique guy. I have a friend named Craig Reynolds, used to play for the Astros and he he played for Yogi Berra.

Yogi has a way of saying things that nobody else in the world can say. I'm like that. Yogi says the obvious in a very unique way. Yogi is a guy who said it ain't over till it's over. Well, I knew that I just never thought about Yogi's, the guy who said if there's a fork in the road, take it. You know, as Yogi Berra said one time, Yogi Berra said, you can see a lot by looking. Now, that's true. That's very true.

Some of you know Dr. Howard Hendricks, you've heard him. Great man of God, great communicator he is. He teaches a course at Dallas Seminary called Inductive Bible Study Methods. This is the second year he's been teaching that class. Dr. Hendricks will assign you a to eight in his class. He's going to teach you how to study the Bible. And one of the principles of studying the Bible is observation. You know this because you have a Bible, a teacher to study the Bible here. You have three hours of Bible here. It's a great thing.

Now, one of the things that you see a lot of people, friends, says, hey, I get to miss my class. I'm sorry, could you sub for me? Yeah, OK, well, sure, I'll step in. What do you what's the verse. What do you teach in Ephesians two. So what you do is you read Ephesians two, then you will get a commentary. You don't do that. If you're going to change visions to invite you to read Ephesians two and then. Read it again. And then read it again. And then read it again and then read it again. Because you could see a lot by looking to look at the text, my grandma died at one hundred and one. I remember she's about ninety six I was talking to one day and she said, Steve, I read something in my Bible this morning I have never seen before.

She'd been reading that thing for eighty five years. So you can never plumb the depths of God's word, you can see a lot by looking. There's a phrase in Ephesians two. I want you guys to follow me here for a minute, because this has to do with your purpose in life. OK, the phrase in Ephesians to eight is and that not of yourself.

My question is, what does that refer to that knot of yourselves? Let's observe the text. You're with me. Let's break it down for by grace four by grace, is Grace a gift of God or is Grace

something that's of ourselves? That's real simple. Grace is not of ourselves, so we've eliminated Grace, not being of ourselves, then, says four, by grace, you've been what saved to save our souls by good works, by giving blood to the Red Cross and doing all that stuff.

No, that can't be done. We don't like candles to be saved. We don't do all this stuff. We don't pray to the Virgin Mary. We're saved by the substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ. When he went to the cross and paid for your sins and paid for my sins. Salvation is not of ourselves. It's of Christ. So we eliminated Grace being of ourselves. We've eliminated salvation of ourselves for grace. You've been saved through what faith is faith something you do? Is faith something you exercise or faith the gift of God.

It got real quiet in here, you say what Steve likes to say, it's face the coming crisis. Lord Jesus come into my life. Yes, you did. But the question is, where did you get the faith? When I was a kid growing up in church, I heard this illustration several times, this is a pretty good illustration. You probably heard it to. Preaching the gospel, the illustration goes, preaching the gospel is like throwing a life preserver to a drowning man, your words pretty good, and the drowning man reaches out and grabs life preserver and he saved.

That's a great illustration, but it's flawed, you know, it's flawed because of Ephesians two, one, two, one what is two one say Ephesians two, one says and you were treading water in your trespasses and sins. Not what it says, not even in the Greek Ephesians two one doesn't say. And you were unconscious in your trespasses and does it? It says and you were dead. I spent several hours one morning doing a work study on this word. I want to find out what it really meant in the

original. I'm doing extra biblical research on the word. I'm going through the Septuagint, the whole thing this word did in the original. You know what it really means? It means it means dead.

There's a cemetery over in Glendale called Forest Lawn. I've got two grandparents buried there, Beruwala to Forest Lawn, unbelievable grounds of flowers, statue. I mean, it's incredible and you can see it as you go along the freeway. And sometimes the flowers in bloom and if you're driving by there, you just got to kind of glance over because the gorgeous flowers and trees, I mean, incredible stuff. Imagine this. You're driving along a freeway.

You're kind of glancing over at Forest Lawn, and all of a sudden you see a pin come up through the grass and then and then you see another hand you're pulling over. Now you're watching this. You've got two hands ahead of burrowing up there. You see an elbow and elbow and this sucker pulls himself up out of the grave. He's got dirt clods all over him. He's dusted himself off. He sees you park. There he goes. Hey, can I get a ride in the town?

