# 15 Aug 2026 : Northern Conference - Manchester : Agape Love, Spiritual Wrestling, Christ’s Pre-eminence

2026-08-15 14:23:25

**00:00:00 Speaker 1**
Let’s begin the recording. I’ll start again. Welcome everyone to the second annual Northern Conference held here in Manchester at Freedom House Church. It’s great to see everyone. Thank you for those who have travelled far and wide to be here. I know some have travelled from Scotland, some from Derbyshire, some from York. So we welcome everyone. Thank you for taking the time and effort to be here. Today we have a jam-packed meeting conference. We’ve got various speakers giving their personal testimonies, which is something we are looking forward to hearing. We’ve got a couple of speakers who will be expounding the scriptures to us, and we look forward to that as well. We’ll begin first of all by dedicating this.

**00:00:52 Speaker 1**
Conference. This meeting to the Lord in prayer, and then there’s a couple of things I want to say as a means of introduction, and then I’ll hand you over to the first speakers for this first part of the interval that’s taking place today. But thank you everyone for being here today. It’s great to see. I think there’s still a few more still to join us, which haven’t quite arrived yet. So we look forward to seeing them again. Let’s bow our heads and let’s give thanks to our heavenly Father for this afternoon’s meeting. Heavenly Father, we give you thanks for the great honor and privilege that we have to be able to be here once again for the second annual Northern Conference here in Manchester. Thank you, Heavenly Father, that we are able to come here and to be gathered around your Word.

**00:01:47 Speaker 1**
Able to have this time of sweet fellowship with each other. Bless our gathering this afternoon. Be in our midst, and may you bless each speaker who comes up here today to share something personal as regards to their testimony and as regards to opening up the scriptures to our minds and hearts. Bless every individual and everyone that is here today. May we truly have a sweet time of fellowship. Today, around your word, we give you thanks, glory, and honour, and praise, in and through the precious name of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen. Thank you, everyone, for joining us today. Just to introduce myself, you probably know who I

am, but I'm Archie Felici. I'm the minister of the Chapel of the Open Book, which is based in London.

**00:02:45 Speaker 1**
This is our second annual conference here in Manchester. As you know, we used to have it in Birmingham, and we also used to have our annual conference in Scotland. What we've done is that we've merged the two together, and this is the second one that is taking place here in Manchester. For some of you who are maybe new to us, who are we? What are we about? We are also known as the Berean Publishing Trust, and this ministry is dedicated to teaching the Word of God rightly divided. It has published and distributed numerous books throughout the years from 1909 onwards, through the writings of Mr. Welch, M. D. Berean Expositor, which many of you are still receiving today.

**00:03:36 Speaker 1**
And what we are committed to is serious Bible study, expounding the Scriptures rightly divided, and having a deeper knowledge of the Word of God. The whole reason why we are here, really, is to understand and know the Scriptures in a deeper level. And the Lord has provided the right sources for us with the literature that we have, and also with the website we have, and the meetings that we have here on an annual basis. Our four basic tenets are as follows: full inspiration of the scriptures, taken from Second Timothy three verse sixteen. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction,

**00:04:31 Speaker 1**
No instruction in righteousness. So we believe that all Scripture is inspired of God, but we must also bear in mind that although all Scriptures are for us, not all Scriptures are about us. This is where the second tenet comes into our focus: we use the principle of right division, rightly dividing the word of truth. That is essential for understanding the word of God. If we don't use this principle of rightly dividing the word of truth, then we will not arrive at the right viewpoint. We will not arrive at the right understanding, and we will not arrive at the right conclusions regarding the scriptures. If you wrongly divide the word of truth, you're going to get the wrong perception regarding the scriptures. What God is about regarding His plan and purpose for heaven, for earth, regarding Israel, regarding the church, you will.

**00:05:28 Speaker 1**
Arrive at a wrong understanding. Rightly dividing the word of truth, rightly dividing the true word, is the only means to arriving at the right conclusion. Thirdly, is the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that the Lord was or is not was, but is fully human and also fully God. In Titus two verse thirteen, the Apostle Paul, when writing to Titus, refers to the blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ. So the Lord is both human and divine; He is both fully man and fully God. Last but not least, He is all sufficiency of His one sacrifice.

**00:06:24 Speaker 1**
Which is mentioned in Hebrews chapter ten, verse twelve to fourteen. So that is really what we promote. This is what we proclaim. This is what we defend. And obviously, we also have the other main emphasis that we are currently living in the dispensation of grace, which Paul mentions in Ephesians three, verse twelve. Within that dispensation of grace is the central theme, which is the mystery. That is the central subject of the dispensation of grace, the mystery, which was hidden in God. I will mention this a bit more later on. But I thought the introduction was necessary. So if you're new to us and you haven't really been attending our services, our meetings, either on Zoom or at the chapel, at least now you've got a brief.

**00:07:20 Speaker 1**
Summary of who and what we are about. Today's first speaker will be Mr. Peter Ambrose, and then afterwards it'll be Nathaniel. He'll be giving his personal testimony, and then we have Wayne. Wayne will be joining us, and then we've got Dave Bond. Towards the end, before the interval, we have Alan Taylor, one of our faithful and loyal trustees, from the Brilliant Publishing Trust. We've got some great individuals who are going to be participants in today's meeting. Obviously, we'll have a break, and then we'll have other speakers coming to join us. I think I've said enough for now. We welcome Mr.

