

Our Motive to Please God

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[0 : 00] Page 1186 if you're using a red covered Bible. It's on page 1186 through these summer months.

It is summer. Yesterday was summer. And we're going through this great letter. And Ralph started us off and Kevin continues in chapter 2.

So we're going to read from chapter 2 verse 1 through to verse 12 of 1 Thessalonians. On page 1186. Let's hear God's word.

You know, brothers and sisters, that our visit to you was not a failure. We had previously suffered and been insulted in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God, we dare to tell you this gospel in spite of strong opposition.

For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel.

[1 : 25] We are not trying to please men, but God who tests our hearts. You know, we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed. God is our witness.

We were not looking for praise from men, not from you or anyone else. As apostles of Christ, we could have been a burden to you, but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children.

We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God, but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us.

Surely you remember, brothers and sisters, our toil and hardship. We worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you.

You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous, and blameless we were among you who believed.

[2 : 27] For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting, and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who called you into his kingdom and glory.

Kevin, when you come up, Yelena, can I ask you just to get some pens while I'm talking to Kevin here?

Yelena's going to be passing out pens. It's an opportunity. You can take notes on the back of the news sheet. Kevin will welcome any feedback afterwards, encouraging ones first, isn't that right? Exactly. This is Kevin O'Connor. He's studying in CIT, just completed your degree, and going on to a master's.

Is that right? No. No? Well, tell us. I was considering a master's. I was offered a master's, but I'll be pursuing four years of theological training with a correspondence course with the evangelical movement of Wales.

[3 : 30] There's another man in my church, Danny McAllen, who's doing that at the moment. So it involves going over for one week in August and another in Easter for intensive lectures. And then what you do is they send you less essays and reading assignments then to do then via correspondence.

So it allows me to serve in my church, work a full-time job, save up to get married to that girl. And so that's what I want to do the next four years anyway. Okay.

Excellent. And you were just on camp as well? Yep. Had the hard job of looking after my son for a week? That's good. You beat him at table tennis? I did, just about. It wasn't good.

It wasn't good. But welcome here today. And yeah, I'm going to pray for you and for us. Okay, so let's pray. Father, thank you for your gifts to us.

Thank you for people. And thank you for Kevin. Thank you for his love for you. Thank you for making him a child of your family.

[4 : 25] Thank you for the love that you have given to him to serve your church and your people. We pray for him in this coming year as he settles into theological education, that you would help him in his reading, in his essay writing.

You would guard him from just making it an informational exercise, but that you would use it all to change his life, to change him to be more like Christ, to be better equipped, to be a servant of the gospel as one, as we've just read, who is entrusted with the gospel.

So we pray for him and we ask for your help upon him now and upon us all, your Holy Spirit to be at work amongst us, we pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. Thanks, Kevin. Thank you. Good morning, everybody. So, let's get myself ready here now. It's a privilege to be here.

And I'm just amazed at the grace of God that I can stand before his people and open his word to you. So I just thank you so much for this invitation. And thank you to my God for letting me stand here.

[5 : 37] And so, I know you started Thessalonians already as a church. And so you've seen that it's a letter written by Paul from Paul, Silvanus and Timothy. They were fellow missionaries. It was on Paul's second missionary trip.

He did a big circle kind of around the place, around two different countries. And he landed, towards the end of it, he ended up in Thessalonica, which is in modern-day Greece. And he arrived from persecution.

And he arrived from out of the frying pan into the fire, as it were, and planted a church there by God's grace. And it was a persecuted church. And so Timothy had visited the church in the meantime, so they moved on.

Timothy went back and visited the church in Thessalonica. And he reported back to Paul. And so, concerning their faith and example, which he looked at last week. And so this letter was written by Paul in light of this report.

So it's kind of Paul's response, after Timothy had given a report to them, of how the Thessalonians were doing. And so, when we're looking at the book of Thessalonians, its parallel passage is in Acts 17, verses 1 to 9, which outlines the actual first visit that Paul and his entourage made to the Thessalonians.

[6 : 43] And so Paul is speaking to them as brothers. And he goes on as well to use paternal language, that he is their father in the Lord. And also, he describes himself as a mother, as we'll see later.

So Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy came from Philippi to Thessalonica to preach the gospel. That was their goal. And this was the end of Paul's second missionary trip, as I said, from 49 to 52 AD. And today, what we'll be looking at is chapter 2, verses 1 to 12 specifically, where Paul outlines how he ministered among them and why. And so, I know preachers like fancy ways of saying things, so here's my shot of this.

