

Known by God

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[0 : 00] Well, good morning, and we're very glad that you could join us today. And today is actually the very last sermon in our series, Inside Out. And I think it's been a pretty different series from the ones that we've normally been doing at KEC.

I've certainly found preparing and preaching it quite different. And I hope that you've also found it quite refreshing in a sense. And I would love to hear what you thought about it and hear your feedback.

So please do let me know how you found it at the conclusion of this series. Now, as usual, there's also a sermon outline, and that should be able to help you to follow in today's sermon.

And of course, the scripture passages should be on the screen. And it doesn't hurt to have your Bible open in front of you, especially to John's Gospel later on. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, we pray again, Lord, that you would be speaking to us by your word. And that by your spirit, you would be leading us to trust you, to trust your word, to take you at your word.

[1 : 07] So that we might begin to know you even more. And as we'll discover today, that it is such a joy to be in a relationship with you.

So, Father, we just pray, Lord, that you give us attentive ears, attentive minds. Help our mind not to wander off today, but instead to have a heart set upon your word this morning.

All this we pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. Well, allow me to begin by showing my nerdy side for a moment, and telling you about one of my favourite theologians, a guy called Kevin Van Hooser.

My guess is that probably none of you have ever heard of him. He's quite well known in evangelical theological circles, but he hasn't really written much for the average person in the pew. Most of his books are pitched at pastors, Bible teachers, and other theologians.

But like many other pastors, I'm a big fan. Ever since I read one of his early books, because he's such a great thinker on lots of stuff, especially to do with the Bible. So he explores very well questions like, what is the nature of the Bible?

[2 : 11] What does it really mean to say that we are biblical? And how does interpretation actually work? And so I've gotten to know quite a little about him. I know he teaches at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Chicago, that his book, *The Drama of Doctrine*, has won a Christianity Today Book Award, and that one of his current writing projects is a commentary on Jeremiah.

More than that, because I've listened to several interviews with him over the years, I know something about his personal life. That he's married to a French lady, that he's an accomplished pianist, and that he's the reason his mother became a Christian.

Apparently his parents shipped him off to Sunday school when he was a kid, even though they were not Christians themselves, because they thought it would be good for him. And he came back asking a ton of questions.

And so the mother felt obliged to answer those questions, and started reading the Bible herself. And she found God that way. So I know quite a bit about Kevin Van Hooser.

But here is where I'm going. I am not known to him. He has no idea who I am. Now, I could fool you into thinking that he does.

[3 : 23] Here's one of his books that I own. And if you open it, not only is it autographed by him, but it contains a personal handwritten message. To Brian, with best wishes, as you seek to play your part in the drama of redemption, to the glory of God, Kevin J. Van Hooser.

And that's because when I was studying in Sydney, he actually came once to give a public lecture. But I couldn't attend to my great disappointment, so I asked my friend who was going if he thought it was possible to get this book autographed.

And I'm delighted that not only did he get it signed, but he even managed to get Professor Van Hooser to write something. But in spite of that message, the sad truth is, I am still not known to him. Well, I'm pretty sure that none of you daydream about being known by a theologian that's only nerds like me. But my guess is, there's probably someone whom you think, wouldn't it be great if I was known to them?

Wouldn't it be great if I was known by them? Perhaps it's a musician you really admire. Or perhaps it's someone in your field of work who is really accomplished at what they do, as a doctor perhaps, or as an architect, whatever it is.

[4 : 45] Perhaps it's someone whom you think is just a fantastic human being, someone whom you only know casually, but whom you hope to build a deep relationship with one day.

Perhaps it's even your dad or your mum, whom you sometimes wish would really get you, would understand you, would know you as you know yourself.

You see, we all long to be known. That's the first thing I want to point out this morning. It just seems to be part of who we are. As Kevin Van Hooser puts it, I may as well quote him, What distinguishes humans from all other creatures is the ability to say, I.

I am someone. I have a story. I have an identity. And I want to be known. That is simply intrinsic to my humanity.

And so when we are the new student in the class, or the new person in the office, or even the retiree with no nearby family, we just want somebody to come to say to us, Hi, I'm Alicia.

[5 : 57] What's your name? We want someone to ask us about ourselves, to invest the time to have lunch with us, and get to know us. And we long especially to be known by the people who matter to us, our parents, our siblings, our friends, the people whom we like and respect.