**00:08:16 Speaker 1**
Peter Ambrose as our first speaker. Thank you, Peter.

**00:08:30 Speaker 2**
Afternoon, everyone. Thank you for that introduction, Archie. It's good to be here. It's a blessing to be here. Thank you all for coming. Thank you to Jonathan as well for organizing this. I know Em and Archie got together on Thursday, but I know Jonathan has a lot to do with the people round here, and you're all related, aren't you? So we're all in the same boat. Let's thank the house band as well for the nice musical introduction. Can you remember last year? I said I'd have a different shirt on because I've been wearing it. I can remember. I got this new shirt.

**00:09:16 Speaker 2**
Forty percent off. Forty percent. I go for labels. You have to do these days, don't you? And keep up with young ones. And I mean, now I'm in my mid fifties. Got to keep that rock and rolling going. But anyway, when I unwrapped the shirt, I understand where the forty percent off were. Sleeve missing. We're not here to joke. We're here to listen to the word of God. We're here to praise Him and thank Him for the Lord Jesus Christ. Thank the Lord Jesus Christ as well for what He's done for us. We could never repay that. I said it's a blessing to be here, and it is. And I think I believe that I've had a really blessed life, and as I look back.

**00:10:14 Speaker 2**
I see where the Lord, even before I came to faith, I can see where the Lord's moved

in me and in my life, directing me, and He brought me to faith. And as a twenty, I was just before my twenty-first birthday, about twenty-five years ago now. But I've had many, many blessings and I went to work in the NHS, and I saw this young lady, and she just qualified as a staff nurse. That I didn't see her again because I left that hospital. I only went there for a temporary basis to see what was life like. And I moved to about 14 miles, 15 miles away, a town called Mansfield. So I never saw this young lady again for quite a while.

**00:11:13 Speaker 2**
But in my lifetime, history has developed a lot. There's more technology in these things now than there were on the moon landing in 1969. Looking back on my life, I've seen history develop. I can remember when I was maybe about 11, Yuri Gagarin, the first man into space, circled the Earth. And they thought that was marvellous. So the Americans thought, 'All right, we've got to do one better than this.' So they sent somebody up, and I think his name was Alan Shepard. He went round a few more times than once.

**00:12:12 Speaker 2**
And we've never stopped talking about it since 1966. We won the World Cup. England won the World Cup, and we've been talking about it ever since. 1969. I actually saw it on a black and white TV, probably 20 inches, which was a big TV, black and white. I saw the moon landing. Saw the eagle come down. That kind of landed on the moon. And I was seeing history being made here and the developments that we've had since then. 1967. After that, the Americans developed the shape of the space shuttle. So it would go up into space on a massive rocket.

**00:13:08 Speaker 2**
Do what every had to do. Helped it. Helped it develop the space station up there, along with the Russians and other countries. My is fantastic, isn't it? But we've recently had an eclipse, haven't we? The beauty and the miracles and the things what are in place by God, and people will say, 'Oh, this has done by accident.' Praise God, praise the Lord Jesus Christ. We know better than that, don't we? We don't brag about it. We pray for them, and that's what we should be doing. Nineteen sixty-seven. Biggest reel was made. We're not talking about that. The reason we're late here today because we couldn't get him out at all.

**00:14:08 Speaker 2**
That's another story. I'll tell you about that next year if we're invited next year, and I don't think we will be. But I'll tell you about that next year. 1967, the first global TV by satellite was sent round the earth, and it was a game-changing thing because satellites, there's so many satellites up there now. They're in danger of crashing into each other. It's marvelous, but it came across again on the TV, black and white. I think we had a 19-inch TV at home, and I was nine, I was 17 at the time, young teenager.

**00:15:06 Speaker 2**
This program was called Our World, and between 350 million and 400 million people saw this satellite broadcast. All these countries, mainly European and American, I think China was involved as well, the Russians. They all contributed to this program. What was on? It seemed to be on forever. But I was interested in the English one, and I'll tell you why. The Beatles were playing. They were a pretty well-known group from Liverpool. Called the Beatles, and their song, which went straight to number one, was called "All You Need Is Love."

**00:16:04 Speaker 2**
You might like the song. You might not like the song. You might like the Beatles. You might not like the Beatles. I still like the Beatles. Not all the songs, but 'All You Needed Is Love.' It's not quite true, is it? What we need is God's love. That's what we need. God's love. 'All You Need Is Love.' As good as I thought the song was. It meant different things to different people, but I still would like to see it on TV, and it's on YouTube, and I think you can get it in colour now on YouTube. But that's what we need. We need God's. We don't deserve God's love. None of us do. It's God who shows that love towards us, and that is a very vital truth.

**00:17:00 Speaker 2**
One of the truths that it speaks about in the Bible is that we become Christians through faith in the sacrifice of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Archie has already said, 'Truly God, fully God, truly man, fully man,' and that you know it sometimes gets a little bit. How do we get round this? But the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ is central to our beliefs, and the beliefs are not only personal but to our movement as the Berean publishing trust. People often ask, don't they? What has God done for me? God's done a lot for me. Hopefully, He's done a lot for you as well. I'm sure He has. But the Apostle John writes in chapter three, verse sixteen of his gospel.

**00:17:58 Speaker 2**
God's soul of the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting or eternal life. Later, that same apostle, in one of his letters, he wrote three letters or three epistles. And he tells us many times about the importance of love towards each other. But in his first epistle, chapter four, verse nine, he writes, 'We love Him—that is, we love God—because He first loved us.' Very important. Another central truth to our beliefs and to our salvation. If God hasn't loved us first

**00:18:56 Speaker 2**
No matter what state our life was in, or is in, or will be in, God loved us first. And if you don't take anything away from today at all, take that with you: God first loved us, and it's an important thing what we should keep in our life. Very, very important truths. And the word love, or the theme love, it runs right through the Bible, through the Old and New Testament, and it's actually in the King James Version, in the Old Authorized Version, it's translated 'love' three hundred and ten times, one

hundred and thirty-one times in the Old Testament, one hundred and seventy-nine times in the New. And I keep saying it's important, and it is.

