

Duplicity/Integrity

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[0:00] Please turn your Bibles to 2 Corinthians, or 2 Corinthians, chapter 4.

If you're visiting with us, or you left your cell phone at home, or your Bible, pull out that black Bible in the chair in front of you, go to the back, find page 141.

141. 2 Corinthians, chapter 4. We're gonna do our study in the first six verses of chapter 4. I've been looking forward to this section of Corinthians, the second letter, for a long time.

So this is gonna be fun. 2 Corinthians, chapter 4, verses 1 through 6. Again, page 141 in that black Bible. By the way, people ask me this.

So I'm reading from New American Standard, but I also translate things from the Greek. So I translate that throughout the week, and then I just memorize that. So I'm reading, when I read, I'll go back and forth from my translation from the Greek New Testament back to New American Standard.

[1:18] Just so that you know. Because people are asking me, what translation are you using? I thought it was ESPN. Is it the Jim translation? I don't know. So it's a mix between New American Standard and the Greek New Testament.

So I go back and forth. Therefore, verse 1, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not fail.

We have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in trickery or adulterating the word of God, but by the manifestation of truth, commending ourselves to every person's conscience in the sight of God.

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the God of this age has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they may not see the illumination, which is the gospel of the glorious Christ.

Christ is the image of God. For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your slaves because of Jesus.

[2:31] For God who said, light will shine out of darkness, He is the one who has shown in our hearts the illumination, which is the knowledge of the glorious God in the face or person of Christ.

In his book, new book that just came out by Francis Chan, Letters to the Church, he says this, I asked my daughter how many kids would come to her birthday party if all we offered was cake. No games, no entertainment. They could come to the house to spend time with her and bring gifts to celebrate her, but we wouldn't have anything else for them. She thought for a minute and said, maybe just a couple.

Then I asked her how many would come if I rented out Dave and Buster's, it's an arcade, and let them have unlimited tokens, food, and prizes. She laughed and said confidently that the whole school would show up.

So let's say, he continues, that for her birthday party, I rented out the arcade and her whole school comes. They're all going nuts, having the time of their lives. Imagine if I pulled her aside during the party, put my arm around her and said, look at all the people who came to be with you.

[3:56] Would she actually believe those people were there because they love her and want to spend time with her? Or would my comment actually be insulting? Isn't this basically what we do with God?

We have learned that we can fill church buildings if we bring in the right speaker or band. Make things exciting enough and people will come.

We say, God, look how many people are coming because they love being with you. But do we really think God is fooled by this? Do we think God is pleased?

He knows how many would show up if it was, He knows how many would show up if it was just Him. He knows there might be only a few if all we offered was communion or prayer. We're just trying to get people to show up to His party.

But based on everything you read in Scripture, does that seem like what Jesus would want? Again, if God had it His way, would He really want a bunch of churches desperate to entertain?

[5:00] Or would He want to be the reason people were coming? Even if that meant a much smaller number of people, on top of that, are we sure what Jesus is looking for is well-attended church services?

Our current models seem directed at this and little else. Mike Breen said, quote, Most of us have become quite good at the church thing, and yet, disciples are the only thing that Jesus cares about. And it's the only number that Jesus is counting. Not our attendance, our budget, or buildings, end quote. And then he says this later on.

Prayer, communion, fellowship, and Bible reading don't attract large crowds. So we start adding elements that will attract people. We accomplish a goal, but it's the wrong goal.

There comes a point when so many additions are made that you can no longer call it a church. There's nothing attractive about the gospel.

[6:11] There's nothing attractive when you say, Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And that's why it takes an act of God to see this, as I translate it for you, illumination.

This good news. They think we're trying to sell them something, but we're not trying to sell them anything. We're not trying to be deceitful.

And yet, in trying to be genuine, we look like we're deceitful. And yet, if people are really being deceitful, it looks like they're being faithful. No. It's not how it works. Again, we have this paradox. And remember, keep yourself in the thinking of the Corinthians. This is what they thought about Paul. Paul. He's trying to dupe us. He's trying to trick us.

No, no, no, no, no. I'm giving you Christ and Him crucified. That's it. Oh, you're up to something, Paul. No. What you think is duplicity is actually integrity.

[7:22] What you think is deceitful is actually being faithful. And that's the paradox that we see today. Duplicity, integrity, or deceitful slash faithful.

Duplicity slash integrity. 2 Corinthians 4, verses 1 through 6. We're gonna see this. I'll put it in a statement for you.