The content and the intent of their ministry. There you go. I thought that was good enough. So the content and the intent of their ministry. And so today, for us as people in 2012, we're not in a persecuted church.

We're not in Thessalonica. But we are God's people. And so scripture always comes to bear to us. And by the Holy Spirit, we will realize that in our individual lives. And so today, God's word reminds us that our motives for Christian living, our motives for ministry as well, are so important.

[7 : 54] And they will shape and define the legacy that we leave behind for God's kingdom and how we labor for him. And we don't have long. It feels like I entered college like four weeks ago, and now I'm finished.

I think once you leave secondary school, it's just like a shotgun. I don't know. I feel like my life's going to fast forward. So I just realized that our time is limited as Christians. So let us labor under the right motives.

And so let's begin in verse one. We're just going to go down through it verse by verse and just expand on what Paul is speaking about. And he says, you know, brothers and sisters, that our visit to you was not without results.

And so Paul begins reminding them of the obvious. The very fact that he's writing to them is proof. If there's someone there to write to, that's a good thing, because the church took ground. They took root.

And so he says, you know, he casts their mind back to their visit. And in one verse five, Paul said that the gospel didn't just come to you. So chapter one verse five, he said the gospel didn't just come to you in word.

[8 : 51] It came to you in power and the Holy Spirit. And I know I've shared the gospel with people before, and I've asked them, do you understand what I'm telling you? And they go, I get it. But you see the spirit is not at work and that power is not there.

And it's a sad thing. But you also see those times when you share the gospel and the power is there and the Holy Spirit is there to open their eyes to the gospel. And such is the case here in the Thessalonians.

And Paul is reminding them. He said, look, I didn't come to you just with a message. I came to you and the Lord came in power and the Holy Spirit. And that is why he has someone to write to. And so in Acts 17, we read about this actual visit.

So I'm just going to give you a brief overview. You can look at it yourself in your own time, but Acts 17, 1 to 9. And it says that basically what Paul used to do, his style of ministry, was to go to the synagogue, open up the Old Testament, and prove that Jesus was the Christ.

And it says in Acts 17 that he proved to them, explained and proved to them, so it's possible to prove from the Old Testament that Christ had to suffer and rise again. Because the Jewish understanding of the Messiah was that he was going to be a king that was going to come along and basically kick the Romans to touch and bring in this earthly rule.

[9 : 59] Whereas what Paul was saying, he reasoned with them. No, it was actually necessary for the Christ, the Messiah, the chosen one of God, to suffer, which doesn't sound very kingly, to be humbled and suffered and die on a cross and then be risen again.

And so he reasoned with them. And some Jews believed, many God-fearing Greeks believed, and some influential women also believed. So influential women would be essentially wives of prominent men, as the society was then.

But what happened is, after a couple of weeks of this, it says about three Sabbaths, about two weeks, but it must have been, it was a good bit longer than that. So a good few weeks, the Jews got sick of it, and they'd got some, basically some wasters from the marketplace, started up a riot, dragged them, they couldn't find Paul and Silvanus, or Silas or Silvanus, it's the same guy.

They couldn't find them, so what they did is they dragged Jason, who was their host for the week, or for their time, their visit in Thessalonica, dragged them before the magistrates, and said that they're committing treason against King Caesar. And so Jason is forced to pay bonds, he's basically forced to pay money as a guarantee that he won't put these people up again.

And as soon as night falls, Paul and Silvanus, they continue on and they head off to Berea. And so you can see that it was, you can imagine the stress of that, imagine ministering among the Jews, and then suddenly there's a riot, you've got to leave as soon as there's night cover.

[11 : 22] I mean, that was a pretty stressful visit for them. And so he left the church in persecution, the Jews were giving them hassle because they had left as they saw the way of God to follow this carpenter from Nazareth.

And so in verse 2 then, Paul goes on to give them a little background. So if that was bad, he says, okay, go back to before I even arrived there. I came from Philippi, and that was just another bad time, it was really difficult for him.

He said, we had previously suffered, verse 2, and been treated outrageously in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of God, we dare to tell you his gospel in the face of strong opposition.

And this outrageous treatment that Paul was referring to was the fact that they were arrested and beaten, they were put in shackles, and as their Roman citizens, basically the magistrates there got egg in their chin, they sort of threw them in prison, realized they're Roman citizens, and said, okay, you can go.

