

# Being a People-Pleaser

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[ 0 : 00 ] Father, we come to your word written. We confess before you that without the help of your Holy Spirit, we cannot really understand your word.

And Father, so we ask that your Holy Spirit would move in our lives, that your Holy Spirit would make your word alive to us, and that your word would touch our hearts so that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your Holy Name.

And we ask this in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen. Please be seated. So I don't know how many of you know this, but there's always an 8 o'clock service before the 10 o'clock service.

I guess we didn't have it for some of the summer when we were here in the school, but for most of the time there is. In fact, for a while this morning, it looked like there was just going to be Barbara and me, and then three other people came. So we did a little service, and one of the things I do at the service is I give a shorter form of my sermon.

And one of the things you're going to notice in a moment is that the sermon's about people-pleasing, amongst other things, but that's one of the issues, about people-pleasing. I'm sure this is a very helpful service. This will be a very helpful sermon for you because you all have friends who have problems with people-pleasing, and so you'll learn things to share with them, but none of you have to deal with it.

[ 1 : 21 ] Anyway, so I do this sermon on people-pleasing, and then in the service, after the sermon, in that service, you have the offertory, and then you have the confession.

And so I'm sitting down, I'm kneeling down, and I have a little bit of a, you know, like 10, 20 seconds of silence before we say the words of the confession. And I always say, you know, what should I confess?

I ask, you know, Father, show me what I should confess my sins about. And then it really, it hit me like a lightning bolt that I was depressed, mildly depressed, because I didn't think my sermon had been very successful.

In other words, the reason it wasn't successful because I wasn't sure if people liked it. So I had done a sermon on people-pleasing, and then I was depressed because I didn't think I'd please them.

So you see, I need a lot of prayer. I'm sure. And, but the, the, the, we are going to look a little bit about people, at people-pleasing.

[ 2 : 22 ] You know, people-pleasing, it's a little bit of a, not, it's not a complicated thing. It's a, it's a very present problem. Some people don't have a problem with people-pleasing at all because they are socially maladjusted.

At different times, there's nobody here in the church like this right now, I don't think, but at certain times, we have had somebody who's been a part of our church for a while, and they don't pick up any social cues at all, period.

I remember one fellow who's, who's now gone to be with Jesus, but he was part of the congregation for four or five years, and part of the hard thing for the congregation to realize was that you had to be basically rude with him because he wouldn't pick up the normal cues, right?

So one of the things he had a problem with would be putting his arm around women, for instance. So the woman had to say, I almost said his name, you know, don't do this.

It's wrong. Like, you have to be really blunt and direct. So those are people, there are some people who are just basically socially maladjusted. They don't pick up people, they don't people-please because it's sort of as if they don't even understand entirely that there are people.

[ 3 : 32 ] And there are some people who are just healthy. I don't know what it is. They have the right genes, they have the right parents, they had the right school, the right coach, the right teachers. They're just pretty balanced and they rarely seem to struggle with people-pleasing.

But for most of us, it's a bit of a problem. And in fact, what I'm about to say might actually depress you a little bit because, well, look what the Bible says.

It can be actually sort of depressing. If you turn your Bibles to Galatians 1, verse 10, Galatians 1, 10, that's where we began the text that Jeremiah read this morning for us.

We're going through the book of Galatians, by the way. That's why we're looking at this next week. We'll do chapter 2, verse 1 to 10. We're sort of going through. It'll take us 13 weeks. This is week 2. And here's what Paul says.

He's just said that those who change the gospel, let them be accursed. And I talked about that in last Sunday's sermon. You can go online and listen to it. And then in verse 10, he says, For am I now seeking the approval man or of God?

[ 4 : 35 ] Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, that's human beings, I would not be a servant of Christ.

Now that's a pretty hard saying, isn't it? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ. If you could put the first point up, here's what Paul's saying.

It'll come up. The more I am motivated by people pleasing, the less I serve Jesus Christ. The more I am motivated by people pleasing, the less I serve Jesus Christ.

That's what the Bible said. If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ. Now for some of us, this is really depressing. As soon as I raise the topic of people pleasing, you think, oh yeah, that's a big problem that I have.

I wish I could be free of it. And now I go ahead and share the really good news with you that to the extent you have that problem, you're not following Jesus. So I've just added an extra large burden on your back.

[ 5 : 46 ] And now I'll say the end of the sermon, go in peace to love and serve the Lord. And off we go, even more depressed than we were before. because now we're not only have a people pleasing problem, but Jesus has said that we're not following him.