And when people don't know us, it can feel painful at times. I recently listened to this little story from a Malaysian professional pianist currently residing in Western Australia.

She talked about how just last week, she was treated like an idiot by another customer at a shop, who automatically assumed that she didn't know English, and tried to point out the entry and the exit signs to her in a rather demeaning manner.

He didn't know who she really was, an Australian race, ethnically Chinese person, who speaks perfectly good English.

And that led to this painful encounter. When we are not known, we are made to feel less than human. That's true even if we have lots of people around us who seem to enjoy us.

[7 : 13] As Tim Keller observes, to be loved but not known is comforting but superficial. You see, we find that we might be able to conform to the people and to their expectations around us quite successfully, such that we are loved.

And that might even bring us a measure of comfort that our hearts crave. Yet, if we are still not truly known as the person we are, but have to become someone else, so to speak, we find that unfulfilling.

But why do we long to be known? Why do we have this desire? Well, to begin answering this question, just turn with me for a moment to Psalm 8, verse 3 to 4.

And let me read it. When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars which you have set in place, what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?

So here we find the psalmist marveling at creation. And as he looks around, he poses this question beginning of verse 4. What is mankind?

[8 : 32] What are human beings? What sets them apart from the rest of creation? And of course, that's basically the question that we've been exploring over the last six weeks, as we've thought about different facets of our humanity.

But how does the psalmist answer? Well, look again at verse 4. His own question actually provides the answer. What is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them? In other words, as the psalmist ponders, what is a human being? He makes a striking observation. Human beings are those whom God is mindful of.

That's a human being. Someone whom God is mindful of. That's what the psalmist realises. That's what puts him in awe. God is attentive to us.

Psalm 144 verse 3 makes the exact same point. Lord, what are human beings? That you care for them. Mere mortals that you think of them.

[9 : 44] Once again, we see that humans are those whom God cares for. It's whom he's mindful of. Or as Psalm 139 verse 1 puts it, You have searched me, Lord, and you know me.

And so to be truly human is to be known by God. We'll see later that the New Testament also uses this language. We're made to be known by God in a personal and intimate way.

And that's why we long to be known by those around us and especially by God. We're made to be known, not in the way I know Kevin Van Hooser, but in the way God knows the psalmist.

We're made to be known the way God knows his prophet in Jeremiah 1 verse 5. Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you. Before you were born, I set you apart.

I appointed you as a prophet to the nations. And that's what it means to be human. To be someone whom God is mindful of, someone whom God knows, someone whom God cares for.

[10 : 59] But if we long to be known, and we're made to be known, why is it that we're scared to be known? That's the second thing I want to look at this morning.

For just as surely as we long to be known, we're also scared to be known. When I was at university, one of the icebreaker games we often played at camps and things like that was something called sardines.

It's a variation of hide and seek. Like hide and seek, there are people who have to hide and people who have to find you. But the twist is, when someone finds a hidden person, they don't reveal it. Instead, they join them and hide with them instead until there's only one seeker left. There was one time where I discovered a whole bunch of people all squeezed into this small wardrobe.

And this illustrates what we all do. We all join one another in hiding our true selves. So just think about that moment in a conversation where someone begins talking about some subject that you have no clue about.

[12 : 10] But everyone is nodding along and sounding knowledgeable about it. And so you pretend you do too. Think of that moment when you slightly exaggerate one of your experiences just to make yourself look a little better in the eyes of your friends.

Both are instances of covering up our true selves. And it's what we all naturally do in one form or another.

But how did we ever come to this state of affairs? Last week, we said that humans are made for friendship, for relationship. And the key to ensuring that our relationships flourish is Genesis 2 verse 25.

Adam and his wife were both naked and they felt no shame. That was God's original design for human beings. Genesis 2 verse 25 isn't so much about physical nudity as about the lack of barriers in knowing and being known by another person.

And that's what the writer of Genesis stresses. He didn't say Adam and Eve were naked and were very happy. He didn't say Adam and Eve were naked and were feeling lovey-dovey.

[13 : 31] Now, that might all be true, but what he says instead is they felt no shame. They could stand before God and be confident.

There was no sense of feeling inadequate or not measuring up. And so, they could relate to one another freely without feeling like they were lacking in any way.