And Paul was like, well, hey, you don't get off that lightly. So they had to apologize to them and send them on their way. But you know, when Paul was in prison in Philippi, I think this is amazing, when Paul was in prison, with Silvanus as well, they sang in their prison cells.

[12 : 36] And I think this morning of people in Eritrea, in containers, and I wonder, I think they're singing, I hope they are in their hearts, and we pray the Lord will be with them. But as they sung,

and as they prayed, there was an earthquake, and the prison basically was just rocked to pieces.

Paul comes out, the door swings open, Paul comes out, the guard is ready to kill himself, because he knows it's better to kill himself than stand before his authorities, knowing that the people that he's been entrusted with have now gone free. And then the jailer gets saved.

He goes, what must I do to be saved? And so his whole house is saved and baptized, and so Paul leaves them in Philippi there, the church, and goes on his way. He greets Lydia as well, another woman who was converted.

And so you can see, you've got the frying pan, and the fryer. So Paul, wherever he seems to go, there's persecution, there's persecution, persecution. And I think it's just, it's really, it's really evident in Acts to see that as the Lord's church is expanding, it is always under fire.

And I know that mightn't be a very comforting thought to us, but we see the places in the world where the Lord's church, where God's people are oppressed in their worship of him. And we see how God blesses them, and how the church spreads in spite of it.

[13:51] And I love that. Not that we don't love the fact that we have freedom here as well. We shouldn't seek persecution as such. So verse 3, he goes on to talk about motives. That's what we want to look at this morning.

So there's the background. He says, remember what I did when I was there? Here's the background for what I did when I was there, before we came there. And he goes on, he says, verse 3, for the appeal we make does not spring from error or from impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you.

And he says, look, I have no hidden agenda here. And as Christians, we should just have a simple agenda, is to please God and to bring people the gospel.

And it's almost deceptively simple. But Paul says, I don't have any trick up my sleeve. I'm not trying to get money out of you. I'm not trying to be greedy. I'm not trying to flatter you. I came. And I just want you to know that I'm not trying to trick you and that my motives for this are pure.

And it's also possible as well, if you read Paul's writings, Paul oftentimes had to address critics in the church. What happens if Paul would plant a church? I'd say he just got sick of it by the end of it. He'd plant a church, leave, and then you'd have someone going like, I don't know about that Paul fellow.

[15:03] They'd undermine his authority. And I actually looked it up. Paul wrote 13 epistles, okay? Not including Hebrews, but most people don't believe that he wrote Hebrews. Out of the 13 epistles, nine of them start off with Paul asserting his apostleship.

And I think that's telling. And so it could be the case, now not explicitly, but it could be the case that in the Thessalonian church that Paul is addressing maybe local critics or people who are sort of giving out about Paul, saying, you know, he came there now and he only did that because he was greedy or he wanted to get money out of it.

He'll be back now and he'll give you the bill for what he did. And he's saying, look, that's not happening. I'm not going to come back and do that. And so although it's not explicitly mentioned, it could be the case that he's addressing those things.

And so regardless, Paul is just saying, our motives are pure. He was transparent before them. And so in verse 4, he gives the actual motive itself. And this is the crux of the passage, I think, for us as Christians today.

On the contrary, verse 4, we speak as those approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please people, but God who tests our hearts.

[16:11] And so Paul here states plainly their motive to please God. It's so simple. I just, I love how scripture is just like, it's like having a shower for your mind.

It just gets rid of all the dirt, all the buildup. And sometimes when I go out in passage, I was speaking to people about the gospel or I was in college, I get all wound up. And you think, well, why am I doing this and all these things?

Why do we serve tea from the hatch? Why do we play guitars? Why do we set up mics? Why do we come here every Sunday morning? Why do we minister in MTC camps or in camps for children with hard of hearing?

To please God because of what he has done for us. And here is the purest and highest motive for Christian ministry. And there are other motives as well. I mean, I got onto passage because, or we share the gospel with people because we want them to be saved.

I want everybody in my extended family to become Christians. And it pains me that so far very few of them have it. None. That is a perfectly good motive but that must come under the highest motive which is the pleasure of God in all things.

[17:15] To please him, to obey him. And by pleasing him we obey him and by obeying him we exalt him. It's all wrapped up in one sort of huge motive. And so we must love people absolutely.