Duplicity slash integrity or deceitful slash faithful. Seemingly paradox things. As opposed to being duplicitous, we have integrity.

Instead of deceiving people, we faithfully give the illumination of the gospel of the glorious Christ who's the image of God and the glory of God. That's what we give them.

Because the truth is the illumination. The gospel of the glorious Christ. That's all we preach. And there's nothing showy about that.

[8:30] There's nothing attractive about the gospel. And yet, we'll do things and try to add things to try and get people through the door. Or try and add some spice to the gospel.

But that's not what we're supposed to do. We're just messengers. And we just give this message.

As someone said to me in Jerome on Friday, you out saving souls? I said, I don't save anybody. I'm just the messenger. There's nothing attractive about the gospel.

And we can be faithful all we want. Faithful and true all we want. But it takes the very power of God to create a change in rebellious wayward hearts.

See, this is a beauty of it. Being faithful to the gospel. Faithful all you want. But realize that only God converts sinners.

[9:37] I don't convert anybody. Nor do you. We are just messengers of a non-showy, ridiculous, ludicrous message that this guy who is on this cross is God and can save you.

That's crazy. No. That's wisdom. It's the power of God. That's what we speak. And that's what Paul is emphasizing here in these first six verses of chapter four.

Oh. Oh, and that includes us. Yes, it's the power of God that's speaking. And that includes us. Here, we're being invited, we're being challenged. Is God creating in you?

So see, this is not just something where we're talking about in reference to the unsaved, the unbelievers. And Paul was speaking about in reference to his connection with unbelievers. But notice, he's also inviting the Corinthians because remember, he's writing this to a church.

So, Conway Bible Church, those of you who are here today, is God creating in you? Oh God, reveal your glory through the preaching of your word.

[11:04] This is what we're just saying. Prepare my heart, oh God. That's what you're just saying. Here, Paul is specifying his mission along with the saving work that God had done in him, including the effect of his mission in the world.

He was God's vessel for this gospel to the whole world and specifically to the Corinthians. And remember, Corinth, put yourself in their shoes.

Their thinking, their thought process was Paul was being deceitful by just giving them the gospel. Are you guys crazy? What? That's what they thought.

So Paul, he's gonna talk about this and say, no, we just gave this to you. This is all we are. This is all we've done. This is all we need to be. And there's nothing special about us.

Paul will also answer the question that the previous section that we looked at, that previous section begged, was the question. How does one begin this process of transformation whereby one sees this audacious mission of the timid Christ through the eyes of faith?

[12:21] How does this happen? God must call one out of darkness and into the light of Christ. When that happens, that one can truly see or hear the gospel and respond.

Just like God said in Genesis chapter 1 verse 3, let there be light. That's what he does. He calls out light and darkness.

And he continues to do that in us. Because the darkness can overtake us. So he said, God, prepare my heart, oh God.

Help my unbelief. Show us Christ. Reveal your glory through the preaching of your word. You just sang this. I'm ready to hear what the message of your word is going to give to me.

I'm ready to hear and obey. Did you mean that? Did I mean that? This was Paul's mission and this was who he was.

[13:29] So let's start in. First, you have this seemingly paradox, duplicity slash integrity. These first two verses and basically, he says this, because we have this ministry which is God's mercy toward us, we don't fail but we have integrity in our lives and in the word.

There's no duplicity. We have integrity. You might think we're being deceitful. Corinthians. And we're being faithful to this message.

Notice how he begins. Verse 1. Therefore, back from what he just said, this ministry as we have, since we have this ministry, what's the ministry? Back to chapter 3. Verse 8.

How shall the ministry of the spirits fail to be even more glorious? Verse 9. The ministry of condemnation is more glory. How much does the ministry of righteousness? So this ministry of the spirit, this ministry of righteousness, this ministry of life, therefore, since we have this ministry, this is what we have.

He's not lacking. I'm not an insufficient apostle is what he's saying to them. This is given to him by God. He's got it. He has it.

[14:49] It was given to him. No doubt about it. And notice he says, we, not we, meaning with the Corinthians, we in reference to the apostles.

We, the apostles, we have been given this ministry, notice what he says too, as we have received mercy. So, we as the apostles, we've received this many, but yet, he's also inviting the Corinthians to join him.

Because, remember, apostles were Christians too. They weren't different from other Christians. Think of it this way. The life of an apostle is the life of a Christian at a 3D IMAX theater.