**00:19:53 Speaker 2**
I'll just read a little bit of scripture now from one Corinthians chapter thirteen. I'll just read the old chapter. It's only thirteen verses, and in the new King James version, it's got an edit. The greatest gift, and Paul writes, the apostle Paul writes, "Though I speak with tongues of men and of angels, but have not love." I have become a sounding brass or a clanging symbol. Though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but not love, I am nothing. Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

**00:20:50 Speaker 2**
Love suffers long; it is kind. Love does not envy. Love does not parade itself. It is not puffed up. It does not behave rudely. It does not seek its own. It is not provoked. It does not think evil. It does not replace. It does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in truth. And it bears all things. It believes all things. It hopes all things, and it endures all things. Love never fails, but where there are prophecies, they will fail; where there are tongues, they will cease, and they have; where there is knowledge, it will vanish away, for we know in part now, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is part will be done away with. When I was a child, I spoke as a child.

**00:21:49 Speaker 2**
I understood as a child. I thought as a child. When I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know, just also as I am known. And now abide. Faith, hope, and love. These three, but the greatest of these is love, and that's what I base my talk upon today. Paul's explaining to the believers in Corinth that although many of them had got spiritual gifts, which were given at the time, supernatural gifts via the Holy Spirit in the previous dispensation to what we are in now.

**00:22:47 Speaker 2**
We have to remember that Israel was still part of God's plan. Always will be part of God's plan, but at the moment they have been set aside, and that may be discussed later. So I'll not go any further than that. But you know that was during the Acts of the Apostles period. Paul writes that without love, no matter what gift we had was available at the time. If they didn't have love, then it was like a clanging symbol. Paul went on to say these will pass away, but now abide faith, hope, and love. These three, but the greatest of these is love. Paul, in his letter to the Galatian church, also compares the sinful nature.

**00:23:46 Speaker 2**
With the spirit spiritual nature, our walk with God and how we reflect this to others. Hopefully, our lives reflect a good life to others. It reflects love. It reflects patience, and it doesn't reflect any kind of nastiness. I know it's difficult, and I admit that I find some people very difficult to love.

**00:24:17 Speaker 2**
I'm a human being. My neighbour sometimes really winds me up. I tell you, really winds me up. But I love him, and we talk, and I had to go and have a word with him now and again. I said, "Look, come on, be fair. We're neighbours. We've got to get on. We want to get on. I love you. The Lord Jesus Christ tells me I've got to love you." And I want to love you. I don't want to fall out with you, and we'll have a little chat. And he understands that I'm right. Never wrong, eh? He's parking in front of our house again. He's got no car to drive, and he's gone on holiday for two weeks, and left this car here. Why? It's nothing, is it? But when my relatives are coming up, we can't park there because he's got three cars on the road.

**00:25:14 Speaker 2**
It's got an empty drive. Park on his drive, and he's got all this CCTV. But I love him, and I love his wife, and we get on really well. To be quite truthful with you, somebody once said that it was like a little rhyme, and he said, 'When we meet with loved ones in heaven, well, that will be glory.'

**00:25:44 Speaker 2**
But while we live on Earth with them, that's another story. It's true, isn't it? Because we're human beings. We're told that we've got to love. Even the Beatles said it: 'All we need is love.' Not quite right. All we need is God's love, and that's what we're hoping to show this afternoon as well. I spoke to Michael some time ago and asked him about Greek words for love. I sent him a message. I said, Michael, am I right in this interpretation of these two Greek words? He says, they're in the Bible. That's what they are. I understand that it was the Greek language at the time.

**00:26:42 Speaker 2**
Was something like coin? Is that how you explain? Coin. As in a coin in your pocket. So I've learnt something already. It was written in and the New Testament written in the Greek of the day. And one of the Greek words, what is identified or translated into love, is philo, or filio. And it reflects a dream, a deep brotherly love that's been demonstrated today, and hugs and the kisses what we had as we met, and it's a deep brotherly love. It's a friendship love. It's a close bond between companions, the love between friends, and it's a give and take kind of love.

**00:27:40 Speaker 2**
Like I've got with my neighbour, I give it, he takes it. Why is he put that car there again? But Michael put me right. And another word is in the Greek is agape, and I think that's one of Archie's favourite words. He loves that word, agape. It kind of

Michael confirmed. It's again. It's an in. It's unconditional love. It's to love what God has for you and as for me. It's the God that you know. It's the God that loved us before we first loved Him. This agape, agape love, and it's the love of the Lord Jesus Christ, the one there on that cross, suffering for me, Pete Ambrose, twenty-year-old.

**00:28:38 Speaker 2**
Sinner, and I came to faith just before my 21st birthday, and He's been guiding me, and I can look back ever since. I've seen a lot in life, and I've missed a lot in life. I've missed good health, for one thing. I know it's hard to believe, but I was born ugly. I really was. I know now I'm the best-looking man, and Jonathan recognises me. I'm the best-looking man in this room. I often get mixed up with Johnny Depp and people like that. I just have to sign, Jada, my name's done. It's done. But I thank Michael for his guidance. But God's love, John three sixteen, for God's soul of the world.

**00:29:35 Speaker 2**
He first loved us because we first loved him. I keep saying it because it's difficult to believe, isn't it? God, who made the cosmos, is looking after the cosmos. Apparently, the moon is moving away from the Earth at about eight millimeters per million years. In three hundred sixty million years' time, the moon will be on the other side of the sun. I'm not worried. If any of you are, that young man there, he might be. He might still be around in 360 million years. I don't think I will be. But I'm also grateful to Archie for the talks he gives and the different kinds of things he discusses, explaining the difference between the Greek and the Hebrew.