And so I think if you look at remember when Christ was asked what's the greatest commandment? What did he say? He said to love God essentially. And he said and the second is like it.

And I can kind of see your man kind of going I didn't ask you about the second commandment. But you see what Jesus was doing there. He was saying there is a very tight relationship between these two. I mentioned the first and it is first.

But I will also mention the second because there is such a close relationship. And so it is with our motives as Christians our highest motive ought to be the pleasure of God but linked to it is the pleasure of people in God.

And he said it's not to please man so Paul states in the negative sense that I didn't come here to please you. I've said it to many of my friends before. I think you get this as Christians. If I wanted to be a people pleaser I'd have picked a different religion.

[18:16] You know or else I'd preach some sort of false gospel about how God will make you rich all the time. And you know there's an awful lot of better religions if your goal is to make people feel happy about themselves you know in a cheap sense.

Christianity of course does bring much joy when we receive Christ. But you know Paul stated in Galatians 1.10 he said you know for am I now seeking the approval of man or of God or am I trying to please man if I were still trying to please man I would not be a servant of Christ.

He says you're going to serve Christ he says you can give up you can give up that motive of just trying to please men. you serve Christ and let men think what they will. And he said I did not change our message to please people the gospel divides it offends people it's awkward to bring up in conversation it started a riot in Thessalonica quite literally wherever Paul went it was just like an explosion but it offends and it's awkward it's really awkward sometimes to bring up the gospel.

I went up to my neighbor the other day because I realized I'd never actually gone to my neighbor about the gospel and it was one of the most painfully awkward conversations of my life. I'm just being honest with you but now she has a gospel of John she has a tract and it's something more than she had the week before when I didn't tell her anything and so I trust God for that but I just want to remind us that it's okay for it to be awkward but let's go anyway and it says here as well Paul reminds them God who tests our hearts and he doesn't say God who tested our hearts or God who will test our hearts on that great day of judgment he could have said something like that but he says God who tests our hearts on a continuing ongoing basis and so we see we know that God often comes to us sometimes when we're lying in our beds at night and he convicts us where we've gone astray or where our motives maybe have gone off or where we need to look in our lives and we see that God tests our hearts and that he keeps us on the narrow path with that singular motive the pleasure of God and he says in 5 you know we never use flattery nor do we put on a mask to cover up greed

God is our witness and flattery we know from scripture is sin I looked up a definition of flattery in the dictionary and it says to ingratiate yourself with another by means of excessive compliments so in other words just trying to butter somebody up by telling them they're great but flattery never works as a means of spreading the gospel what we know from scripture about man in his fallen state is that he is in love with himself he is a hater of God and if you tell him that he's great he's bound to agree and so the main message of the gospel is not that you're a fantastic person it's that God is a great God and that he has come to save sinners like us and greed is likewise a sin and Paul is well aware that there are many ministers around in that time as there are now who use the gospel or a sort of gospel and use the scripture to make money and that is a shameful thing Paul addressed that in Romans 16 he said for such persons do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ with their own appetites and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive and you know we are sure from scripture they will be numbered among those who stand before the Lord on that day and the Lord will say

[21:35] I never knew you away from me you workers of lawlessness and so Paul is saying I'm not like those I did not come to you to flatter you or to get money out of you and he says we were not looking for praise verse 6 and 7 and 8 as well he says we were not looking for praise from people

so again he's saying the same thing a lot of the time over and over again the same thing not from you or anyone else even though as apostles of Christ we could have asserted our authority instead we were like young children among you just as a nursing mother cares for her children so as apostles of Jesus as apostles of Jesus Christ as ones who received their ministry directly from the Lord they could have made legitimate requests he was an apostle that was a privilege and he could have made legitimate requests without sinning and the only thing I can think of at the moment would be that they would ask for financial support ask for bread and board as it were but Paul said no we were sensitive towards you and they did not have a sense of entitlement so they didn't walk in and go like we're apostles you know we're the big Jesus we'll tell you how it's done he shared the gospel with them they disciplined them but they did not lean on them or become a burden to them and he says as a mother as a nursing mother cares for her children and so mothers ask for nothing from their children really they don't try and make a profit off their kids if they do they're mixed up mothers want to see their kids to grow up and be healthy and Paul is saying that's what I want for you