Now, that's ludicrous and you're laughing, why are you laughing? You're laughing because that that is just absolute foolishness. Why is it foolish? It's foolish to follow. This is foolish because dead men can't will to become alive. Can they? Because they're dead, dead men can't will to change their condition because they're dead. John Newton wrote a great hymn called Amazing Grace. If most evangelicals, if most of you in this room wrote that hymn, you wouldn't call it Amazing Grace because you're not amazed by grace.

You know, you'd call that him, you'd call it Grace. See, John Newton called that hymn Amazing Grace. Because John Newton understood his condition before he came to know Christ. See, the problem with the illustration of the guy reaching out and grabbing the life preserver. Here's the problem. The sucker is dead. He's not treading water. He's on the bottom of the ocean. He is dead as a doornail and dead men don't reach out and grab life preservers.

But you say, Steve, he's got to exercise faith in Christ. That's exactly right. He sure does. So what does God do? You go on to read Ephesians. It says, even when we were dead, he made us alive. What would Jesus do with Lazarus, Lazarus was dead as a doornail, Jesus said, Lazarus, come forth. And he did that's what God did with you, you were as dead as Lazarus, most of you just don't know what. You say, what about my free will, you're free will was dead. Guess what, your free will isn't free. Some of you don't like me anymore because you really liked your free will. Well, let me ask you something.

Did sin enter into your life? Yeah, when Adam Sin Sin went everywhere. You ever heard of a doctrine called total depravity? Total depravity means sin went everywhere. You're not as bad as you can be. It just affected every part of your being.

I have a friend when he went to the senior prom the week before, his dad brought a brand new nineteen sixty four Chevy Impala Super Sport and he talked to his dad and let him take it to the prom. And he went and picked up his buddy and they had their two dates. They went to the dance having a great time, his buddies outside drinking, Jack Daniels getting drunk as you can be. They get the girls back. They take them home on the way back, take his buddy home. But he

says, I don't feel so good. I don't feel good. So we'll get in the back seat. But he's in the back seat, throws up, vomits all over the back seat.

Gets his body out here, drops him in the driveway, get the heck out of here, he's in trouble. He goes to sum all night, do it yourself, car wash. These two hours. He's scrubbing. He's cleaning up the scene. He's getting this crud out. The next morning, he gets up real early for his dad, gets up. He takes us to one of those big time car washes, the steam clean. He says, do the whole steam. They're doing all this. He takes it home. His dad walks out is those dads that gets in the car, puts in reverse, backs up about three feet, stops. Is that smelled the vomit, they never got the smell of vomit out of that new car because the smell of because vomit was everywhere, it permeated the foam, cushioned rugs, fibers. They never got it out.

That's what Cindy does. Only it was more than a smell. It killed us and it killed your will. Your will isn't slave to your nature something you don't like this read your Bible. Read Psalm 14. There is no one who does good. There is no one who seeks God. If God left you to your own device, you would never choose him. You would never see him because you're dead and you don't want him.

So when you even when your dad, he made you alive, you don't have to agree with it, just read the scriptures, just read the word of God. He raised you like he raised it. Now let's go on to something. That you won't have that big of a problem with, but I want you to understand this before we get to Ephesians two 10. So why we're going to Ephesians two ten? Because what I did last night and what I've done so far is the introduction to Ephesians two 10.

Because we had to set the stage so you would understand the patient's tent and understand your purpose. You guys stay with me. Let's pick up 10 from eight, I'm not sure you're with me. Are you with me? OK, good. Let's pick it up from eight four by grace, you've been saved through faith and that night of yourselves, it is a gift to God. Oh, by the way. So so how did you come to Christ?

You said Lord Jesus, come into my life. You see, the reason you said Lord Jesus come into my life is that the Lord Jesus breathe life into you. As he breathed life into Adam and you said, Lord Jesus, come into my life. He's a great God that he would save you from your sin and save me. You know how I pray for people who I love that I want to see coming to Christ, I say Lord violate their will, Lord overpower their will, Lord bring them Jesus.

And all that the father has given me will come. Jesus said to his disciples, You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you, that you might go forth and bear what fruit. That's what he wants you to do. Patience to wait for migration saved through faith, that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, not as a result of works that any man should boast for. You see that connector for we are his what workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works. That's why you're alive. That's why you haven't died yet. Which God prepared what beforehand before you ever born that you might walk. What do you do on a trail? You walk, that you might walk in them. That's why you're alive.

