

Bear Foolishness / Bear the Truth

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[0:00] Please take your Bibles and go to 2 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians. If you're visiting with us, that black Bible in the chair in front of you, you left your cell phone at home, you feel lost, you can pull out that black Bible in the chair in front of you, go to the back, find page 145.

Page 145. 2 Corinthians chapter 11. 2 Corinthians 11. Trucking our way through this letter.

Second, actually it was the fourth letter to the church in Corinth. 2 Corinthians chapter 11, we'll do the first 15 verses. 2 Corinthians chapter 11, verses 1 through 15.

I'll read and then we'll do our study. Oh, that you would endure from me a little bit of foolishness. Oh yes, indeed.

You bear with me. For I'm jealous for you with the jealousy of God. For I betrothed you to one husband, to present you a pure virgin to Christ.

[1:17] But I fear, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his trickery, your mind should be ruined, ruined away from the simplicity which is unto Christ.

Verse 4. For if one comes and preaches another Jesus, whom we've not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not welcomed, you bear well.

For I consider myself not in the least inferior to the super apostles. But if unskilled in speech, yet not in knowledge, in every way we've manifested this to you in all things.

Verse 7. Or did I sin in humbling myself that you might be exalted because I preached the gospel of God to you without payment? I robbed other churches, taking support for your ministry.

And when I was present with you, and was in need, I was not a burden to anyone. For when the brethren came from Macedonia, they fully supplied my need. And in everything, I kept myself from being a burden to you, and will continue to do that.

[2:32] As the truth of Christ is in me, this boasting of mine will not be stopped in the regions of Achaia. Why? Because I don't love you? Well, God knows. But what I do, I will also do, that I may cut off opportunity from those who desire an opportunity, in order that in that which they boast, they may be found just as also we.

Verse 13. For such men are false apostles, workers in deceit, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan transforms himself into an angel of light.

Therefore, it's not surprising if his servants also transform themselves as servants of righteousness, of whose end will be according to their deeds.

The father said this, quote, my son lost his life over foolishness.

A 16-year-old is facing a judge after he was accused of shooting and killing a classmate inside a Matthews, North Carolina high school.

[3:58] This happened late last month, October 30th. Police said, Jotuan Cuffey got into a fight with Bobby McKeithen inside Butler High School in Matthews, North Carolina, Monday morning.

Police said, Cuffey pulled out a gun and shot Bobby in a hallway full of students minutes before the first classes of the day began. Can you believe that? And they were interviewing the parents and that's when the father said, quote, at the end of the day, the reality is my son lost his life over foolishness.

Foolishness and truth don't go together. Today they do. Foolishness is gonna be truth today. Which is the awkward thing because as we're looking at this passage, as we're looking at 2 Corinthians, we have this title, boasting in our weakness, boasting in the Lord. Those seem to contradict each other, but they don't.

When you boast in your weakness, you're gonna boast in the strength of the Lord because strength is only found in the Lord, not in you and not in me. And as we come to this part of chapter 11 of 2

Corinthians, these first 15 verses, this is what we'll see, the paradox, bearing with foolishness, bearing with the truth.

[5:41] They seem to be opposites, but they go together. Because in this next section, Paul, which we'll look at next week, he's gonna boast in his weaknesses, he's gonna compare himself to these super apostles.

He's gonna do it as a way to express, really, his foolishness. But today, Paul's gonna give two reasons to the Corinthians why they should bear with his foolishness.

And as they're bearing with his foolishness, they're gonna be bearing with the truth. As they endured or put up with Paul's foolishness, they would be, in essence, enduring or put up with the truth.

What truth? That he was jealous for them. Oops. That he was jealous for them and that he was a true apostle. He truly loved them.

And these opponents were false apostles. The truth of the matter is that Paul's foolishness was the truth. Which is the essence of the gospel, isn't it?

[6:55] I mean, that's why we read from 1 Corinthians 2, a little bit of chapter 1. Foolishness is bound up in the gospel. It's ridiculous. I mean, think about it.

We put our hope in a person who died upon a cross and upon that cross, you can be saved? Yeah. That's what we believe.

To the world is foolishness. But to us, it's the power, the truth, the wisdom of God. And Paul is, you can sense his sarcasm.

In these first 15 verses, his ironic sarcasm. Oh, you're bearing with these guys. Would you bear with me a little bit, please? Oh, in the Corinthians, they thought they were so generous to put up with Paul despite the fact that he was such a, such a loser.