You go to a 3D IMAX theater, you watch a movie, and it's like, right? It's like in your face. It's the same movie if you were to go to, you know, like when you go to Sedona, the movie theater, the screen is like this big, you know, in Sedona.

You might as well just go to your bedroom, your living room, right? We used to make fun of that, you know, it was just funny. So, yeah, yeah, Sedona, but that's the same movie, right? The movie's on that screen, or, right?

[16:04] It's the same movie though. That's the life of an apostle. The life of an apostle is I go into a movie at a 3D IMAX theater. It's a Christian on steroids.

Don't quote me on that, please. Please don't quote me on that. So he received mercy. Wait, apostles are on steroids? Wait a second, what's going on with that?

That guy's preaching heresy. Okay. His calling as an apostle was nothing other than God's mercy given to him. There's nothing special about us. Upon him, God had pity. It's not about Paul's prowess, powers, performance. It's all about God and his merciful love. Oh, but all those things, the prowess, the powers, the performance, the super apostles, that's what the Christians were looking towards.

He's like, no, no, no. God was just merciful to us. We've received this mercy and then he says this. This is a ministry.

[17:11] We've received mercy. We do not, and in your numeric standards it says, do not lose heart. Now, in context, the word can mean two things. Lose heart or, as I translate for you, fail.

Context always drives meaning of words, so therefore, that's why we chose the meaning to be fail because he's talking about integrity. The Corinthians were suspicious of him being a fraud.

No, we don't act wrongly. There is no moral failure in us. We're not deceiving you. Look at my life, says Paul.

I'm not all for myself, he says. I'm not trying to trick or swindle you. I'm not in it for the money.

Because, by the way, for the Corinthians, I'm not having you pay me, which you should, but I'm not having you do that. It's sad.

[18:15] It's sad. It's sad that Paul was defending himself before a people who should have trusted him unreservedly. Paul gave his life for this church. He had nothing to gain.

He was there to benefit them. It hurts when people should trust you the most and they end up doubting you. And that's what's happening here. Paul says, I'm just a vessel of God.

That's all I am. And we don't fail as vessels. We're just going to give it to you as it is. Paul is simply what D.T. Niles said about evangelism.

Niles says this, quote, evangelism is, quote, simply one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread. That's all that it is. That's evangelism.

One beggar telling another beggar where to find bread. That's evangelism. There's nothing special about us. We simply direct people to the Lord of glory.

[19:23] And notice about the integrity. It comes up here in verse 2, but instead, we don't fail, but we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness or trickery or adulterating the word of God.

And we'll stop there and look at the word of God. The word of God, that is the gospel. That's what he's talking about. That's the context. We do not declare this to be the word of God, nor does the word of God need us to authenticate it.

It simply is the truth. It authenticates itself. We will remain true. It will remain true. No, I'm sorry. It will remain true no matter if we believe it or not.

We put it this way. The Bible is the brute fact. It doesn't matter if you believe it or not. It doesn't matter because it's going to remain true. It just is.

And that's what Paul's saying. So, because it just is, we've renounced. Here's his claim to integrity. We've renounced. We've put away any shameful things.

[20:33] See, again, the Corinthians were suspicious of Paul because A, he refused their support and B, he failed to visit them. Remember that? He didn't visit them. He said he was going to and he didn't. It's all based upon appearance for them.

And they thought it was up to them to judge the apostle. Oh, is he legitimate? Oh, it's up to us. But they failed to see that appearances can be very deceptive. You cannot judge a book by its cover. It's the gospel that judges both them and Paul. The gospel is over us all. The gospel determines us all. Me and you.

So he says, we had verbal and life integrity because integrity is found in the true gospel. Thus, we renounce the hidden things of shame. We renounce deceptions. And notice how he explains this. First, not walking in craftiness or trickery or guile, which means a readiness to do anything, even something underhanded, to achieve his aim.

[21:43] We didn't do that. We did not operate in treachery. That's not how we work. We didn't do that with you. Notice he's kind of taking jabs at the super apostles.

He's kind of saying these things and taking little jabs there. Both his speech and conduct were part of his integrity. He didn't act in secrecy or deception.

He's transparent. He's open. I acted in transparency. I'm acting in openness before you. Tell me how I haven't done that. Notice the next part.

Not walking in trickery. How else did they renounce hidden things of shame or adulterating the word of God? Dishonestly manipulating it.

nor did he ever dishonestly manipulate God's message by letting things for his own benefit getting things for his own benefit or gain.