Now, just a couple of things. The text, if you look at the text again, if I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ. Just to try to, just chill out, right?

What is it the Bible is saying here? First of all, it's not saying that you're not a Christian. Okay? This letter is written to Christians in a church.

So the Bible text isn't saying if you're a people pleaser, you're not mine. No, it's not saying that. It's saying something which if we think about it is actually true to the extent that I am concerned about people pleasing when the pointy edge of the gospel, when different commands come that might mean that I have to be different than the way Canadians are or think or do things that Canadians think are weird, like pray or go to church or stuff like that, the more that we're consumed with people pleasing, the harder it's going to be to do that.

But the text isn't saying you're not a Christian. Okay? It's just saying it's affecting your discipleship, not your salvation. Now, here's another thing because some of us might say, well, you know, George, this is sort of vaguely interesting, but I don't have a problem with people pleasing.

[ 7 : 18 ] If you could put up the next point. Here's the thing which often goes in many of our hearts. We human beings are so deeply controlled by people pleasing that we don't often recognize that the way we move away from people pleasing, or at least we think we're moving away from people pleasing, is just moving into two different forms of people pleasing.

When I get sick of people pleasing, I move to either pride, narcissism, or cynicism and despair.

Now, why are these basically both forms of people pleasing?

And it's interesting, right? Because, like, what is it that our culture basically says around marriage? Our culture says around marriage that we need to find somebody who's going to be our soulmate, who can encourage us and keep us going in our projects and can affirm us.

Well, that's what our culture says. Our culture says around our own personal thing that nobody can tell you how to be happy. You have to choose how to be happy yourself, make yourself happy. You have to do all of these things.

Basically, what it's actually saying is it's exalting people pleasing where I now move to the point where I say, well, I'm not going to try to please you folks.

[ 8 : 38 ] You should please me. It's still a form of people pleasing, right? But I've given up on the idea of trying to please you folks. I now want to say, why am I trying to please you folks if you knew how wonderful I was and if you knew how my needs are just so important and more important than yours?

So you should please me. And, you know, a lot of models, a lot of TV, you know, we want to move towards a place where there's nothing to forgive or forget, where we're marching only to our own drummer and people have to affirm and applaud us.

And so it looks as if we're moving away from people pleasing, but all we've done is sort of just said, everybody has to please me. You're still in a people pleasing world. And another very common thing, and it's funny because there's a lot of Christians who think that cynicism and despair is a form of holiness and spiritual maturity, but it's not.

And one of the ways that we deal with the people pleasing problem is we've just basically been not very good at it. And because we're not very good at people pleasing, then we say about people, everybody's stupid, everybody lies, everybody sins, everybody's a hypocrite, nobody's going to do the right thing.

Then we'll say they're dumb, they're stupid, nothing works, institutions break down, okay? But, you know, when we get that way, first of all, that is not a form of holiness.

[ 10 : 23 ] That is a sick form, a sickness of a problem or a form of a problem, another form of that basic problem of people pleasing.

Our desire to please people and to get a sense of self-worth and identity from people's affirmation of us has failed. So we don't sort of look for a solution to people pleasing, we just sort of gag on it. But still deep down, and you can often see it because there'll still be attempts to people please, but it's just another form of people pleasing. It's one that's despaired on being successful at it, but does not have an alternative of it.

Why do we know that this is not a form of spiritual, some of you might say, no, George, it is this form of holiness. Look at Romans chapter 3, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Look at the, look at Psalms, like Psalm 58 and Psalm 109 about how people's mouths are like snakes' holes and vipers and no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no.

Everything in the gospel is centered around the fact that for God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son to the end that all that believe in him will have eternal life.

[ 11 : 38 ] God loves people. He knows they're sinners, but he loves them. So this text here in verse 10 again where it says, if I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.

It's a challenge for those of us who choose pride and narcissism. It's a challenge for us who choose cynicism and despair. It's a prize. It is a, it is, it applies to us who just have a straight up form of people pleasing that keeps messing up our lives.

And, it has, it has a, it has a word to all of us. But it's really weird because it looks as if Paul just sort of throws that line in, if I were still trying to please man, I not would be a servant of Christ.

And some of you who remember the text might say, but George, you know, he says that, but then he ignores it. It's a, it's as if he's one of these guys, George, that just sort of throws a bomb into the room to get everybody stirred up and then leaves and go somewhere else.

And that's a little bit what it seems like here in the text. If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ. Oh, then I took him to talk about how I saw Jesus and how I was violent and how I became a Christian.