And yet, they happily bore with those who brought them the another's, another Jesus, another spirit, another gospel. You see the irony?

[8:08] What will we see? Paul boasted about his episodic qualifications, he embarrassed the Corinthians, and he attacked the loyal opposition. You want it to sum up for these first 15 verses?

There you go. And yet, Paul knew what he was doing, and yet, he knew what he was about to do, we'll look at that next week, was improper, almost, if you kind of think of it this way, ungodly, to compare himself.

And yet, he was putting himself in their shoes. They were the ones being ungodly. They should have known better. And he would force them to acknowledge the role that these guys had, this opposition, this loyal opposition, and really, he was going to help the Corinthians to see that they were the problem.

He betrothed the Corinthians to Christ. And yet, he feared that they were being led astray, away from Christ, by these super apostles.

He was in no way inferior to them, in spite of his lack of rhetorical skills, blah, blah, blah, blah. But this opposition that preached a different Jesus, a different spirit, a different gospel, they were really false agents of Satan.

[9:32] They were really false apostles. They came across as being agents of righteousness, but they were agents of the evil one. Because they attacked Paul.

Woe to the one who attacks God's shepherd, God's pastor. Woe to the one who does that. Paul takes it seriously, and so should we. So notice how it begins.

Bear foolishness, bear the truth, or bear with his foolishness, bear with the truth. Look at verse one. Oh, that you would endure from me a little bit of foolishness. Too much they regard it as foolishness.

Paul's weaknesses, he's going to bring them up. See, to them, the word of the cross was foolishness. This was the world's wisdom.

It was a wisdom that the Corinthians had embraced. Because they judged things by appearance.

So Paul is trying to get their attention. Oh, that you would bear with me. But almost being sarcastic.

[10:35] And notice the next part of the verse. It says, but indeed you are bearing with me. And the idea is, oh yes, yes, yes. You do bear with me, don't you? They endure this one regarded as weak, incompetent, substandard, and even suspicious.

Oh, they bore him, and yet they didn't bear with him, did they? Bear with my foolishness. Bear with this truth. What truth? The first reason he says this, I'm jealous for you.

I'm jealous for you. Look at verse two. For I'm jealous for you with a jealousy of God, literally. I'm jealous for you.

I'm zealous for you. I'm not against you. And that's what they thought, wasn't it? The Corinthians thought Paul was out to get them.

It's like, come on you guys, really? He was passionate about one thing, to betroth each church to Christ, the one husband, and notice he says this, betroth you to one husband, to Christ, a pure virgin.

[11:54] His role, and really the role of every pastor, every true pastor, I'm your father. I'm your father, I'm going to present you as Christ's bride and present you.

That's what I'm going to do. It's like a father's zeal for his daughter, like God's zeal for his people. This was a soul satisfaction, soul desire.

He was the one who first gave them the gospel. He was the one who first carried them in the gospel. He was the one who provided for them in the gospel. So how in the world could they render a judgment like this?

How in the world could they compare him to these super apostles? And when would he do this presentation? Well, at the eschaton, the last days, when Jesus returned.

Faith has broken into the present time by God's work, by his spirit in the heart. Faith has been given.

[13:08] Change has happened. The final ceremony will be presenting them to Christ as a pure bride, betrothing them to Christ. We as the church are Christ's bride.

This is Paul's goal. This is every true pastor's goal. Purity and faith, a pure virgin, their pure trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

That's why he was fearful of their minds being seduced. So here's the truth. True pastors are jealous to see God's people be loyal to Christ Jesus.

They desire to see God's people follow the Lord Jesus to stay committed to the gospel and to grow in their love for each other. That's what a true pastor wants to do. And notice the fear that comes, verse 3.

But I fear with how they were acting. It looked like their minds, as he says, as the serpent deceived Eve by his trickery, your minds have been duped.

[14:14] Just like it happened between the serpent and Eve when it deceived her in trickery or craftiness. What did he fear? He feared their communion with the Lord Jesus Christ would be disrupted just like in the garden.

I mean, think of it, a picture, not necessarily saying that the serpent tempted Eve in some sexual way, but the idea is the communion and the union with humanity and God was disrupted.

The marriage between God and humanity was marred because of the evil one. And for Paul, they were in danger of abandoning the gospel and turning away from Christ.

Juxtaposed with his solid trust of God's work in them and Christ. Satan was doing this through these false apostles. He'll bring that up later, right? His agents.