**00:30:34 Speaker 2**
It was, but I've been looking at this word agape, and I'm going to refer you to Mr. Welsh's comments, and in the alphabetical analysis, part seven, fantastic read. If you've got it when you get home, just go and read it again. That's what people were mumbling about then. Alphabetical analysis. Part seven, pages fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen, and Mr. Welsh goes on to say, 'A gap in love. It's the relationship. I'm not saying I've written these words. I'm not plagiarising. This is Mr. Welsh's words, and it's how God guided him to put pen to paper. The relationship of the Father and the Son.'

**00:31:30 Speaker 2**
Look at John fifteen verse ten and John seventeen verse twenty six. The redeeming love of God. I'll not repeat all the scripture. The distinctive peculiarity of Christian love towards each other. The love that we give, the love that we share, but the love that we take in from others as well. The love we received when we came here this afternoon. It denotes or it's a sign of the meaning of the believer's relationship to God, and to Christ. So we can look at two Thessalonians, chapter two, verse five, one John, chapter two, verse five. Mr. Welsh also explains something about.

**00:32:27 Speaker 2**
Latin words in this, and I'll let you read it yourself. But words not considered fitting in the Bible, words not considered fitting for this afternoon. And the Vulgate, in the authorised version, uses alternative words, but we don't need to discuss them today. Mr. Welsh goes on to say that as a result, because some of the translations of agape, it's translated in the older versions, in the authorised version, as charity. And Mr. White goes on to say that the word agape is translated 28 times as charity over the years.

**00:33:24 Speaker 2**
Rightly so, Mr. Welsh says that charity has lost its meaning as such. There's a lot of charity shops in Newlands. One time, charity was seen as being put into a workhouse because you've not got a job, you've not got a rent, you've got nowhere to live, so you went to put in. You were put in a workhouse in the 16, 17, 18, 1900s, even. Because she couldn't pay her way in society, and it was looked upon—they were little more than prisons, really—but it was looked upon as being charitable. But there's the saying that now, nothing as cold as charity. You've probably heard that before. But Mr. Welsh goes on to use Moffat's translation.

**00:34:22 Speaker 2**
Now I'm not using Moffat's translation, but I'll just read you what I have written. The word Agape is translated love in the Old Holy Bible. Without the love of God, we wouldn't have the love of Christ in our lives, and we wouldn't have the love for each other either. Love means different things to different people, but we've got to remember that God first loved us before we loved Him. Mr. Wells finishes this analysis by reminding us that the salvation is complete. We don't have to do anything. It's complete. It's assuring. It's unchallengeable.

**00:35:21 Speaker 2**
Nothing can take us away. Mr. Welsh quotes from the Bible, from Romans 38, 39. I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, no things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love, the agape love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Romans 8:38 and 39. Thank you for listening. God bless you. Love you. I know you love me because you can't help it. Remember, God loved us before we loved Him. Blessing. You take care. Goodbye.

**00:36:28 Speaker 1**
Thank You. Thanks very much, Peter. That's Peter Ambrose, and there's a lot in what Peter has shared with us today. When we think about what First Corinthians 13 verse one to 13, which is the chapter of the definition of love given by the Apostle Paul, notice that he uses the negative to show the positive. So love is not, in order for us to have a better understanding of what love is. He uses the negative in order to show the positive for what love is, and we know that God's main attribute is that

God is love. We read this in one John four, verse eight, and when we think about the whole purpose of creation.

**00:37:21 Speaker 1**
Is that because God is love, and love is a verb; it's an active thing. God's purpose of creating man was to show His love to the human race. Also, since the fall of man, through the Lord's sacrifice upon the cross, God's love is truly manifested to us. Through what Christ did for us upon the cross, by sending His Son to be our atonement, to be our substitute, to be our redeemer, and to be our savior. So this is how we know about God's love—that God first loved us before we loved Him—and not only that is that thinking.

**00:38:19 Speaker 1**
Thinking about God's election is also that He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, before we chose Him. That we've been chosen, not just chosen, but chosen in Him, in Christ, before the foundation of the world. That God had us in mind before He created the heavens and the earth. We were in God's mind, in God's heart, prior to what God intended to do.

**00:38:49 Speaker 1**
With the Earth, regarding the chosen people or the chosen race, which will be the nation of Israel. Thank you for sharing that, Peter. A lot of thought has gone into that, and we can really ponder upon that today. Once we go our separate ways, our second speaker will be Nathaniel, and I believe he's going to give a short brief testimony. So we welcome Nathaniel Tisswell, who is the son of Jonathan Tisswell. So thank you, Jonathan.

**00:39:40 Speaker 3**
Nathaniel. Hello, everyone. Thank you for coming. Hope you all had nice journeys. As you probably know, my name is Nathaniel, which means gift from God, which is a considerably better name than Ichabod, which means the glory has departed. I would like to talk about a rather rare word in the Bible, as it only occurs three times, twice in the Old Testament and once in the New Testament. The word in question is wrestle, or in the Greek palle, wrestling.

**00:40:15 Speaker 3**
Similar to "palo" to sway, vibrate. The verses where it occurs are, if you would like to turn, then please do. Genesis 30, verse 8.

**00:40:48 Speaker 3**
And Rachel said, 'With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed.' And she called his name Naphtali. Genesis thirty-two, chapter twenty, verses twenty-four to twenty-five. And Jacob was left alone, and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of day, and when he saw that he prevailed not

against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh, and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint as he wrestled with him. Ephesians chapter six, verse twelve.