[22:50] He did not falsify the way you translate that the truth so that he could benefit handsomely. He didn't do that. So he claimed integrity calling the gospel to judge him.

Again he's making an indirect charge against these super apostles. He gave them the word of God straight up no holds bar right here which is my endeavor.

My endeavor I will give you the truth whether you like it or not I don't care. My intentions are the gospel the truth the body are God. That's what I'm supposed to do.

That's what I'm called to do is give you the truth. which is the next part he says adultery in the word of God but the next part of verse 2 there in the middle but by the manifestation the revelation of truth committing ourselves to every person's conscience in the sight or the presence of God Paul or they made truth known or they revealed it to every human conscience before God they made it known and that's important for him to say this because the apostle was not on the stage with the Corinthians judging him or assessing him no no we manifest the truth and truth is not just cognitive by the way Paul was the very embodiment of the truth not just his integrity but in his suffering and in deliverances he experienced he didn't judge this or that to be the truth oh did you that no he was a vehicle for the truth to be told in word and in life and notice he says manifesting the truth commending ourselves do you know where he used that word before chapter 3 verse 1 remember when he said that he says are we beginning to commend ourselves again

I told you this earlier when we started this letter 2 Corinthians that Paul this letter is filled with sarcasm it is because chapter 3 verse 1 he is being sarcastic and almost here being sarcastic as well but yet truthfully telling him we commend ourselves you Corinthians you think we are trying to commend ourselves trying to get your approval no we can commend ourselves to every person's conscience before God we didn't boast about ourselves our performance our power no we boast in Christ and this commendation takes place to all human consciences with the very presence of God which means the final judgment of God the end is in sight he's thinking God is the one who sees what he or they or we speak and it's about being faithful to the message realizing that God sees and he will bring judgment upon us all that's what

[26:09] Paul is saying now this conscience not conscious like I'm conscious of the fact that I'm living but conscience the thing that kind of tells us what's right or wrong it's the moral judgments of humans seared yes fallen yes but still there in spite of all our false idols and immoral judgments that rule our hearts this aspect still remains this is our moral faculty you could even say this is our point of contact like Cornelius Van Til said Paul says we speak to the heart of the matter he went after the conscience allowing the spirit to work that's what we do when we give people the gospel we're going after their conscience run after it despite the limitations and perversions of the conscience we're called to speak to each person's conscience bringing the truth of the gospel to bear upon their lives that's what we do we bring the gospel to bear we talk about the creator we talk about the almighty we talk about the law we talk about judgment and we go after that conscience seared yes depraved yes fallen yes but still there and that's what Paul's saying we go after their conscience we commend ourselves to every person's conscience how do we do it we manifest the truth this is the truth of the word of God he does this we have integrity we're not being duplicitous we're being faithful okay we do this you manifest truth blah blah blah but why why why but why why do people still not respond we give them the truth we go of their conscience we talk to them about Christ there's nothing special about us we're not trying to trick them but why don't they respond because of

Satan's blinding work verses three through six actually verse three to five five six five they can't see the glorious Christ which is what we preach and we preach we're slaves because of Jesus as God created in our hearts Paul will say even so he must create in all because Satan blinds their eyes it comes down to this we can't make people believe the truth we simply give the truth because Satan blinds their eyes that's why it's so important for when we come together to meet together that you are saying God help my eyes to be open to your truth and ready to receive because the evil one wants to blind me to what you have to say you should pray that every morning when you come on Sundays you should be praying that every time Sundays we're coming together Lord we're coming together I'm ready the evil wants to blind my eyes having to be ready to receive notice what he says verse 3 and even if our gospel is veiled hidden covered same word he used in chapter 3 not that

Paul hid anything he's not saying we hid anything he's open he's transparent he's not being duplicitous right there no to the perishing the gospel is hidden in the cross of Christ and in the life of Paul the broken suffering weak feeble apostle it's veiled to those who are perishing Paul says interesting how he brings this up this hardness this blinding of the minds he talked about this in chapter 3 verse 14 when he says about the sons of Israel but their minds were hardened and yet just as well the