Four years ago, May 22nd, my brother Mike walked into his office in San Jose, California.

Mike's big guy to be an offensive tackle at USC about 30 some years ago. About six, five, about three, 20, great athlete, big guy. Love the Lord, love his wife, loved his kids, a great man walks into his office with his briefcase down, walks around the other side to get in his chair before he hits the chair. He has a massive coronary. He's dead before he hits the ground. He's forty eight years old. I get a phone call from Mary. I'm getting my. Free on charged in my eighty five diesel Mercedes, I get a call. Next thing I know, I'm calling the next thing you know, I'm in Pleasanton, California, at 11 o'clock that night, I walk in, there's his wife, Kathy, there's his daughter Becky, who had just been married. There's his daughter Laura is going to graduate from high school in the next week. There was a son, Jason.

And and what happened was there's my mom and dad. There is my brother Jeff. And we're just all in shock. None of us see that wasn't on my daytime or that day. That wasn't in my Palm Pilot. I hadn't plan on being at Mike's house at 11 o'clock, we all embrace, we weep, we can't believe it. We're sitting around the kitchen table. About midnight, we realized that we had to have a memorial service, a funeral service. So we started talking about it. We planned it for Friday. Over the next few days, people are coming by the house who love Mike. Everybody's in a state of shock and people are trying to come to grips with this. You never know what to say in those deals, do you? People read what's on your heart. But I heard I heard people say two things throughout those next days, people that love Mike who were trying to come to grips with his death.

Here's the first thing I heard. First thing I heard people say about Mike. They would just shake their head and they would say it's a tragedy that Mike's life was cut short. Now, I understand that. I understand emotionally, whenever we have Thanksgiving and Christmas, whenever we get together, Mike's not there anymore. And Mike was the fun guy in our family. I mean, the three boys. Michael's the middle, my brother Jeff is the youngest, I'm fairly intense, you may have picked that up. Jeff is as intense as I am. Mike was the easygoing guy, gentle giant. Hey, let's have fun as Michael was. Michael's the fun guy. Mike, when we get together, Christmas, Mike's not there. We'll all be getting together and we'll have fun. I'll look over and I'll see my mom with a tear coming down her cheek.

She's thinking about Mike. You say I look over his daughter, Becky. We're having fun. There's a tear coming. Mike's not there. We'll never get over that. It's a tragedy of Mike's life was cut short. I understand that emotionally. Can I say something to you from the word of God, Mike's life was not cut short. Mike just finished the work that God had for him to do. A lot of times I speak in California, Michael, come and meet me wherever it was I was speaking. You know what, Mike's not here tonight, you know why Mike's not here. Mike finished his work. You want to know why you're here? You haven't. That's why you're alive.

Second thing I heard people say, I heard people say they'd shake their heads in disbelief and people would say they couldn't believe Mike was dead. They would say there's no rhyme or reason to this. And I understand that you see the word workmanship in verse 10 where his workmanship that is the Greek word poema. It's where we get our English word poem. We are his workmanship, we are his poem, you're saying, wait a minute, Steve, you're telling me I'm

God's poem. That's what it says. Why thought poems were supposed to rhyme? Well, they are well, Steve, if you knew my life what was going on, if you knew the circumstances of my life right now, I'll tell you something, Steve, there's no rhyme in my life right now. And and I would accept that.

But can I ask you a question in return? Does every word in a poem rhyme? See, some you don't get to a rhyme till you get to the end of line. Some of you, I want you to hear this. Some of you are three words away from a rhyme and you don't know what. You're in the middle of a sentence.

Several years ago on December 4th, which is Mary's birthday, I remember it was about two years ago, I was having a rough day on December 4th. I was having I was fighting off depression. I was kind of upset because I didn't understand what God was doing, because for three years we've been praying for something Mary and I had that we believed to be according to the will of God. For three years, we've been faithfully praying. For three years.

We seen no movement whatsoever. And I was just I was just depressed - all day long, I was fighting off pressure. Now, if I had known that two weeks later, God was going to miraculously answer that prayer. What? I've been depressed on December 4th. No, but you see, I was 14 days away from arriving and I just didn't know it.

That's where some of you are. Some of you think God has forgotten you. So why do you think God has abandoned you so much? You think these tragic circumstances that intrude into your life that God is taking his hand off your life? No. You know what's happening with this. God is

just getting you ready for the work that he has for you to do. I read Psalms, you know what I read all the time in Psalms, I read the word pit, pit, pit. They're always talking about the pit. You know, I've kind to realize in the Christian life, as you walk down the trail, there are unscheduled pit stops.