So Paul, he's like, I'm gonna protect you by the power of the gospel. I'm gonna keep giving you the gospel over and over and over again.

[15:29] God is just, we are sinners. Jesus died. Repent and believe. There's the gospel. But he was afraid they'd be, notice what he says, New American Standard says, led astray.

The word actually means corrupted or ruined. That the serpent would ruin their minds and their hearts. Remember what he said back in chapter 4 of 2 Corinthians verses 3 through 6 that the evil one blinds the minds of the unbelieving from the knowledge of God which is found in the gospel which is found in Christ.

This has always been his tactic. I mean, to them, this is rational. This is legitimate. And yet, confidence in their own wisdom and reasoning, it just won't cut it.

The gospel must overtake our minds. This has always been the tactic of the evil one. He will always try to dupe your mind away from the gospel.

Away from grace. So that you will enhance bitterness, anger, resentment, fear, anxiety, worry, everything.

[16:49] and get us as a church away from the gospel. Away from Christ Jesus and him crucified.

Away from salvation and hope and change comes at the cross. At the crucifixion and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Praise his name. It's always been his tactic. And it's my job and it's your job as members to hold us to this gospel.

Notice what he says the last part of verse 3. It says in the American Standard from the simplicity and purity to Christ. Simplicity is a great translation because that's the word simplicity which we've talked about this before.

Remember? And by the way when I translated that purity is added later not part of the original but it makes no difference of whether it is or it's not.

[17 : 51] Because the idea is this. Simplicity means openness. Freedom. Freedom to communicate. Open communication with Christ or simple mindedness.

That's why in the American Standard translate this as purity and devotion to Christ. So you're open. You're saying here I am. Here we are.

As a church here we are we're going to be open to Christ. We're going to be devoted to Christ in the gospel. But human wisdom rejects this truth.

But as the communion of God with humanity was ruined by the serpent's deception so also their communion was in jeopardy since it was fulfilled by their union with the Lord Jesus Christ.

They were duped. It's like we need to fight for the gospel to be central in this church. We have to fight it because the natural tendency will be to move away from the gospel.

[19 : 05] Pastors have to fight for it because congregations will go away from the gospel. True pastors will fight for the gospel.

So what happened? What took place? Look at verse 4. For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we've not preached or you receive a different spirit which you've not received that's Holy Spirit or a different gospel which you've not welcomed oh you bear and the numeric sentence says beautifully the word means well what happened?

Another Jesus another spirit another gospel that's what happened. Paul's mission was this the relationship with God comes by means of proclaiming the good news which is the crucified Lord Jesus who works by means of the spirit and gives his spirit as a gift.

That's the essence of the gospel. That's the mission of Paul. That's the mission should be of this church. So with another Jesus comes another spirit another gospel.

Notice the contrast with Paul's mission and the mission of his opponents. Now he doesn't say what specifically was this other Jesus other spirit other gospel he doesn't say that.

[20 : 29] But obviously he contradicted God's wisdom which would be contrary to the cross. And given the fact that the Corinthians what did they prize?

You know the four Ps power, prestige, persona, and privilege. That was Corinth. Remember where they lived? They lived in like New York City with glamour, glitz, and glory.

All of it there. They loved it. They would be seduced to welcome a different Jesus, a different spirit, a different gospel in which there was no place for suffering, no place for weakness, no place for feebleness, no place for humiliation, and no place for death, no place for a cross.

No, no, no, no, no. Don't be boasting about your weakness, Paul. Don't boast about your being a loser. You don't do that. You gotta show you got it all together.

That's your hip. Notice he says you bear this well. They happily tolerated something different because they focused on appearances rather than walking by faith.

[21 : 49] And they thought they were being so generous to Paul. Oh, we're putting up with you, Paul. Would they really bear with the truth? Would they really bear with Paul? So the first reason, he says, I am jealous for you.

What truth? I'm jealous for you. Second truth. No, second. I'm not inferior to these super apostles. So the first point, I love you.

Second point, I'm for real. Notice he says in verse five. For I consider myself not in the least inferior to the most eminent apostles or super apostles.

He's not inferior to them. He didn't boast about himself and become a fool and yet, if he did compare himself, which he would, he wouldn't come behind them.

He'd come on top. He'd actually be over them. And notice how he named his adversaries. Super apostles. These are the opponents. These were the loyal opposition.

[22 : 52] Yeah, he wasn't being serious on his label, but he used this as a way to compare themselves with Paul. Oh, they're super apostles. And in their minds, they were.