**00:41:50 Speaker 3**
For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. For context, I suggest you go away and read the full chapters when you have time. Now you may have noticed that each verse refers to a different kind of wrestling. Genesis 30: verse 8 refers to mental wrestling. Genesis chapter thirty-two verses twenty-four to twenty-five refers to physical wrestling, and Ephesians chapter six verse twelve refers to spiritual wrestling. As an example for mental wrestling, if I had a son who became a priest, would I call him son or father? As an example for physical wrestling, as some of you may know, Dave, I am a four-striped white belt in Brazilian jiu-jitsu.

**00:42:47 Speaker 3**
In Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, there is what we call in the industry rounds. These rounds involve takedowns, sweeps, headlocks, armbars, ankle locks, knee bars, bicep slicers, and many, many more. Now let's set the scene. Before these rounds, we had already done two hours of wrestling, so all of us in the class were very hot and very tired. We had about as much energy as a sloth coming off a sugar rush.

**00:43:17 Speaker 3**
We were also wearing our gees, which is a very thick cotton suit, and it was 25 degrees outside, so that didn't help either. After five minutes in extremely bad positions, I felt like giving up. But an opportunity presented itself, and after a less than glorious victory, we both collapsed and sat down to regain our breath. This example can also be applied to spiritual wrestling. Life is like a Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu competition, wrestle after wrestle, with small breaks in between. You might win some, you might lose some. Some might be easy, and some might be hard. And occasionally, life throws you a black belt. But God will give you those opportunities, and give you the wisdom and the strength to get through those opportunities, to wrestles. But I must clarify, He doesn't just give you the wisdom and the strength and go.

**00:44:15 Speaker 3**
Figure it out. He's always with us. Philippians chapter four verse thirteen says, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." But if we want to be more accurate with the divine text, we must read the original Greek, which states beautifully, "All things, I am strong for, in the one strengthening me." Amen.

**00:44:48 Speaker 1**
Thank you, Nathaniel. Very, very, very well put. I just want to say a couple of things before Wayne, who's going to be our next speaker. Just want to say something regarding the event with Jacob wrestling with God, which is recorded in Genesis 32,

verse 22 to 32, as mentioned by Nathaniel. And in this physical combat, Jacob was literally wrestling with God, and Jacob wanted two things from God: a blessing, bless me, and his name. Who are you? What is your name? And what we have here with Jacob wrestling with God, and also God had

**00:45:43 Speaker 1**
Affected his hip where it went out of joint. Is that Jacob, throughout all his life, he was running away from God. He was running away from people. He was running away from his circumstances, his problems. Now God has met with him and has challenged him. And what we find here is, if you look at the history of the nation of Israel from their exodus out of Egypt, during their time of bondage in the land of Egypt, when they were liberated by God through their servant Moses. If you look at the 40-year wanderings in the wilderness, when they entered their land under judges, or when they were ruled under the various monarchs and kings, Israel has struggled with God. They've wrestled with God.

**00:46:38 Speaker 1**
Going against God's laws, turning to other gods and worshiping other deities, but they still wanted God's blessing. So they were struggling with God, going opposing God, but still wanting God's blessing. And they took pride in claiming to know God when in reality they didn't. Like Jacob, who are you? What's your name? They thought they knew God, and we know that when the Lord.

**00:47:08 Speaker 1**
Finally arrived when the seed of the woman mentioned in Genesis 3:15 had arrived. When the Lord was born through the conception of the Holy Spirit, with His birth through Mary, He was given the divine name Emmanuel, God with us. The Word became flesh. The mystery of godliness mentioned in First Timothy 3:16 is that God was manifested in the flesh. But John chapter one verse eleven tells us that he came to his own, and his own received him not. He wasn't recognised. Again, who are you? And what's your name? But this is how it's been for the whole history of the nation of Israel. That there is a pattern from this occasion with Jacob, coming out of the land of bondage into the promised land.

**00:48:06 Speaker 1**
Whether it be under the judges, whether it be under the kings, under the prophets, the nation of Israel has struggled with God, but at the same time wanting God's blessings. We have a type here of a physical event, but there's a type here of Israel's struggle with God. There is a typology within this passage of Scripture. As for Ephesians 6:12, it ends the way it does. It's a warning for us that there are evil, wicked spiritual forces who are against us, especially for us who are members of the body of Christ. And because we are currently living under the dispensation of grace, with its theme being the mystery, what is the mystery? Is that God had chosen before the foundation of the world a company of people who will occupy heaven.

**00:49:03 Speaker 1**
And that this group of people will replace the fallen angels who had vacated their position in heaven. As a result of a rebellion that took place in heaven with certain angels, with obviously Satan the devil leading that rebellion, there was now a gap which needed filling, and God has filled that gap with Gentile believers, which is us who are members of the body of Christ. And it's only through Paul's prison epistles, which he wrote during his two-year imprisonment in Rome, between 60 to 62 AD, where he writes Ephesians, he writes Colossians, he writes Philippians. He then introduces that we are now under a new economy, an economy which does not include Israel but primarily the Gentiles, us.

**00:50:02 Speaker 1**
Is that now we're not under earthly blessings. We're not connected with the Abrahamic blessings. We are now connected with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, as mentioned in Ephesians one verse three. We are disconnected from the new covenant, and we are disconnected from the Abrahamic blessings. That everything for us is spiritual and heavenly. Hence why Ephesians six ends the way. Does that these fallen angels know that we have now replaced them, so now they will turn against us to try and bring us down and make us lose our rewards. There's that to bear in mind. And life is a struggle. We are constantly wrestling with temptations, with constantly being tested at all fronts.

**00:51:00 Speaker 1**
In a psychological way, an emotional way, a spiritual way, and a physical way. I thank you for bringing that to our attention, Nathaniel. You did really well. Our following speaker is Wayne Pickeral from Birmingham. Great to see you, Wayne. Thank you for joining us today.