You're doing fine, everything's normal, and then all of a sudden you ever see these these cartoons, these Roadrunner guys, Roadrunner and Wylie Coyote and that roadrunner, that coyote can never catch the sucker and the roadrunners. Beep, beep, beep. He's doing this whole thing and seems like in every cartoon he's running full speed and he's always running towards a cliff. But Wiley Coyote doesn't know it. And why the coyote was going about 90 miles an hour at the last minute, the Road runner pfft goes the right. Wiley Coyote keeps going and he goes out over the cliff about 30 feet because it's a cartoon. He doesn't drop. He hangs in midair for about 12 seconds. Then he drops. He drops into a pit. That happens in the Christian life.

Can I ask you something? What's the worst thing that's ever happened to you? There are a lot of broken hearts in this room. Everybody looks together, everyone looks good. But there are broken hearts and there are broken spirits. What's the worst thing that's ever happened to you? I think if we were to ask that of Joseph, you know what I think Joseph would say to us? I think Joseph would say the worst thing that ever happened to me was the day that my brother sold me into slavery. Horrible thing, kids, 17 years old. They didn't like him, they were jealous, his dad bought him a coded L.L. Bean and didn't get one for the rest of them. You know, it was a hard thing for those guys.

And, you know, Joseph had, you know, felt like at one point God would use him and bow down, you know, and he told them he probably shouldn't mention that. And they just hated his guts. They said one day, let's just kill him. And then they fall in and let's not kill him. Ruben said no let's put him in a pit. Ruben was going to go back and saying, But but they saw slave chariot going by, say, hey, why should we kill this guy? Why don't we sell him? At least make some bucks, will dip that L.L. Bean coat in blood. And we're told that he got killed by an animal. So that's what they did. Now, can I tell you this? When you're 17 years old and you were sold into slavery back then, chances are you wouldn't be alive when you're twenty five. His fate was sealed.

I want you to imagine being 17 years old, suddenly your life is gone. Your family is gone. Your hopes, your dreams, your aspirations, everything you hope to achieve. I mean, his life was over. And as he was strapped onto that camel, I wouldn't be surprised if it entered Joseph's mind if he thought to himself, there is no rhyme or reason to this. Now, let me ask you this. On the worst day of Joseph's life, was there a rhyme and was there a reason? Yes. On the worst day of his life, the sovereign hand of God was all over that kid. On the worst day of your life.

It may be today the sovereign hand of God is all over your life. As it was on Joseph. Why did you see Joseph was his workmanship. Why was Joseph sold in St. Joseph? Was his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works in what nation? Egypt, that slave caravan wasn't going to Syria, that slave caravan was going to Egypt. Joseph, was his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works in Egypt, which God prepared beforehand, before he was ever born, that he might walk in them.

Joseph never read Genesis, Joseph didn't know what the heck was going on, all the news at the bottom fell out of his life. He was finished, he was done. So he gets to Egypt. They put him on the slave block. They do this eBay thing, but it's a slave thing. And they put him on the block. And this by by chance. By chance, this guy, Potiphar Bizim, he goes to work for Potiphar I'm sure he started cleaning toilets, but he whose faith will be faithful and much.

Can I give you an insight into Joseph? Joseph worked hard. Joseph had a great attitude. He was promoted. You know what I think? I think Joseph did not become bitter. People will become bitter at poor attitudes. People will become bitter. No one wants to be around. People who are bitter or poison. People who are bitter don't excel in their jobs because they don't do their jobs to the glory of God. I think somehow he came to grips with bitterness and trusted God.

So he started cleaning toilets. The Bible says he was faithful little. She'll be faithful and much have you had disappointing circumstance happen. Don't let bitterness set into your heart towards God. And I'll tell you why in just a few minutes, he started being faithful, so he got promoted, then he got promoted. Before you know it, he's running part of his whole deal. I mean, he's signing checks, he's doing quick books. This guy's got a company car, he's got a 401k, he's doing the whole thing.

He probably can't believe how good God has been of him. He's been very successful. He thought he'd be dead. But look at what God's done. But there's a problem because Potiphar has a wife. And Genesis says that Joseph was handsome and form in appearance, he was in his 20s that was

in shape. Twenty four hour fitness. I mean, this guy was trim, you see, young guy, he was a good looking guy. The Bible says day after day she hit on him day after day.