There were no barriers in their relationships. But what happens in Genesis 3? The serpent comes questioning God's word.

Did God really say? More than that, the serpent comes questioning God's character. Did God really say you must not eat from any tree in the garden?

You're so restrictive on this God. No tree or so can eat. When God, of course, said that there's only one tree that's out of bounds. Everything else is free for you to enjoy.

[14 : 32] But humans begin to take after the serpent. They too question God's word and God's character and that leads them to disobey God.

And so, shame is introduced. 3 verse 7. Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they realised they were naked.

So they sewed thick leaves together and made coverings for themselves. They followed the serpent. And so, suddenly, they now felt a deep sense of lacking something.

They had become serpent-like, dehumanised, less than their best selves. They felt like they couldn't relate to one another freely anymore. And so, they began covering and hiding.

And when God comes, verse 8, this is how they respond. Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day and they hid from the

Lord among the trees of the garden.

[15:40] They didn't want to be known by God any longer. They're scared to be known because in the language of Romans 1, verse 21 to 23, they knew they did not honour God and in fact exchanged the glory of the immortal God for a lesser glory.

Now, have you ever had to choose between buying two things, say, two laptops and later discovered that the one you chose to buy was vastly inferior and you scolded yourself wishing that you had been a bit smarter to make the better choice.

You know, you felt a little bit ashamed that you chose wrongly. You're like, why did I buy that one? Well, that's kind of what Adam and Eve felt. They're ashamed because they chose the serpent instead of God.

They're ashamed to admit to God that they've exchanged a better glory for a lesser glory, a perverted glory. That means humans are now characterised by sinful desires, depraved minds, and shameful acts.

And so ever since Genesis 3, what we discovered is that we're all a little bit like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Now, I'm not sure nowadays if everybody is familiar with that story, but that's the classic tale of a reputable gentleman who turns out to have an evil elder ego whom he sometimes transforms into.

[17:12] And that's not something he wants anyone to know, of course. And so Dr. Jekyll is forever trying to repress Mr. Hyde with diminishing success as the story goes on. But that's us, isn't it?

We're Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Dr. Jekyll is what I want you to see, the public part of me that's good and respectable. But Mr. Hyde is the other part of me that I don't want you to see.

The part I know isn't so good and respectable. And this Jekyll and Hyde aspect has now become part of our fallen humanity.

Now I'm not saying that we all have an incredibly dark elder ego, but I am saying that we all have stuff that we would like never to come out in the open. We carry shame maybe from what we did in a past relationship.

Or we have shame because we are part of something we feel is shameful, like being from a dysfunctional family. Or we have shame from something that happened to us, like losing a job unexpectedly.

[18:21] Whatever it is, there's something we prefer to hide, something we're scared to be known for. And so we control how we are known, we control how we are known.

That's my third point for today. You see, often we're scared to be known because we're scared that we'll be found out to be an imposter. We'll be found out to be someone unlovable.

Earlier, I quoted Tim Keller who said, to be loved but not known is comforting but superficial. Well, in the very next line, he says, to be known but not love.

That's our greatest fear. We're scared that if people know the Mr. Hyde side of us, our broken and sinful selves, we'll be rejected and condemned.

And that fear extends to God. We see our relationship with God now as being like prey and predator. We're certain that God will jump on us and eat us up if he finds us.

[19:30] And so that's why the words of Jesus in places like Luke 8 verse 17 can fill us with great fear. Jesus says, for there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed and nothing concealed that will not be known or brought out into the open.

Or Luke 12 verse 3, what you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight and what you have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed from the roofs.

We're scared we'll be found out. And so we desperately control how we are known. Even the Apostle Paul did the same.

He tells us what image he previously wanted to project in Philippians 3 verse 4 to 6. If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more.

Circumcised on the eighth day of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews, in regard to the law, a Pharisee, as for zeal persecuting the church, as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.

[20:44] You see, this is how Paul wanted to be known, by his heritage, by his credentials, by his zeal. He was a son of faithful Jewish parents.

He was a genuine Israelite. He had been trained as a Pharisee, a status not everyone could attain, and he observed the Mosaic law meticulously.

And that's how he wanted to be known, as someone approved, exalted, and respected, as he conformed to the cultural and religious expectations of his time.