Corinthians were in danger of becoming hardened themselves like the sons of Israel seeing the gospel is truly hearing the gospel which shows itself in response one must hear it to see it one must hear it to see it interesting he's putting these two terms together to see is to hear when you hear you see it's veiled it's veiled because in that gospel word God destroys all human wisdom by the proclamation of a weak feeble timid lame powerless messiah who died a shameful audacious horrible death but it's this message of foolishness that true wisdom comes this makes no sense to them and that's what the evil one does he blinds them because they think that that's absolutely stupid that you actually believe in that ludicrous no sense because to crucify christ that's good news but it's foolishness to the world again he says if our gospel is if it's prodding the corinthians to examine themselves have they truly set their hope on this weak foolish message have you christian put your hope on this weak foolish message or on the great powerful appearing so awesome message of the super apostles to grasp the gospel doesn't come from great human insight strong intuition or that one's got it all together on the contrary to hear to see to trust christ and his work takes an act or work of god john says this in his gospel as many as received him chapter 1 verse 12 of john's gospel to them he gave the right to become children of god to those who believe in his name who are born not of blood nor the will of the flesh nor the will of man but were born of god god is the one who acts god is the one who moves god is the one who changes god is the one who transforms that's what paul's saying even if our gospel is veiled as veiled to those who are perishing in whose case he says the god of this age it is satan himself who's blinded their eyes so they cannot see notice what he says blinded the minds of the unbelieving that they may not see the illumination i told you in your bible it says light but the reason why i translate it is illumination that's not the way you can translate it is because think of it this way in a room it's dark you know you have the little dimmer on right so it's kind of on but then when you turn it up you go whoa wow i can really see right it comes up the illumination and then he stacks up these genitives on top of each other on purpose so then we translate it like this the illumination which is the gospel of the as we sang earlier glorious christ who is the image of god this is a very provocative statement blinds humans this evil one he binds them in unbelief their thoughts their plans their affections their practical judgments their minds they cannot see the cross of christ and the power of the cross they can't see it they cannot behold or grasp the stunning

truth of the gospel Satan is blinding them to the illumination which is the good news of the glorious christ the good news of the glorious christ who is on the cross they mean that man who is on the cross that's glorious yeah that's the illumination Satan blinds them so they can't see that to them it's foolishness christ's glory is the glory of the crucified one raised by god and he is the essence of the gospel you see that the illumination which is the good news of the glorious christ who's the essence of the good news christ christ's glory is the display of power and weakness and his death this is the gospel word if you're here and you're not a christian that's what you need to do you need to embrace the glorious christ on the cross repent and trust him that's the gospel you must ask god to take those blinders off of you so that you can see the good news which is found in the glorious christ it's the only way and notice he says who is the image of god christ jesus is the very god of israel one writer puts it like this quote the glory of christ god's image is the glory of god found in jesus end quote so jesus christ is the crucified god amazing love how can it be that thou my god shouldst die for me as the old song goes god suffered in his eternal son that's what we believe that's the truth and notice notice what he does at this point he says so they can't see this illumination of the glorious christ who's the image of god for there in verse 5 we do not preach ourselves he's talking about his ministry his message it's not about us it's never been about us they question his motives they question his practices i'm not some gifted leader i'm not some gifted hero you don't do some hero worship we don't preach ourselves he says but christ jesus as lord paul was physically weak he failed in different ways he didn't come and visit us shame on him but for the corinthians appearance was everything just like our culture right in my study one of the commentators he brought up the fact about how paul probably wouldn't make it in our facebook culture he wouldn't get many likes on his facebook page people would be even less willing to friend

him right that guy is crazy but he kept pointing to christ kept pointing to christ only time i talk about jesus christ is when i'm cursing that's how you do it not me christ and the cross christ no look christ jesus and him crucified christ jesus as lord the message of forgiveness grace mercy compassion we should be condemned but christ has set us free and transforms us we don't preach ourselves we

[38:58] preach christ we preach the cross the truth of the matter is you must be saved you must come to christ have forgiveness of all your sins else you will be condemned that's the message of the cross and notice he says and ourselves so he's saying we preach christ jesus as lord and we preach ourselves as your slaves passive role he's very active earlier in chapter 1 verse 24 he placed himself next to them here he put himself beneath them we are your slaves oh well that's not what a cool leader does says the corinthians leaders aren't servants they're powerful they're strong they're cool they got their leathers on man they're awesome yeah there's nothing special about

Paul he was their slave because he did all things for their benefit it wasn't for him to profit but for the body of Christ to profit he worked for their joy he sought to build them up it was all for their benefit but it meant he would at times confront and contradict them and he would do that because he was both their preacher and their pastor their apostle remember this whole this whole thing with the corinthians is that they would embrace him to be the apostle no no no that they would embrace him to be their apostle their pastor i'm your slave i'm here to give you the truth you understand it also means i must confront and contradict you which means you need to consider the source we also talked about that too they were doubting