She wanted to sleep with this guy. I'm sure you know, she's a typical rich Egyptian chick. You know, she drives a Mercedes, you know, chariot in the whole thing. And, you know, she's doing the spa thing and, you know, she's been Botox, you know, you know you know, she's some rich chick. Joseph, he's at the height of his sexual drive. She wants to sleep with him, you know what, he won't sleep with her, drives you nuts.

One day she calls him and she said to him up, he literally runs out of his tunic. Later, Paul would say, flee immorality. Joseph did it. She must be called rape because next thing you know, Joseph winds up in an Egyptian dungeon. Now, can I ask you this? He's in a dungeon. He's in a prison. Had he done anything wrong? No. If you were Joseph, how would you feel? See some if you feel like Joseph, because you feel that you've been trying to walk the Lord, you've done nothing wrong but the bottom has dropped out of your life.

Then learn from Joseph. He's in prison for two years. He's in a dungeon, and I tell you this, when you find yourself in an Egyptian dungeon, you don't call the ACLU to get you out. You don't call Johnnie Cochran to represent you. When you're in an Egyptian dungeon, you're in there for the duration, one night, one night by chance, two guys who work for Pharaoh are thrown into the deal with Joseph. There is no chance. They were thrown in. They have dreams. By chance, there is no chance, you know, why they had dreams? God gave them great by the spirit of God, Joe, some church interprets the dreams, Joseph says, you're going to live, you're going to die.

That's what happened when the guy went back to work for Pharaoh. You know what Joseph said? Joseph said, don't forget me. And you know what the guy did? He forgot him. You know why he forgot? Because God wanted him to forget. Because it wasn't time yet. You know, Long Joseph was down there in that pit, he was there for two years that Joseph know he was going to be there two years. No. How do you think Joseph did every day?

See that's the thing, when you're in a pit, you think you're always going to be in there, but you won't be that pit you're in. Can I tell you about pit? Every pit has a beginning, a middle, and an end. You just don't know where you are. How do you think Joseph did every day in the pit? So he was a real spiritual guy, was he really? Do you think Joseph got up every day and said, [singing] this is the day, this is the day the Lord hath made, we will rejoice, we will rejoice... [audience laughter].

If you do that every day, there's something wrong with you. If you do that every day, you ought to become a televangelist. Right? Because you're an airhead theologically and you're not real and you're not authentic. Are there days, Joseph was like Lord, I trust you. You bet there were weather days he was fighting off depression. You bet. Because it was just a guy just like you. He didn't know what the heck was going on. Lord, I try to follow you, I tried to serve you. I tried to be faithful to Potiphar, and then they show me this thing and this guy came down and I thought that was my chance to get out. And then nothing happened and.

And then one night, by chance, Pharaoh has a dream. There is no chance, you know why Pharaoh, the most powerful man on the face, you know, I felt had a dream that night because God said, hey, you Egyptian wuss, dream this [audience laughter]. I'm telling you. Silk sheets, silk underwear, you know, he's got a little. Thinks he owns the Nile, you know, the whole thing, you know why he was pharaoh, God raises up rulers, God sets him down, he blows on them and they wither. Isaiah, 40.

You know who's going to win the election in November, who God is determined to win the election. That's who's going to win. You go ahead and vote the mind to man plans his way. But those guys together went to Harvard, Yale, Stanford. He's done. They don't know what they got. One of those guys, those guys know nothing because the things that got him spiritually appraised. They're talking about they're trying to figure it out. All of a sudden, all of a sudden, this guy remembers Joseph. You know why he you remember Joseph? Because God said to remember Joseph.

It was time. He say it was this Hebrew kid down there and he said, he says, go get that sucker. They go down, they get Joseph, they run into a car wash, they clean him up to get him a robe. The fingers pull thing of their knees before Pharaoh froze. I had this dream and I hear you could I can interpret there's a God in heaven created all things. He'll provide the interpretation. So, in fact, how 17 cows there's to be seven years of prosperity like the world has never seen.

But there's going to be seven years of famine like you cannot believe. You better appoint someone to manage the prosperity so you can get through the famine peril. Looks at Joseph and

says you're the man. And a forty five minutes Joseph went from the lowest place in Egypt to being the second most powerful man on the face of the earth. That's God that's God. Got. Hey, listen, listen.