I'm like a mother nursing you I want you to grow up and be healthy that's my desire and so we care for you he says because we loved you so much we delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well and so Paul said I didn't just give you the gospel and kind of step back I wasn't standoffish I gave you my very self we shared our lives with you we ate with you we worked in the same areas as you we shared ourselves with you so it wasn't a sort of impersonal here is the gospel and we'll be over here we'll come back tomorrow and tell you more they share the gospel with them they share their lives and that brings validity and I think there's surely a good principle to be observed here that by giving of ourselves we reinforce the message of the gospel as it says in Titus that our good works they adorn the doctrine of God our saviour and so our good works are not the gospel they are a result of the gospel they are an outworking of the gospel but what they do is they point towards the gospel and so Paul shared with them their very lives and this reinforced how genuine and sincere he was to them surely you remember brothers verse 9 it says surely you remember brothers and sisters our toil and hardship we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preach the gospel of God to you and so they sought to avoid being a burden financially and we all know that Paul had a trade what was his trade he made tents I'm intimately aware of the need for good tents having spent two weeks living in one we had army tents they're really good tents but we had really good rain as well so I woke up one night and it was just like just like a bucket of water had been sloshed into our tent but that was fun I had to laugh it was good fun but Paul I'd like to think of this sometimes we think of Paul like this and we ought to think of Paul highly I was just thinking on the way down I'd like to imagine Paul just sitting there making a tent I know we always think of Paul like standing in the middle of you know the Coliseum like roaring you know and having this massive point to make and preaching Christ but remember Paul sat down sometimes for the whole day and made tents I think I've never actually thought about that before I knew he made tents but I never actually pictured him sitting there you know getting the cuts right or getting one wrong getting frustrated selling them and just dealing day to day and I think that is that's a nice thought to dwell on I think to see that even Paul the great Paul just to see him making tents and that gives me hope for a guy who works in a shop

I sell you know computers and laptop cases and all that I can do all things for the glory of God and so can you there is no separation between secular and holy all of our lives are worshipped towards him and finally in 10 just going towards the end of it he says you are witnesses and so is God of how holy and righteous and blameless you were among you and he appeals to their consciences he says look remember just think you can pick what we did apart just look at what we did it was before you all it was transparent and it was clear to you that we had no false motives and just going back as well sorry just to verse 9 there while we preach the gospel to you I just want to pick up on that very last phrase it says while we preach the gospel to you and so he doesn't say like when we preach the gospel to you it wasn't just a one off event as I said remember that it didn't just hit them with the gospel and leave for the next town he worked in the in the synagogue Paul did for three weeks three sabbaths so two weeks inclusive but he stayed with them a lot longer and he disciplined them and so the gospel this is something that is that is really important

I think for us to understand is the gospel is simple enough to be outlined in a few phrases or even a few paragraphs in a few minutes you can give someone the gospel you can start off with the holy and righteous God the fall of man the Messiah the sent God that God sent us a solution he sent us

to atone for sins he sent his own son Jesus Christ and that by simple faith in him we can join in his resurrection life and be forgiven of our sins there's lots of ways you can say the message of the gospel but it's simple enough to be outlined in a few minutes but it is deep enough and it is deep enough to be thought of for eternity we will spend eternity glorying in the gospel of Jesus Christ we will not arrive at heaven and realize that there's you know another gospel there is one gospel and we will we will glory in that forever it says that angels long to look into these things that is an amazing thing to think of isn't it that is how amazing the gospel is the fact that I was just thinking about this over the week that God infinite God of all creation who existed in perfect communion in the Trinity before the world began became a baby he became a baby

[28 : 01] God became a baby he grew up and when he was 33 years old he was crucified on a cross naked shamefully for my sin and for your sin what a wonderful wonderful gospel it's amazing to think of and Paul stayed there and he explained it he disciplined them and so he didn't as I said he didn't just give them the gospel as it were in a couple of points and leave them he explained it to them and I have no doubt that Paul would have taken them because they didn't have the New Testament at that time yet he would have taken them to the Old Testament I would like to guess at the passages he would have used you see Isaiah 53 or Ezekiel 46 he was talking about the new heart you see all those Old Testament passages that speak of Christ and how Paul would have shown them from the scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah and that he was the way the truth and the life and finally in verses 11 and 12 he says for you know we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children encouraging comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God who calls you into his kingdom and glory and he says as a father deals with his own children and I think the picture of fatherhood is a perfect blend of authority and love