And in their minds, they were like, we rock. We're like, this. This. Yeah. The super apostles. I still like the winking.

Eh, right. Yet, they were devoid of the truth that Christ's power is seen in weakness, feebleness, humility.

True apostles. Or how about this? All Christians are those who are condemned to die.

This is what we proclaim. Come and die. Is that not what Jesus said? If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.

[24:07] That's what we say to them. That's why, if you're here and you're not a follower of Jesus, you're not a Christian, I'm gonna tell you, it's not gonna be your best life now. It won't. It might be your worst life now.

It might get worse for you. I'm serious. I'm not joking. And yet, in the midst of that weakness, you're given strength because that's where the power of God is seen.

Because he's ready to forgive and ready to embrace and ready to love. And you have a relationship with God that will last forever. Come and he'll save you.

Come and you will be loved. So he says these two reasons. I'm not inferior. First, I love you. I'm jealous for you.

Second, I'm not inferior even though, here's the next part, even though I'm unskilled in rhetoric but not in knowledge. Verse six. Though I'm unskilled in speech, I'm not in knowledge. In fact, in every way, we've manifested this to you in all things.

[25:12] Here's his disclaimer, so to speak, concession. He was untrained in rhetoric. The philosophers of the day, they're trained in oratory skills, how to speak.

But he was untrained in this, which his opponents made much of. So he's weak. Interesting how he brings up his oratory skills now. Earlier he brought up his personality.

Interesting, though, we don't shape the gospel in this way. The gospel is not shaped, as one writer says, to match the taste of its hearers. Or we'll put it a different way.

The gospel is seeker unfriendly. The gospel is seeker unfriendly. We're not trained in oratory skills. We're not trained in rhetoric. But notice he says, okay, I'm not trained in this rhetoric, but a knowledge on far beyond.

[26:21] His knowledge, his content was amazing. He wasn't versed in rhetoric, which the Corinthians expected even required, but he sure could communicate the gospel.

In weakness, fear, and trembling, he preached, what did we read earlier? Christ Jesus and him crucified. I didn't come with great speech with you.

Remember he said that in 1 Corinthians 2 that we read just a few moments ago together. I didn't come with all this skill. I came and preached Jesus Christ and him crucified. That's the gospel.

And notice he says, we manifested this to you in every way, in all things. It was about the gospel. God speaks in wisdom in the cross of Christ.

It's this wisdom of the word that operates in the heart and life of the one who speaks it and the one who hears it by the power of the Spirit. It's all about the gospel which holds its own because the gospel is the thing that judges us all.

[27:24] And true pastors, true pastors have a passion to see God's people be simple-minded to Christ to be devoted to this gospel truth. What we as pastors say is much more important than how we say it.

Yes, we can be very bad at some of the things and how we say things because sometimes we're just not good politicians, are we? We're just not good diplomats.

We cannot be very diplomatic in things. It's true. And if some of you know me, you know me. I'm not very diplomatic. Yeah, listen to this guy. You can leave now.

See how non-diplomatic that was? But it's the content of what I say not so much in how I say it. That's Paul's point.

What's the content? Even though I'm skilled in rhetoric but not in knowledge and here's a point of contention, a big point of contention. Even though I did not take wages from you.

[28:34] I have there verses 7 through 9. This actually goes 7 all the way up even to verse 12. Notice how he gets sarcastic here. Or did I sin by not taking wages from you?

He did not take their financial support yet refusing compensation led them to be suspicious of Paul. Oh, he's incompetent.

He's unscrupulous. This was sin in their minds. No, it was a preference that they had and it was a preference that he had.

It was just a preference. He had every right to accept them to pay him. Of course he did. But why was it such a big deal to them though? Because they wanted Paul to be their seller and they his clients, his patrons.

Because remember, the customer's always right. Oh, but remember, the gospel is seeker unfriendly. But that's why Paul didn't accept payment from them.

[29:49] Now, should they compensate him? Well, absolutely. Of course they should. But he refused this right that was due him mostly because of the thinking of the area because that's what they would do.

It shows how fundamental this was to their relational conflict. To them, Paul sinned. But they were judging things not by the cross.

They were judging things based upon their own preferences. And they thought that was gospel.

Notice what he says here. That I commit sin in humbling myself that you might be exalted.

Notice how he's actually living the gospel again. Humble yourself so you might be exalted. Isn't that what Christ did?