[ 12 : 56 ] And it just seems as if on one level as if he drops a bomb and then moves on. But actually, it's really interesting that what he does is in an indirect manner, he goes directly to the heart of the issue.

So look at what he does next. And by the way, to show you that he hasn't just sort of dropped the bomb and moved on, look at verse 11. And in the ESV, it has the word for.

In other words, okay, I've just said this big statement. I've said a couple of big statements. If you change the gospel, if you change the gospel, you're accursed. And if you're trying to plead to the extent that you're trying to be a people pleaser, to that extent, you're not being a servant of Christ. And then he says for. So he's connecting. He's going to start explaining this. He's going to look a little bit more deeply into these two different things that he said and the other things that he said in the first nine verses.

And so look what happens here in verse 11 and 12. For I would have you know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel that was preached by me is not man's gospel.

[ 14 : 03 ] It's not a human gospel. It's not a gospel from flesh and blood. For I did not receive it from any human being, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

Now, well, here's the first thing. If you could put up the point, Andrew. So one of the things, I talked about this a little bit last week, and it's very relevant here again, is the gospel.

Paul is saying the gospel is not the product of human genius. And it doesn't matter how that human genius is formed. And the way it talks about in the original language, it's not only that it's not that he himself was a genius, it's also not the case that he went and met somebody who was a religious or philosophical genius and he learned from them.

And it's not that he was part of, I don't know, like the Christian equivalent of Princeton, Yale, and Harvard, and Stanford, and he just went to the right place. And it's not the case that he was in the most spectacular church or the most spectacular social group or that he had spectacular parents. What he's claiming, listen to it again, verse 11, for I would have you know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel that was preached by me is not man's gospel. It didn't come from human beings. To make it clear, it says he has continued more denials.

[ 15 : 23 ] He did not receive it from any person. He was not taught it, but instead, he received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ. And the word revelation in the original language literally means God making clear what human beings cannot know.

It would be as if, like to give a bit of a human analogy, there's a big black box here and it's lead lined and, you know, has a Faraday, you know, it just, it's no attempt to get inside and figure out what's going on is in it.

And unless somebody somebody who has the, you know, the key to open the locks because it's locked down, unless somebody picks up the box so we can see what's inside of it, we could never possibly know it.

And that's what Paul is saying. If you could put up the next thing. What Paul is saying is that Jesus Christ himself revealed to Paul a capital, this isn't the greatest grammar in the world, I apologize for it, that's why the capital he is so handy.

It's not revealing to Paul who Paul is, but Jesus Christ reveal himself, revealed to Paul who he is, that's Jesus, and what he accomplished in his life, death, and resurrection.

[ 16 : 43 ] That's what Paul is claiming happened to him. It's a very, very, very big claim. But remember, he's beginning by saying and all the way through his writings, he's never, ever, ever claims that there's something special about him, that there's something that's because Jesus chose him because he was a genius, as we're going to see in a few more lines.

Paul is going to say, I'm actually the least likely person on the planet, one of the least likely people on the planet for this to happen to happen to be me. He's making absolutely no claim about him being special at all.

But what he's saying here is very, very, very important, even for this people-pleasing issue. How do I get this?

Yeah, some of, a few years ago, some, I don't know what it was, some type of a fundraising event and it was going to be a very fancy restaurant and I don't think my wife could come with me for some reason but I think I had two or three extra tickets.

They gave us like four tickets so I took three of my kids to this fancy meal in a fancy restaurant and it was a table of eight or ten. I think it was a table for eight.

[ 17 : 49 ] Maybe it was either eight or ten, it doesn't matter. So, you know, I'm there with my kids and, you know, we're all enjoying the big meal and of course, what do you do at a table? Well, I don't know, you try to make conversation, right?

So, I mean, one thing we could have just done is I could have ignored the other people on the table and just talked to my kids. Always an option, right? But who wants to be the person who ignores everybody else on the table and just talks to their own group, right?

So, I try to make conversation and, I don't know, like I'm sort of good at it, you know, I talk, ask them about sports, weather, like just about every music, like the topics there and every time I ask the other people a question, I always got a one word answer with one exception.

Towards the end of like my tenth attempt, two of them went like this, rolled their eyes at me. I felt like saying, listen, I'm doing all the heavy lifting here.

you folks were only giving me one word answers, like, come on, work with me, don't roll your eyes, like I'm getting desperate, you know? In fact, I was never able to succeed to get them to a conversation, we ended up just chatting with each other.

[ 19 : 05 ] Like I just, at some point in time, I exhausted all conversation starting gambits with them. And so, I just talked to my kids, you know, it's just a really awkward table.