Did God have a work for Pharaoh to do? Yes, yes, yes. I thought you meant Joseph. I didn't mean Joseph, but God also had to work for Pharaoh to do. When God has to work for you to do, God will even work in your enemies hearts to accomplish his purpose in your life. Your enemies cannot stand against you. Your enemies have to cooperate with the sovereign will of Almighty God. Did you know that?

They have to. You've got a great God, you've got somebody on your case, you've got somebody that doesn't like you, that's not a problem. God is bigger than they are, God runs them, God owns them, God controls them. Suddenly, listen, God promoted him. Why did Joseph go through what you know, what I want to do when I get to heaven? I'm dead serious. I want to get lunch with Joseph, I want to talk with him.

They have lunch. I hope they have lunch. I bet it'll be the greatest lunch I've ever had. I want to have lunch with Jose. I got those. I've been thinking about this for years. I got to ask you something, because I got a sneaking suspicion. You know, my suspicion is my suspicion is a half hour before they called him to stand before Farrell. I think it may might have been his very lowest point.

I don't know for sure. That's what I want to ask. See, for some reason, I don't think he was having a good day. I think he was losing heart. I thought I think he thought it was over. I think he thought he was finished because, you see, God loves to take people who think they're finished and they lose hope. Ray then used to say that resurrection power always works best in a graveyard.

Isn't that true? See, we love resurrection, but they have a resurrection. Somebody's got to die. So some of your dreams have died. Some of your hopes have died. You've got a sovereign God. You know why you're in the pit, you know why you're struggling for the same reason. Just listen.

If you're in the pit, if you're struggling, if you're hurting, you're in there because God is preparing you for the work that he has for you to do if you're in the pit. I was thinking of this last night. I took a course here at Talbot. What year is 2004, I took a course at Talbot twenty two years ago, I was going through a time of depression. I had a growing church in California. I was a young pastor, long story, I stepped out of it. I thought I was going somewhere else. It didn't happen. I interviewed at seven different churches. None of them wanted me. We went through tough financial times during that time.

Mary got pregnant with Josh. She wasn't supposed to get pregnant because she had a blood clot from flying across the country. And John was on her lap and her leg swelled twice its size. We lost everything financially. They said, don't let Mary get pregnant. She got pregnant. She went to see the doctor at Stanford. This really looks bad. You were taking Coumadin to break down this. You didn't know you were pregnant. You affected your baby that same day I got meningitis. I'm

in the hospital. I was fighting depression because nothing was working for me, I couldn't get a church, nobody wanted me, no one was inviting me to speak. I was driving a truck making minimum wage. I was embarrassed. I was humiliated.

I finally get this little church. This little church kept calling me. They were the ones that called me. They had 90 people in the church. The average age was 70 years old. I was 30. These people were all shriveled up. They look like prunes. And they were sweet people the first time they called me, so, Steve, would you come and be your pastor? I was real sweet. I was real nice. I hung up the phone. I said to myself, I would never go there. That's where I went [audience laughter].

When I was there, I got meningitis, I went in three o'clock in the morning, I was so sick, I had incredible headache. Mary said, Are you OK? So I'm just going to go to the emergency room, get some antibiotics. I walked in there three o'clock in the morning. This doctor comes in here visiting a doctor, an emergency room, three a.m. This sucker look worse than I did. The guy I've been up for 12 weeks straight. He couldn't see straight. He starts asking me questions. He wants me to do this. He do, you know? And I said, I just need an antibiotic. And he said, I think you've got meningitis. I don't know, meningitis. I think you do, but we're going to know in about 20 minutes or so. Well, how are you going to know that I'm going to do a spinal tap. I've heard of spinal taps. I'm not talking about the rock group.

The sucker comes in and he brings out a horse needle about this long and the guy who's getting ready to do it and he didn't look too sharp. I said, hey, why don't we pray here for a minute, OK?

I did. So I started praying for him. I prayed for his family. I prayed for I prayed for North Korea. I prayed for Russia. Finally, the sucker just jab that sucker in there, terrible. Twenty minutes later, he comes in. I said, how'd it go? He said, Well, it was inconclusive. That's true. I said what does that mean? He said, well, we're going to keep you in for three days, going to load you with antibiotics. But we don't know what you got yet. There's a bad kind and a not so bad kind. I said, what if it's the worst? He said, you'll have to bring your wife and two little kids and we'll have to do that to them. Spinal taps.