Paul which was ridiculous he wouldn't do anything and everything for their benefit the gospel judges consider the source so you have this anything is being duplicitous we're having integrity deceitful no we're faithful but same blind as people's eyes they can't see this we just preach anyways so what's the solution though to the fact that people are blinded to this gospel message that we preach Christ Jesus and him crucified what's the solution verse six the God who saves is the God who created God the savior is God the creator salvation is an act of creation and creation is an act of salvation because notice what he says for God who said light shall shine out of darkness in other words he's saying he did a saving work in me my heart was dark my heart was without void my heart was null and void my heart was formless and empty but

God said let there be light where does that ring familiar oh Genesis chapter one verse two the earth that was created was formless and void and the spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the deep and then God said let there be light and there was light the same God who says this notice what he says the next part of verse six he is the one who shone in our hearts to give the illumination as God was excuse me as light was created by the word of God so the gospel's effect in this comes by that same powerful word God says come to life God says let there be light or Jesus says Lazarus come forth and they awaken and they see and they go oh that's what that means now i understand God creates light in the darkness of the human heart that's what he does darkness signifies evil light symbolizes good so out of evil God creates what's good God creates light in the darkness of the human heart remember we brought this question up a question that Paul was going to answer how does one begin this process of transformation whereby one sees this audacious mission of the timid Christ through the eyes of faith how does one see or hear the illumination of Christ God must call light out of darkness he must open the eyes to see or rather to hear the gospel word from the heart to believe God truly works in a way that's contrary to appearance contrary to expectation salvation is found in the weak Jesus who's now risen and God spoke and he says he shined in our hearts the illumination which is as he says the knowledge of God's glory which notice he says the knowledge of God's glory which is found in the face of

[44:39] Christ or in the person of Jesus he bears the brightness of God's glory so this gospel word remains hidden in the crucified Christ and in the apostle who spoke about this crucified Christ and that's what we do we sincerely proclaim this crazy ridiculous foolish absurd completely preposterous message of salvation in a weak timid Christ upon a horrible shameful audacious cross and that's how God saves always willing to come and say okay God now take me in all my weakness in all my shame in all my feebleness in all my stupidity and show your glory i'm ready it doesn't stop it keeps going God's glory can only be seen in the crucified Jesus proclaimed by a weak feeble people seen in a people who are the very image or body of

Jesus all our weaknesses all our feebleness all our timidity all our failures we bear the markings of Jesus ourselves right here we bear it and if God's glory is visible nowhere but in Christ then that

means that his glory is primarily seen among us his people who gather together to give him praise thanks and glory because his very spirit the spirit of Jesus lives inside of us so shouldn't the church be the most important thing to us shouldn't the church gathering be the most important thing to us because this is how you see Jesus it's in us you would think God's word created light to shine in Paul's heart which is why he was able to hear or see the gospel and believe thus in order for anyone to see or hear the gospel and believe God in his word needs to create light to shine in the heart of that unbelieving person that's the only way and that's why you pray for people to be saved isn't it that's why you pray

I pray for so and so I pray for Uncle Joe to be saved or Bob to be saved or Harry to be saved or Joe or Michael whoever that you know these people that you know that they don't know Christ you know them family friends you know them why do you pray for them because you know only God can open their heart to see the truth of the gospel anyway there's no glory in death is there oh yes there is there's nothing to see at the death of a timid weak man is there oh yes there is is that foolishness oh no it's illumination it's glory it's light it's sight it's truth it's Jesus CBC caught in the Bible are we faithfully giving the word plus is God doing a work in us whereby we are seeing or hearing Christ in obedience the two parts that we talk about by way of application every week one will proclaim this message of the gospel will proclaim the grace that's been given to us but two will display that same grace to each other in this church that's the way we apply this and so God we pray let us know you and love you worship you and honor you we come with humble hearts we're ready to receive we've received your food now by the spirit spirit excuse me as you take our formlessness our feebleness our weaknesses bring order strength grace power by which you work in us because when we're weak that's when we're strong take some time please and ponder what we've seen from

God's word pray for the person that you know doesn't know Jesus take the time and pray that they would see the illumination of the gospel of Jesus Christ even take the time to pray God from your word you've spoken help me to obey maybe we want to pray that and focus and ponder that but just a few moments and we'll do our time of giving when we give and then we'll sing two songs and pray like we do normally but take this time between you and the Lord and we and and you