That's what he put his confidence in. And, this is important to observe, that's how he wanted to be known, not just by others, but by God.

He wanted to be known by God as righteous, as a good servant. And as he observed the law faithfully, he was certain that's how God would have seen him, how God would have known him.

[21 : 45] But of course, that image control actually leads him to act in pretty sinful and dehumanizing ways. If you look at how Acts 9 verse 1 describes him, for example, in his zeal for God, he ends up breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples.

He thought he was doing the Lord's work when he was actually doing the serpent's work. In his attempt to be Dr. Jekyll, he became even more of a Mr.

Hyde. And that's what we often do too. We work hard to cultivate a certain image, to be known for certain things. Let me use myself as an example.

I might want to be known primarily for being a good preacher and pastor, and that's what I want you to know me as. So I can easily put in all my efforts into simply managing your impression of me.

I don't want you to know all the less impressive bits of me, like the fact that I'm pretty hopeless with cars, or the fact that I'm not the greatest conversationalist in the world. And in my attempt to control how I am known, to want you to know me primarily as a good preacher, well, my Mr. Hyde might come out in ways that I didn't expect.

[23 : 09] So for example, I might get annoyed with you if you interrupt my sermon preparation time, even though you have really good reasons too. Because, hey, I need that time okay, so that I can show I'm a good preacher.

Or I might concentrate on saying stuff that sounds good, rather than doing what is actually right. Now, without a doubt, that's a temptation for me, one I'm sure I've given into sometimes.

And that's the temptation for all of us, whatever form it takes, to control how we are known, to put on masks, to make sure that people don't see all of me.

But here's the problem with controlling how we are known. It becomes tiring because it's simply not what we're made for. For from what we've seen so far, here's the great paradox.

We are scared of being known, and yet we long to be known. So when we control how we are known, we feel sheltered and yet discontented.

[24 : 19] The shame researcher Brenny Brown puts it nicely. Masks and armour are perfect metaphors for how we protect ourselves from the discomfort of vulnerability.

Masks make us feel safer even when they become suffocating. armour makes us feel stronger even when we grow weary from dragging the extra weight around.

But the irony is that when we're standing across from someone who is hidden or shielded by mask and armour, we feel frustrated and disconnected. And that's true too.

If we are the one wearing the mask or armour, it's not what we're made for. And so what is the solution? Well, here's the good news of the Bible.

And it's this. We can be known by God. Now, I think many of us are pretty familiar with the idea that through Christ, we can know God.

[25 : 20] But did you know it also works the other way? Jesus has come not just so that we can know God, but so that we can truly say we can be known by God.

God. In a way that doesn't cause us to fear. And in a place where our deepest longings can be met. And so that's the fourth and most important point I want to make this morning.

We can be known by God. And the gospel of John shows us this over and over again. Right at the beginning, there's a little story in John 1 verse 43 to 51.

I encourage you to open your Bibles to that passage actually. John 1 verse 43 to 51. There's a guy called Nathaniel. And he's pretty skeptical about this Jesus that everyone keeps talking about.

But his friend Philip says, come and see. Come find out. So he says, okay. And so, verse 47, when Jesus saw Nathaniel approaching, he said of him, here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit.

[26 : 34] Now that sounds like a strange thing to say. But here is what is especially shocking to Nathaniel. You see, when we meet a stranger for the first time, the first thing we notice is their external features, right?

Wow, he's so well-groomed. Wow, she carries herself well. Oh, she's pretty strong. And that's because we don't know anything else about them. We can only observe from the outside. We certainly don't know their inner selves. But when Jesus sees Nathaniel, he doesn't say, wow, what a handsome Israelite.

Or, wow, here's a distinguished Israelite. No, he immediately says something about Nathaniel's inner self. He is able to see straight away what sort of person Nathaniel is.

He looks into Nathaniel's soul and sees someone who is willing to accept the truth as it is. And that's why Nathaniel responds the way he does in verse 48.

[27 : 42] How do you know me? Nathaniel is not asking who made the introductions. He's telling Jesus, Jesus, I feel seen.

I feel known. How in the world can you know me in this way? It's as if I took a personality test and got the most accurate description of myself I've ever heard.

And Jesus basically says, I know you because of who I am. I'm the Messiah. I have supernatural knowledge. And this Messiah, as we'll see later, is a shepherd who knows his sheep.