At this point in my life, I've had so much loss, I was crying on the average of three to four hours a day and I couldn't stop. I'm just being honest with you. Mary remembers this. I used to remember if she would love me. I couldn't figure out why she loved me, because I didn't love myself, because I failed at everything. I remember I'd stop at stoplights and I'd have tears coming down, and I look at the normal people all around me. And their life with everything was going well, but my life was broken and God had forgotten me and abandoned me. And I was, those people in this little church were so sweet to me. But, you know, I didn't want to be there. It was a hard and you know what, I went into a deep depression, it took me two and a half years to come out of.

Oh While I was in the hospital. They came in and they said, Steve, you're OK. The meningitis, we're just you're out of here this afternoon. Great. Great. Mary comes in from seeing the doctor at Stanford. I'm in the hospital room an hour later. I'm all pumped up. I'm going home. She says she looked terrible. She came, came in, said Steve. I just saw the specialist at Stanford about my pregnancy. This is Josh. And he said, you've got serious problems with this baby because what

you were taking to break down your blood clot. And he said to have you thought about interrupting the pregnancy? These guys are real smooth, aren't they? These baby killers, and that's what they are. See this guy wanted to kill Josh, so you know Josh. He wanted to kill Josh.

He says, hey, you got a healthy boy, you got a healthy girl, why would you take a chance? Mary says, we don't believe in that. That's not our call. That's God's call. He said this child may be born handicapped. She said it's not our call. See every child is born handicapped. We're all screwed up. Some of us have physical screw ups, the rest of us are just screwed up, period, and that's why we need Christ, right. Finally, you know what he said to her to pressure. She said, Steve, he told me I was going to have a little monster. This guy had a great bedside manner. She didn't have a little monster, she had Josh, some of you know Josh.

I'm in a hospital room, she says. We're going have a little monster. 9months more wait and see what's going to happen. I'll tell you, that was one of the worst chapters of my life. I was in the pit. You know, I went through a depression. Wanna know the real reason I thought God had taken his hand off me, I thought I would never I thought I would never be used by God. I came down and took a Dmin course at Talbot's Seminary. I remember one night walking around this campus, there was no one here. And I was sobbing walking around Talbot and Biola because I thought God would never use me and he'd taken his hand off me.

That's why I went into depression. I thought he was finished with me. Some of you feel that way. He's not finished. You're in the pit because he's getting you ready for the work that he has for you to do. And just as he raised Joseph, I tell you some good news. If you're in the pit, it has a

beginning, a middle and end, and while you're in the pit, here's what you need to do. Stay teachable, say, Lord Jesus, teach me everything you have for me during this hard time. If you stay teachable, I'd say, Lord, teach me every lesson you got while I'm in here, I don't want to go to summer school on this deal, right.

Don't be hard head. Don't be an idiot. Soften your will to the Lord Jesus. And then Mary and I would pray, Lord, one day. Would you use this somehow so we can minister to somebody else? The tough time. It was a bitter time, it was a difficult time, but pits have a beginning, a middle and an end. As God raised Joseph up, he'll raise you up. About 15 years ago, a pastor called me from Maui, he said, Steve, we're doing a men's deal on Saturday, we're getting all the churches of Maui together. We'd love to have you come over and speak to all the guys on Maui, all the churches. And we love do a Saturday thing. And then we'd like you to speak Sunday at our church. If you could give us Saturday and Sunday morning, a day and a half, we'd like to fly you and Mary over here to Maui. There's a guy in the church has a condo on the water that comes with a car. We'd like you to be our guest. Everything covered will pay all your expenses, we'll pay your plane, flight. If you'll give us a day and a half, we'd like to give you guys 10 days in Maui for no charge. I said, well, let me pray about th - yes, I can come [audience laughter].

Some things are so clearly God's will. We got over that, we had an unbelievable time, we had an incredible time, we never been over there. We found this little beach on the south in the Maui. It was really hard to get to. But at night, with sunsets going down, we'd walk on this beach, hardly anybody on this beach. It was unique because we're walking on this deserted beach. The sun's going down and there is little ovals that were in the sand. And we sure looked and they were

pearls. You could walk and pick up these pearls in about an hour. You could get three to four thousand dollars of pearls just walking on the beach. Now, that's not a true story. It's a real good story, but it's not true. Don't sweep up on the seashore, do they? Can I give you a principle about Pearls? I'm done. In three minutes. I'll give you a principle about pearls. Pearls? Why?