**00:51:31 Speaker 4**
You know

**00:51:32 Speaker 5**
It's amazing. Nathaniel, Peter, and myself haven't spoken about what we were going to talk about today. There are words and Bible passages that I've picked up on in my talk, and in this you can see where God is operating in our lives, because even though we haven't spoken about our talks, our talks all coincide with one another. It's amazing. Praise God. Philippians 4:13. I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things. I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

**00:52:28 Speaker 5**
I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. I've been very much like Paul in all my life. I've never really wanted money. Never wanted to be rich, live in a big house, or have a big fancy car, be dripping in gold, or have gold teeth. My needs are basic. I'm happy if my bills are paid. I can buy my dog Ruby sweets, and I can buy

the occasional book. So my family were really surprised to find out I play Euro Millions. When the jackpot is a big one, why does Wayne play Euro Millions? Let me use our Lord's own words to answer this: "Two Timothy three through three, through five." But now this.

**00:53:24 Speaker 5**
But in the last days, perilous times will come, for men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemous, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, disposers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away. As Martin Luther, Luther King's words, I have a dream. A dream where chapel members and their families can either live in a gated community or use it as a retreat, a community built on Christian values. Satan doesn't attack values he already has.

**00:54:22 Speaker 5**
He goes after vows. He doesn't have his true enemies here on earth, who see his influence in politics, business, and everyday life. Bible-believing Christians like ourselves, people such as we here now, who don't want to change God's word to suit their sinful ways, but to live by the fruit of the spirit, to overcome our fleshly desires. Galatians five. Twenty-two, for out of twenty-six, but the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is now law, and those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another.

**00:55:20 Speaker 5**
Envy in one another. You all know Colossians and other chapters like it. However, those roads are constantly under attack from Satan and the world. Alleged Christians embracing what goes against everything God's inspired words says not to do, or twisting God's words to justify sin. Bishop John Charles Royal, first Bishop of Liverpool, eighteen sixteen to nineteen hundred. Quoted in a collection of his sermons, "Armtrous." It is not atheism or my fear so much in the present time as pantheism. It is not the system which says nothing is true, so much as the system which says everything is true. It is a system which is so liberal that it dares not say anything is false. It is a system which is so charitable.

**00:56:18 Speaker 5**
But it will not allow everything to be true. It is a system which is also scrupulous about the failings of others that we are never to say by our rank. I'm not just lost my place. What is it but a bowing down before a great idol, suspiciously called liberality? What is it all but a sacrifice and of truth upon the altar of a caricature? Character of charity. Beware of it if you believe in the Bible. Ryle could have been writing that today. Yet he wrote that was very weird back in the late 19th century.

Today we see how truly rotten civilization has become, having a form of godliness but denying its power, and from such people turn away. I agree.

**00:57:15 Speaker 5**
We are locked in a spiritual warfare. Don't kid yourselves. That's what you're not. Satan wants you to fail more than anyone. Ephesians six ten to twelve. The whole armor of God. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood. But against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places. We live in a physical body, a body of flesh and blood, a body of mind that grows weary at some points in our lives, from the grind of daily life. My dream wants to offer a spiritual escape from those evils.

**00:58:14 Speaker 5**
Somewhere to recharge your spiritual batteries, fellowship with Bible-believing Christians who aren't going to get offended and report you to the police for speaking God's truth. This brings to mind Isaiah 5:20. To those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. We live in a terrible world, growing more evil by the day. We see the word of God in 2 Timothy 3:1 through to 5, becoming a reality before our very eyes daily. People being murdered, sexually assaulted, robbed, beaten, and more. A gap. I love God's love, and the love we practice as Christians should raise in us a righteous indignation and disgust at this.

**00:59:10 Speaker 5**
We don't want this for anybody. We want everybody to be happy as best as can be. Why would anyone want to hurt another human being? It's meant to happen. God says as much, in His inspired word. However, just like a soldier fighting a physical war in a foreign land, we Bible-believing Christians are fighting a spiritual battle. Daily within ourselves and from without. So I make no case for why I play for Euro Millions. It's not for selfish reasons at all. The reason I want a big lottery win is selfish too. I want my dream to be free for all. Or you come for a day, weekend, week, or a month. Joining the seminars, join the communal dinners.

**01:00:08 Speaker 5**
Have Christian fellowship and recharge your spiritual batteries, and all it costs you is your journey to the retreat. You may think that your money won't last long there, Wayne, but I have plans on how costs would be kept low and making the retreat self sufficient. Plus, if my heart stays true to God and all he stands for and wants, then everything else will fall into place. A little faith can move mountains. No one knows when Christ will return. The Bible offers signs to watch out for. A lot of prophecy has come to pass, although not all. Therefore, God willing, my dream still has time to come to fruition. As I said, the spiritual war is escalating.

**01:01:05 Speaker 5**
The pressure upon those who strive to obey every inspired word of God have targets upon their backs. If like me, you love peace and quiet, doing your best to be kind, generous, caring, practising, all the other traits that mark you as a Christian, when you know exactly what I mean. Even our apostle Paul was hunted, attacked, slandered, imprisoned, yet he put his faith in and life in our great God and Saviour's hands, Jesus Christ. My dream is to serve. My dream is a no. Sorry, my dream. I've done a dumb action. My dream is a dream to serve, to give, to share, and bless. The riches of a lottery win wouldn't be my financial wealth. My wealth would be serving God and my fellow man. Which is truly my dream. Should it ever happen, when I curl up my toes and leave this mortal coil.

**01:02:05 Speaker 5**
The retreat or pray would be there for my fellow Christians to enjoy until the day of our Lord. Thank you, and God bless you all.