Christ humbled himself so that you can be exalted, right? Paul is the living example of the gospel. I humbled myself and exalted you.

[30:48] How? Because I preached the gospel of God to you without charge. Once again, Paul was the living display of the gospel.

It was common for philosophers in that time to take a wage for their wisdom. But for Paul, he would not receive support from a current ministry where he was present and receive support from them.

He would not do that. Especially for Corinth because of their mentality. He would be their seller.

They, his clients.

his clients. No. And notice how far he goes with this. Verse 8. I robbed other churches and I translated this for you like this, which this is a good way to translate it.

Taking wages for your ministry. They supported me while I was serving, ministering to you.

[31:46] They supported me. not necessarily because they didn't care, which could have been the case, but more so because Paul, you better give us what we want here, buddy, and then we'll start forking out the money.

This humiliated them. This shamed them. It's shameful when a church doesn't have the funds to take care of their pastor. That's true. And notice, to add insult to injury, look at verse 9.

When I was there with you and when I was in need, I was not a burden to anyone. When I was there and I was in need, I did not burden, or actually the word means benumb you, overburden them with his needs.

But guess who did it? Oh, joy! Guess who were the ones who provided for Paul and supported Paul? Those doggone Macedonians again!

Oh! Pfft! Remember chapter 8? They were the poor ones, weren't they? The Macedonians. And they were the ones that they wanted to give to the Jerusalem church.

[33:00] Remember them? Oh, the Corinthians were like, oh! Oh! Oh, there's Macedonians again! The lonely Macedonians! Ah! They couldn't stand it! La, la, la, la, la, la, la!

They supported me when the brethren came from Macedonia. They supported him in his ministry above and beyond expectation. What a shame.

The Corinthians had become beneficiaries of the poor Macedonians. shame on you, Corinth.

Corinth. And notice what he does here at this point in verses 9 through 11, which I put it as a point like this.

Which I'll keep doing to show you my love for you. I will keep doing I will keep doing this. I will continue to not take compensation from you because I love you.

And notice the strong verbiage that he uses here. Verse 9. Excuse me. Yeah, verse 9. They fully supply my need and in everything I kept myself from being a burden to you and will continue this.

[34:19] Paul had kept himself from being a burden and he would continue this practice. So in other words, their suspicions of him are ridiculous. It showed how vastly different he was from these super apostles.

And look at how he takes an oath here in verse 10. As the truth of Christ is in me, ironic that a vital aspect in their dispute was they were wondering if the truth of Christ was really in Paul.

Side note. As the truth of Christ is in me, this boasting of mine, what boasting? That he didn't take compensation from them. That's the boasting.

This boasting of mine will not be stopped in the regions of Achaia. What's he saying? He would make sure they wouldn't forget this important aspect in their relationship by promising to reveal it to the regions of Achaia.

They'll hear about this matter. He would not allow the Corinthians to manipulate the situation to control him. He wouldn't do it. He wouldn't do it. He wouldn't do it. He would boast about the fact that he did not and would not take any compensation from the Corinthians not to humiliate them further but to show that he truly loved them.

[35 : 36] Look at what he says. Why? Verse 11. Because I do not love you. God knows. He did love them.

He wounded them to heal them. And their first response would be, oh, he doesn't love us. They would doubt his love. That's not true. God knows.

And it does it in New American Standard that says God knows. I do. I do is not in the original. So it just says God knows. And he did this though to affirm his love for them.

In the end, God knows our feelings. God knows our longings. God knows our desires. He knows.

He knows. God knows how much he cared for that church in Corinth.

And yet, he cared for them even though they were so cantankerous in their attitude against him. But he'll keep doing this.

[36 : 40] Not just to show his love for the Corinthians. But this is where we come to this part about the opponents. He'll keep doing this to show the falsity of his opponents. Of these super apostles.

He's going to expose them. This is what he does right now. Verses 12-15. Notice. He says, verse 12, what I do, I will also do. What's he talking about?

He's talking about not taking a compensation and boasting about this. What I do, I'm going to continue not doing this. I'm not going to take any compensation. Why?

Because his desire was to cut off any opportunity for these clowns to boast about their apostolic authority. Now, I translate this for you there at the end of verse 12.

That let me cut off opportunity from those who desire an opportunity. Remember that. And that which they boast they may be found just as also we are. And the American Standard tries to help you with that just as we are in the manner about which they are boasting.

[37 : 44] In other words, Paul was saying, I'm no benefactor of the Corinthians. We are for real. They are not. That's what he's saying. He lived the gospel.