I met two guys on Maui who were free divers. You know, free divers, do they do it the old fashioned way, they go down and get pearls and don't use any equipment. Sea pearls are in the depths, pearls are in the bottom of the pit, down at the bottom of the ocean. If you were to dive even half that depth, your eardrums would burst because the pressure is so great in the pit.

Oh, the other thing is it's so dark, you go like this and you can't see your hand. These guys train themselves to go down into the depths and get the pearls, you want to hear something great about the goodness of God if you're in the pit? One day he's going to surface you, but if you'll stay teachable, he won't surface you empty handed. He'll surface you with pearls, pearls of wisdom, pearls of obedience, pearls of integrity, pearls of scripture, pearls of promises that you'll live on for the rest of your life. And when he surfaces, you just as he surfaced, Joseph, at the right time. He will surface you because he has prepared you for the work that he has called you to do, that nobody else on the face of the earth can do.

The pit's hard, what is the worst thing that's ever happened to you? Can I tell you something great about God? The worst thing that's ever happened to you, whatever it is, God is so big and God is so great that he'll take that worst thing and he will turn it for your good. That's Romans eight twenty eight, and we know and do you know this, that God causes most things to work

together? Someone who says God causes what? Does God cause rape to work together for good. Yes. This God calls bankruptcy to work together. Cancer, yes. Leukemia. Yes. The trail. The best friend, your wife leaving you for some guy on the Internet. Yeah. God works all things. What we know that God cause this is nothing to laugh at. And we know that God causes all things to work together. For what? For good to those who love God and are called according to his purpose.

Last story. Last illustration. I'm done. When I was a little kid, my dad's watch stopped working. I went with him to the jewelry guy and the little jewelry store. Little classic watchmaker guy had an accent, got a little deal. He gets my dad's watch. I'm there. I'm a six, seven year old kid. He takes his little little like, screwed everything. He unscrews the face of the watch. I don't even know that thing came off. I was a little kid. And when they took that off, there was a world in there I didn't know existed. Unbelievable engineering these gears, and they were all in perfect synchronization and I'm looking at these gears all going around. I can't believe I'm looking at these gears, I'm just looking at. And he'd tweak it and they were all moving and they weren't moving before. And I'm looking at and all of a sudden I notice something I had noticed before those gears. See, I thought we're all moving in the same direction. But as I looked, there was one gear over in the left.

And you know what? See, all the gears were going clockwise, but there was this one gear and I noticed that's going the wrong way. See, one of the gears was going counterclockwise. Every person in this room in your life right now, there's a gear in your life and you don't understand why it's going the way that it's going. You can't figure out why God's allowing that gear to go

that direction. Can I tell you something? That the greatness of God? God takes gears that you don't understand that are going the wrong way in your opinion, and God will use that gear. To accomplish your purpose, and he will make sure that your purpose and your reason for existence, he'll make sure that everything stays on time, even when there is a gear going in the wrong direction because he's sovereign over everything. He has a plan for you. He has a purpose for you, you can't die until you do it. That's the greatest truth in all the world.

So we bowed before you, Lord Jesus. We thank you that you are big and we are not. We thank you for your greatness. Or do we have struggles, we don't understand why you allowed this to happen, we don't understand why life worked out this way. We don't. But you've told us that your ways are not our ways and our thoughts are not your thoughts so often, nor do we get in trouble and we prescribe to you how you should fix our situation. You do not need our advice and you do not need our help, you need our obedience and you need our submission and you need our trust.

I pray that you will encourages that even the hard times, even the difficult, even in times of criticism, even the times when friends turn against us, even the time Lord, when those who we had sweet fellowship with, when they go against us and they and they cut us to death with what they say, Jesus knew all about that Jesus was betrayed. We're going to be betrayed. Thank you that you're sovereign over that and you'll turn it for our good. Maybe we trust you. I pray for every student here, I pray for those Lord that are confused about the next step, you'll make the next step clear at the appropriate time. I pray for those, Lord, that are that are struggling because they're confused, give them clarity. I pray for those lawyers still trying to figure out they want to

Farrar: God Controls It All

do what's right. Help them not to be fools. Help them not to waste their lives. You've got a great purpose for them. We submit ourselves to Jesus and we pray these things in his name because it's the name above every name. Amen.

[End of Recording].