And what happens as Nathaniel is known by Jesus? Well, he in turn is led to know Jesus. 1 verse 49. Rabbi, you are the son of God.

You are the king of Israel. You really are the real deal. And as we go through John's gospel, we find this happening again and again.

[28 : 49] In John 4, Jesus meets with a Samaritan woman. And we discover he already knows all about her. Her scandalous past with five husbands is already known to Jesus.

And we discover he doesn't just know all about her, but he knows exactly what she needs. He offers her the living water she's craving for.

And as a result of being known by Jesus, she in turn comes to know Jesus. She returns home to tell everyone that the Messiah is here.

Or come to the scene outside the tomb in John 20, where we find Mary Magdalene crying. Jesus has risen, but she doesn't know that yet.

And as he appears to her, she doesn't recognize him, thinking he's the gardener. And then Jesus just says one word, Mary.

[29 : 50] He addresses her personally. He knows her. And suddenly Mary's eyes are open. And as she is known by Jesus, she in turn is led to know the risen Jesus.

As she declares to the other disciples later, I have seen the Lord. And so here's what we discover. Jesus knows us already.

He knows our Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde selves. Look at what he says in John 10 14-15. I am the good shepherd. I know my sheep and my sheep know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father.

Jesus knows you as well as the persons of the Trinity know each other. I don't know about you, but that blows my mind.

Jesus knows you way better than you know yourselves. He knows even the very worst bits of you that you're not even aware of yourself.

[31 : 00] And yet, knowing all that he does, he does not come to condemn. he doesn't come as a predator looking for his prey, but as a shepherd looking for his sheep.

And this shepherd, John 10 verse 15 tells us, will lay down his life for the sheep. Earlier in 10 verse 12, we learned that there are hired hands who will abandon the sheep and run away as soon as the wolf comes.

But not Jesus, he is the good shepherd who knows you as you are, who knows you as a sheep who's gone astray and he is willing to die for you.

My friends, if this is true, we really have nothing to fear. We don't have to control how we are known.

We don't have to hide from God, but we can come before him. For Jesus sees us as we are and says to us, stop covering yourselves with fake leaves.

[32 : 11] Let me cover you instead. For this is the message of the gospel. You can be known by God and love as you come to Jesus.

Here is Tim Keller again. To be fully known and truly love is a lot like being loved by God. It is what we need more than anything.

It liberates us from pretense, humbles us out of self-righteousness and fortifies us for any difficulty life can throw at us. And that is what Jesus does for us.

In him, we are fully known and fully loved. We find our fears erased and our longings fulfilled. For when we are known by God, the scriptures say, three things become true of us.

Let's briefly explore each in turn. Firstly, when we are known by God, we become his child. The Bible connects being known by God with being adopted as his children.

[33 : 20] We'll just take one New Testament example, Galatians chapter 4, verses 4 to 7. But when the sad time had fully come, God sent his son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.

Because you are his sons, God sent the spirit of his son into our hearts, the spirit who calls out, Abba, Father. So you are no longer a slave, but God's child.

And since you are his child, God has made you also an heir. In verses 5-7, it's repeatedly emphasised, Christians are God's sons, we are his children.

And then, when Paul comes to verses 8-9, he parallels this adoption language with being known by God. So look at verse 9.

But now that you know God, or rather are known by God, he says. So you can see the language is paralleled between the two sections. To be known by God is to be his child.

[34 : 30] The two are connected. At the 2012 Olympics, the South African swimmer Chad Laclosse won a gold medal. And his father was interviewed afterwards.

And thousands of viewers watched as he kept saying over and over again, oh, look at my boy, he's so beautiful, look at my boy, he's so beautiful. His joy was uncontained.

His pleasure was unrestrained. And that's what it means to be known by God. His plan was to find you while you were hiding so that he can adopt you and take pleasure in you.

Secondly, to be known by God is to say God knows you by name. Names are critical to our personal identity. Our surnames associate us with our family.

To be on first name terms with someone is usually a way of saying we are close to them. To have a nickname for someone is a sign of affection. To record the name of that person you met once after many years is to honour them.

[35 : 42] And God knows those he has redeemed by name. He knows who they are. Look at Isaiah 43 verse 1. Do not fear for I have redeemed you.