**01:02:30 Speaker 1**
You, thank you, Wayne. A heartfelt message there, and we hope your dream comes true. So thank you. Our next speaker will be Alan Taylor, and he's come all the way from Scotland. He's one of our loyal and faithful trustees, as is Peter Ambrose, and it's great to have two of the trustees here at the Northern Conference in Manchester.

**01:03:02 Speaker 1**
We give you a very warm welcome, Alan. Thank you for joining us today. Nice to see you.

**01:03:11 Speaker 6**
It's a privilege to be here today, and I thoroughly enjoyed it last year, and I think it'll be exactly the same this year. What I'd like to actually speak about, and I'll maybe start this with some scripture, is from Colossians one, verse fifteen to seventeen. It's talking about the Lord Jesus Christ. And it says, 'Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature, for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, that are in earth.'

**01:03:55 Speaker 6**
Visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers, all things were created by Him and for Him, and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. When I read that, and when there are several verses in the Bible similar to that, it conveys the power that comes from that. These verses. This is the Lord Jesus Christ as Creator, and for some people get a shock when they hear that. But He is. The God is invisible. No one's seen God, but if you've seen the Son, you've seen Him. But it's the power that comes from that, and He created things that are visible and invisible.

**01:04:52 Speaker 6**
And you say to yourself, and quite rightly, when you think of the invisible, you think of the spiritual things, like the principalities and powers, whether they be antagonistic or whether they're not antagonistic. You think of that as being invisible. I just thought, and I can't help myself, in the material world, it's I see you and you see me. But is that the reality? The reality is that each human body has got about 86 billion neurons that convey electrical impulses that make you who you are. That's the reality, and thankfully, we don't see that. We see the physical, and I'm glad about that. And I'm also glad that we don't see the spiritual forces that oppose us.

**01:05:49 Speaker 6**
And if you want to go into that, go into Two Kings, and read about Elisha and his servant, and the Syrian army had encompassed, and his servant is desperate. He says, 'The Syrian army are outside; they were doomed.' And then Elisha says, 'Ask the Lord to reveal to you the situation as it is,' and he did. And as soon as his servant looked, he could see the chariots of fire. He could see the spiritual ones that would outnumber those that oppose. This is the invisible. But there's also another side to the invisible. I think it's to do with quantum physics. If you want to give yourself a nice headache, have a look at quantum physics. And it's not like classical physics.

**01:06:46 Speaker 6**
Sir Isaac Newton, an apple falling on his head. It's not like that. It's man's effort or human beings' effort to scratch the surface of what the reality is. What is this reality? Verse seventeen for me. Every time I read that verse, I want to put in brackets where he says, "By him all things consist." Now I've got to watch because there's so many Greek scholars here. I've got to be careful what I say. But the word is synasketon, is similar to that, and what it means, held together, hold together. It's the Lord Jesus Christ who holds everything together, the whole universe, the material universe, right down to the subatomic level. Now I don't know if there's any physicists here.

**01:07:42 Speaker 6**
And I'm not here to talk because A, I'm not qualified, and B, I'm going to repeat what someone who does know about physics. I don't know if you heard of Niels Bohr. Niels Bohr was one of the most eminent physicists that ever lived, a Danish scientist. He was a contemporary of Einstein, and he said, "If you're not shocked by quantum physics, you haven't understood it." And you say to yourself, "What does he mean by that?" Well, have a look at the two-slit experiment that was done. Have a look at Schrödinger's cat, and then you'll get an idea of what's been discussed. How particles, when they're being observed, can change their behaviour. And you think to yourself, "What? What's going on? It's the weirdest thing ever."

**01:08:39 Speaker 6**
There is no explanation. I will quote one other person from this area, and it's John

Stuart Bell. He did a great mathematical model to predict certain things, and he said in an interview that when he was a certain scientist, when they were examining things, he said it was like a conspiracy at the subatomic level.

**01:09:09 Speaker 6**
A conspiracy. It was like certain things were being hidden from view, and they couldn't explain it. And then finally, I'll say what Richard Feynman—he was a Caltech man, very eminent physicist. He astounded me by saying, "It's safe to say, nobody knows what quantum physics really is." That's his words. Nobody really knows, understands how it works. It's so amazing, but we know how it works. It works because the Lord Jesus Christ, as it says in verse seventeen, holds it all together. He bonds it together. Without Him, the universe, the material universe, of both the invisible and the visible, would disintegrate. He holds it in His hand. Now I don't know how much effort that was for the Lord.

**01:10:07 Speaker 6**
All I do know is that he said, 'Let there be light.' There's another thing. Have a look at light. Let there be a light, and there was light. I don't want to sound as though I'm being disrespectful, but for me, God, in His Creator, or the Lord Jesus Christ, when He created all this, and it's unbelievable, and we can't prove it. We've just scratched the surface. We don't really know. But what we do know is that quantum physics does work because there are certain technologies that we use day in and day out in electronics, microelectronics, lasers is another one. Even an MRI scanner they operate on the basis of quantum physics, and that's it. So we know it works, and that's what that Richard, what's his name, Feynman had said. He said the only thing it has got going for it is unquestionably right. It does work.

**01:11:07 Speaker 6**
We've tried to find the secrets of how the universe is. But we do know. You say, right? This is all very interesting and it's all very good. But where are you going with this? Let there be light. Could it be said? Could the Lord Jesus Christ say, 'Let there be redemption'? He couldn't say that. He couldn't just say if you like any in a and if we put it this way, in a comfort zone where I don't know, he had to leave the comfort zone to do this. It had to be God manifest in the flesh. This is the key. He had to be our kinsman and he had to be a redeemer and he is our kinsman redeemer. But the only way he could do that was he had to be in human form.