I'm glad that I have a father and he's not a perfect father by any means but I'm glad I have a father and I'm glad that God has given him authority over me and I'm glad that he loves me and I think if you have all love but no authority no discipline you get mixed up kids but if you have all authority and no love it's a sterile relationship with your father but our father in heaven he's a perfectly loving father and he disciplines us because he loves us and Paul goes on and I want us to just dwell on this as we finish he says I want to he encouraged you comforted them encouraged them and urged them to live lives worthy of God who calls you into his kingdom and glory and I was thinking like it says that in Philippians in chapter 1 of Philippians or chapter 2 it's in Philippians anyway definitely where it says that we are to live in a manner worthy of the gospel I was thinking how can you live a life worthy of that how can you live up to this amazing calling that God has brought us to that God has become man that he has humbled himself that he has died under the curse of the law and that he has redeemed us from out of the law into the gospel of grace how can I live a life that even what does worthy mean in that case there is no life that deserves the gospel that's not what Paul is getting at he's not saying live a life to earn your gospel there's none of us in this room that deserve the grace of God the mercy of God as revealed to us through our Lord Jesus Christ

I know I don't I deserve hell it took me a few years to really be able to say that and mean it but having seen more of my sinful nature I realize now that I deserve the wrath of God apart from Jesus Christ I really do I'm not saying that because I'm standing up here I'm saying that because I know myself and I realize from scripture that all men are just like me and so apart from God's mercy and forgiveness through the Lord Jesus Christ all men deserve God's wrath and judgment but it is an unearned gift God has lavished his love upon us as it says in 1st John what manner of love is this that we should be called children of God it's an amazing thing so there is no life that deserves the gospel there's no one that ever God came along to and said he's really good I think he deserves the gospel it is all of grace in fact the gospel is good news for us because we don't deserve it if our salvation was contingent upon our performance I'd have been disqualified years ago but thank God that it depends not on man who wills but on God who has mercy and boy does he have mercy boy is he patient and I just

I revel in that I thank him every day for it and so when he's saying is live a manner worthy of the gospel here's what I think he means is live a life that points and reflects the fact that God has undeservingly showed his mercy upon you he's not calling us to to sort of try and earn our salvation at all that's a works gospel and Paul has spent a lot of time in Galatians and many other epistles trying to dismantle that he's saying live a life that reflects the mercy and glory and forgiveness of Jesus Christ I think the nicest people to talk to in the world are people who are humble and people who are forgiven remember Jesus said you know if you're forgiven little you love little isn't that what

he said but he's forgiven much and so the more we dwell on the gospel the more we realize how God has had mercy on us the more happy we are to put up with other people to put up with our own sinful nature to serve in a church humbly to go out and talk to people about the gospel and if they spit in our face or if they just give us some really weird sort of awkward response like I got during the week to just say that's okay because you know what it was awkward for God to come to earth to become a child to grow up

God went through such persecution and he endured the shame of the cross from me the least I can do is go to my neighbor and have a bit of an awkward conversation so long as they know the gospel and I'll let God take care of which soil that seed falls on and Paul is calling them to a life of holiness he's calling them to sanctification that's the fancy word for holiness becoming more like Jesus even in the midst of persecution and finally he says the motive for this call to holiness is the end result of our faith the kingdom of God and the glory of God and so may we be people who are busy readying ourselves for that kingdom as it comes here on earth and eternally on that great day of judgment let me pray for us Father I thank you for your word and Lord I pray that you take these sort of broken thoughts about your word

[34 : 36] Lord and I pray Lord that that your gospel Lord would hit us afresh I thank you for Paul who gave us a good example and for Silvanus and for Timothy I thank you Lord for the reminder Lord that your persecuted church will flourish and that no power of hell no scheme of man will ever come above them all authority on heaven and on earth has been given to you Lord whether we are sharing the gospel Lord or making tents or whatever our calling is I pray Lord that we would do it Lord with the motive of pleasing you Lord that you would be pleased in our rising up and in our lying down in our drinking and in our eating in our silence and in our words I thank you for the Lord Jesus Christ I thank you for his people that is here in this room I thank you for his church and as we labor as we seek to fulfill the great commission here in Carragalline or in Balanchalec or if it's in Eritrea or in North Korea

Lord may your people Lord labor under the pure motive it is to labor for the pleasure of you to obey you and to see your kingdom come here it is a privilege to be a Christian Lord it is all of grace and we thank you for this time Lord around your word in Jesus precious name Amen