I have summoned you by name. You are mine. And then in the New Testament in John 10 verse 3 we're told that Jesus himself caused his own sheep by name and leads them out.

When you are known by God you are known to him as just one of the masses. You're not known to him the way Kevin Van Hooser knows me as just someone whom he signed a book for.

No, God knows you the way he knows Jesus. He personally wrote your name into the book of life. He made sure you're on the acquittal list and not left out.

You matter to him. And that's probably why the Bible is full of genealogies. You know that God knows.

[36 : 52] He remembers those who belong to him. Or think of the beginning of Exodus. We have the all powerful Pharaoh who is looking to kill all the male babies of the Israelites.

And then we have the Hebrew midwives who feared God instead and did not do what the Pharaoh asked them to do. But here's the striking thing. This all powerful Pharaoh, this evil man is not named.

We don't know who he is today. But these midwives, nobodies in society who just wanted to honour God, well, we know their names, Shiprah and Puah.

God knows them and he made sure today we do too. For thirdly, to be known by God is to be remembered in affliction.

Let me just take you to Exodus 2 verse 24 to 25. And God heard their groaning and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob. God saw the people of Israel and God kneeled.

[38 : 05] Here are the people of Israel under slavery in Egypt and God sees them and God knows. The NIV says he was concerned about them but it literally says God kneeled which is why I read this verse from the ESV.

God kneeled their affliction and he remembers his covenant. Now remembering here isn't simply about bringing back to mind what he has forgotten.

In the Old Testament it's a way of saying that not only does God know you and his promises to you but he is going to act on them. And so when you are known by God you can be reassured that all of God's promises to you in the gospel that you are no longer a slave to sin that the spirit of God lives within you all those promises have been acted on you can be reassured that in affliction God has even in our darkest days you can be reassured that we can be known by God and as those known by God we can now identify ourselves as such we won't have time to read Colossians 3 today but Colossians 3 verse 1 to 4 makes clear what our identity is now go back and read it later as those known by

God we are those who have died with Christ as those known by God we have been raised by Christ and we are those who are destined for glory and if we are known by God in this way well we want that to be what we are known for and that's why if you read Colossians 3 verse 5 onwards we find a stirring call to live as God's dearly beloved chosen and forgiven people and so that includes putting to death all kinds of sin and putting on love as that which makes us distinct in this series I've occasionally mentioned how the world often proclaims this message be true to yourself and I've challenged that message but there is a sense in which that is right we should indeed be true to ourselves when we know ourselves as sheep saved by the good shepherd and that's why we should remind ourselves all the time of our new identity and that's why every

Sunday we read scripture we say the creeds we address God in prayer we sing the songs we sing for what we are really doing is learning confirming and reinforcing who we are those saved by Christ and known by God and so as I finish off let me first of all address any non-Christians listening in today I want you to know that this is the good news of Christianity Jesus is not anti-human in any way rather he wants you to be the best human you can possibly be but he says the only way that can happen is by believing in him the only way you will ever escape the fear of being known primarily for your sins is to come to him and so give him a chance don't go away without investigating more who this Jesus is and for my brothers and sisters

[41 : 52] I hope you've all benefited from this series considering different aspects of our humanity but I urge you not to take for granted this most precious gift of all because of Jesus you have a new heart you have sanctified emotions you have a cleansed conscience you have new bodies in the new heavens and the new earth you will be his bride you will enjoy perfect friendship there in Christ you will be the most human you can be because in Christ you are known by God and so be the human you're meant to be live for the one who knows you inside out and loves you let's pray father as we come to you we just want to celebrate this great gospel truth again that when we were blind you made us see when we were lost you came and found us and father we come to you and we're so amazed so glad that all our sin and all our shame is nailed to the cross and so father help us to enjoy that freedom that we have in you help us to live in a way knowing that we can be unashamed before you and before others because of what Jesus has done will you help us not to be scared to be known by you but allow you to see us in all our imperfect cells knowing that there has been atoned for by

Christ and similarly would you help us to extend that kind of knowledge that kind of love to those around us that we want to tell them about this grace that is available to us the grace that covers all our shame that frees us to be the kind of human a new kind of human that you want us to be pray all this in the name of Jesus Christ Christ all for you to be to be a new way that you can try to be a new night