**01:12:05 Speaker 6**
As Archie said earlier, divine and human. It's the only way that he could save, he could redeem. But keep in mind this for this power of the subatomic level. And think about this: is that Christ? This is the person that washed the disciples' feet. Now think about that. This is the same power. This is the force that holds the universe together. I know he was in a limited form because that's how he had to be. He was human, and he was God. God may manifest in the flesh, but think about it. Washed the disciples' feet, endured the anguish that happened in the garden. The anguish

is sometimes overlooked. The anguish was a nightmare, even for him, and the agony of the.

**01:13:05 Speaker 6**
And yet, that was his mission. He had to do that. It couldn't be again. He had that's the only way redemption. It wasn't a case of speaking and something and it happened. He had to come down to this level. He had to stoop. And even when he was resurrected and then he appeared to the disciples, I find it quite touching. He was, clamber me. Has a spirit? Has a ghost, if you like? Got flesh and bone. This our God. This our Lord, and this the one that holds the fabric, the whole universe together. And yet, it really is disappointing. You read some people like Stephen Hawking. I've read a few physicists, and that there are some Christians there, but most of them or a lot of them think.

**01:14:03 Speaker 6**
Of an impersonal force, that's what they are. But aren't we glad it's not an impersonal force? An impersonal force—you mean nothing to an impersonal force. None of us do. And even worse than an impersonal force, could you imagine a capricious God? A one-eyed God that could say, 'You know, you've annoyed me this week. You're annoying. You're out.' That's it. You've annoyed me, and that's it. I'm not mentioning any other religions, but there are some religions that actually believe that only one way of guaranteeing this paradise. And even one of their leaders had said, even if I had one foot in the door of paradise, I can't trust the God that he was talking about to let me in. And I say, well, let me introduce you to the God of the Old Testament and the New Testament.

**01:14:59 Speaker 6**
And you know what he says? He says he delights in keeping his word. He can do nothing else but keep his word. What a relief! You know that we are, and it's not only that. It's every single individual here. He knows. He knows you. He knows me. He knew you before you were born. And as mentioned earlier, he chose you in Him before the world was even founded, before the creation, before or overthrow. He knew, and He chose you in Him. And you have to say, what a God. You couldn't. It's almost unbelievable, but it's true. And in life, you go through different things, and you have.

**01:15:55 Speaker 6**
Peers that are not good, and your peers that are good, and as already, because already the speakers that have gone before were interlinking in certain things, it's the same theme. He will guide you through life, and then sometimes you'll say. I mentioned to Simon today, this afternoon it was quite strange when I said to him. Sometimes I say to him, are you remembering that I'm dust?

**01:16:24 Speaker 6**
That's true. I'm dust, and feeble, and then the answer is always the same, and I

know what the answer is before I ask, and that answer is, my grace is sufficient for you, and it's sufficient for everyone here. But keep in mind, when you're talking about the Lord Jesus Christ and this enormous power, it's not an impersonal power. It's a power that would tap you on the shoulder. It's one that would guide you. That one helps you throughout life. It's a real force, and it's a great blessing. And we're so fortunate to be in this position because he stooped from that position and became God manifest in the flesh. And without that, we wouldn't be here. We would be lost. It couldn't happen. But he made it happen.

**01:17:23 Speaker 6**
And we look forward to the day when this frail body is no more, and we'll have a spiritual body. Then we'll actually be able to understand what spiritual blessings actually are.

**01:17:55 Speaker 1**
Thank you, thank Alan Taylor, for sharing that. And what really coincides with Colossians one verse fifteen to seventeen is Hebrews chapter one verse three. And we believe Paul is the author and writer of the epistle to the Hebrews. But Hebrews one verse three tells us who the Son is, his nature, and also His power and the fact that He's also our Redeemer. Hebrews one verse three: 'who being in the brightness of His glory and express image of His person and upholding all things by the word of His power. When He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.' So as Alan rightly pointed out at the very beginning when the Lord.

**01:18:53 Speaker 1**
Created the light to divide it from the darkness. The Lord just had to say it through His Word, and it is God's Word which upholds all things, everything within the universe, the cosmic universe, the stars, the moon, the planets. If we think about the universe, which is vast. It's like a clock which goes round. Everything is circular in a circular motion. But when you put it down to quantum physics, as Alan pointed out, quantum mechanics, which I don't know much about, the only thing I do know is that it defies all the laws of physics. So a small atomic particle can be in two places at once.

**01:19:52 Speaker 1**
It can also split into two, and we know that God can do that Himself. He can be in two places at once because He is omnipresent. He can be everywhere at one time, and the Lord can be in two places at once. Something of God's divine nature is found there within the world of quantum mechanics. Thank you for sharing that, Alan. I think that'll be a talking point later on as well. Thank you. We're going to have a short break now, an interval for about forty to forty-five minutes. We can soon make our way to the kitchen, have something to eat and drink. Let's give grace and give thanks to the Lord for the food which we are about to eat, and then we can resume after forty minutes.

**01:20:49 Speaker 1**
Heavenly Father, we give you thanks for the individuals that have come up here to share the scriptures with us and their personal testimonies. Thank you, Lord God, for the input, the encouragement, and for the edification that we have received. And as we now stop for the next 40 minutes, Lord God, as we prepare to have something to eat, we pray, Heavenly Father, that you will bless the food to our minds and bodies may keep us strong, healthy, and fit. And above all, Lord God, may we continue to enjoy this sweet time of fellowship that we have together. Thank you that you have blessed us with both spiritual and physical food this afternoon. We give you thanks in Jesus' name, our Lord, Savior, and Head. Amen. Everyone, enjoy.