He trusted God to work in them and the Corinthians. So he's going to take a stand. No. Stop following them. And these fakers would boast but Paul would expose their falsity by living out the gospel which was receiving no compensation from Corinth.

And then look at how he describes these guys in verse 13. Such men he says are false apostles. Workers in deceit literally.

And they're itinerant preachers who got paid to proclaim. Interesting, the word there workers in deceit the word deceit in the noun form that's where you get the word fish bait.

That's interesting. They were tricksters is what they were. Now it has here a numeric standard which I don't really know why they translate like this because it gives it a stronger emphasis which is what I did when I was reading it for you.

[38 : 59] It says disguising themselves the actual word is transform. They transform themselves into apostles of Christ.

And notice transform themselves. Now does God transform us? Absolutely. But we don't transform ourselves. God is the one who transforms us by the gospel.

We're talking about the gospel. By the power of the Spirit. Transforming themselves apart from the powerful work of the Spirit only the message of the cross of Christ works true transforming, saving, transformation.

they're here to take advantage of you guys. They look legit. They may even have thought they were doing God's work.

That's the scary part is when people come into a church and they're thinking they're doing the work of God and they're not.

[40 : 12] they're truly deceived. And notice what he says in verse 14. No wonder. No wonder for even Satan transforms himself same word into an angel of light.

He gets that from Isaiah chapter 14. So that in essence Satan displays false appearance. Oh and what was the danger with the Corinthians?

Oh yeah that's right. they like to judge things by appearance and not walk by faith.

So Satan was using these guys to destroy the church. Remember what Paul just talked about in chapter verse 2 3 and 4. I mean betrothed you to Christ.

I have a jealousy for you. I love you. I want to betrothed you to Christ but I'm fearful that Satan is taking your mind and it's happening.

[41 : 20] Look I thought this was interesting. We were in first hour with the adult Bible study looking at the teachings of Islam and I was dumbfounded how God just brought in this providence that study that we were looking at corresponds with this about the essence of the gospel which seems to be truth no matter how bright the light may be at the end of the tunnel if it does not lift up the crucified and risen Christ it's totally false.

Look people experience a lot of things great but if the experience does not focus on the Lord Jesus Christ it's wrong and I have every right to say that because the gospel is what matters not your experience and this is the danger though the danger for us as a church is that we go after other idols we have some affection for other things besides the gospel I know I do that's why it's permanent for members you as members you must be driven to keep us committed to the gospel and then as shepherds we're called to bring you back to the gospel notice how he ends here verse 15 therefore it's no surprise if his servants again the same word transform themselves as servants of righteousness interesting apostles are agents of another they're given a mission that's what apostle means it means sent one so God's agents true agents they bring the gift of life the spirit and righteousness in Jesus these guys only appear to be agents of only appear to be agents of righteousness it's just visible it's just outward it's just pure deceit notice he ends this part of whose end will be according to their deeds which truly displayed their motives well what was one of those deeds they defied

Paul their driven desire to oust Paul displayed their anti-gospel anti-Christ focus you see what that says up there and I wasn't sure to say this but I did to drive against God's shepherd is truly anti-gospel anti-Christ a true shepherd a good shepherd who's shepherding you in the gospel oh we are weak yes we are we are sinners yes we are just like you we are all in this together are we not no the truth of the matter is Paul's foolishness was the truth he was jealous for them because it's not about us it's about the gospel it's got to be about the gospel and so father we pray just for us as a church that we can get caught up on preferences and blah blah blah help us to stay focused or driven to be centered to be passionate single minded devotion to Christ to the gospel to the life and death and resurrection of the Lord

Jesus Christ repentant faith in him a life of grace and mercy as you have shown us mercy oh yes spirit we are once again brought to the same two applications how we treat each other based upon the gospel and what we speak to the world because of the gospel how you've shown us such grace that's how we should treat each other and how you've shown us such grace that's what we speak to the world so I encourage you at this time with all the stuff that we were doing just take a few moments and it's like what a minute 45 seconds just to stop to think to ponder to reflect to let your mind just dwell on these things that we've seen in God's word and then after a few moments we'll do our time of giving and we have some songs to sing at the end but in our closing prayer yes but just take this few moments let your mind think maybe pray worship between you and the Lord just a few moments to do that you will be will again bye Whoa whoa hold a■ 20 Chip know this like that happened ago and we hit up or beat■ peace that you can beikum John John