But here's the thing, and this is the way human beings are. You know, I know that we can stalk people, and I don't know, what's the word in social media where you go looking on Facebook and all, what's it, creeping?

What's it called? Okay, so I know you can do creeping, okay? But fundamentally, if you want to know somebody, you have to talk with them, and they need to reveal themselves.

Like, nobody likes it. If you were to meet somebody, and then after a while, you realize, no, I'm meeting you for the first time, but no, they know all these things, about you, that would creep you out and freak you out, right?

Because that's not normal human behavior in case you were wondering about it, okay? Or it's not admirable human behavior. But basically, when human beings, I mean, you know, I don't know, like some of the engineers and scientists in here, they could figure this out.

[ 20 : 07 ] It's completely passive. All of the effort to know just comes from us. This is completely passive. And as you move up, you know, dogs, there's not much to know about dogs. They just love human beings, and they're always your friend, and they're always wondering when they're going to get more food to eat, and they're, you know, optimistic.

You know, but fundamentally, most of the knowing and the caring comes from human beings. But when it comes to knowing another human being, the human being has to reveal himself or herself. Well, if it's just that way with us, with another human being, if you think about it, then with God, God, we can't even creep God.

Unless God chooses to reveal himself, we can know nothing about him. Like, if I can't know something about these four people at the table without them revealing themselves, how on earth can I possibly think that I will know anything about God unless he reveals himself?

But you see, so this is the thing about this text. On one hand, it's a very, very big claim that Paul is making, but on another hand, it's a very, very reasonable claim because when we think about it for a second, if there really is a God that does exist, then it can't just be that we human beings by our poetry, by our philosophy, by our science, by our metaphysics, by our rituals, by our sheer desire and anger that we can ever possibly know God, we are going to be completely and utterly dependent upon God to reveal himself.

There's other reasons given and it's another sermon as to why it might be reasonable, to believe that Paul actually had a revelation from God, but his fundamental point is a completely valid one and it's also a really, really important one because what it's saying is that God is completely the opposite than the four people at the table.

[ 21 : 56 ] That long before I even wanted to talk to God or even would think that God would want to talk to me, that he comes to my table and opens himself up to me, to have a relationship with me, that he takes all the initiative and he takes the initiative, he reveals himself so he can be known and he reveals himself because he wants to know me and be in a relationship with me.

See, one of the real problems we have with people pleasing, you see how in an indirect way Paul is starting to actually deal at the heart with this problem of people pleasing because part of the thing that motivates those of us who are people pleasing is that we get our sense of worth and some of our identity from having people like us and communicate that they like us.

And it's as if we don't have a stable enough identity or a stable enough sense of our own value that we're always needing this type of affirmation from other people. Like how on earth can I be a good pastor if the congregation doesn't like my sermon?

Woe is me, there's something wrong with me because I need to have that type of affirmation. And so right from this very start when Paul seems to not be talking about the problem with people pleasing, he's saying, listen, God is the one who came to sit at your table to make himself known so you could know him and he could know you.

God did that to you. You didn't go to God's table and are now trying to drag a response out of him. And you're going to see in a moment, he's going to say, while I was off following human tradition, while I was off consumed with prejudice, when I was off consumed with violence, when the last thing that was on my mind was to actually sit down with God and ask him questions, when I was

consumed with all of these other things, he came and sat down and talked with me.

[ 23 : 54 ] And what he did for me, he'll do for you. Could you put up the next thing, Andrew? This helps us to understand why Paul, in chapter 1, verse 8 and 9, says if you change the gospel, you're doing something accursed.

Human beings, I can proclaim what God has revealed about himself, but I cannot reveal God. Only God can reveal himself.

See, and that's why sharing the biblical gospel is so important. Because God has revealed himself. Paul, in the gospel, is saying Jesus revealed who he is and what he's accomplished on the cross, and all I'm doing is passing on what he revealed to me.

And as I pass on what he revealed to me, God continues his work of revelation to coming to human beings, ordinary, fallible, finite, sometimes highly disreputable human beings like you and me.

And to change that is to take the place of God. I can do a better job of revealing God than God can do of revealing himself.

[ 25 : 18 ] And once we put it in those terms, that's unbelievably arrogant nonsense. I'm going to be better at God at revealing God. Oh, yeah? No, you're not.

No, you're not. And it's also part of the thing why, you know, in evangelism and stuff, one of the main things of evangelism is not just that we have some opportunity where we can bear witness to Jesus, but that we pray.

Because all we can really do is proclaim what God has revealed about himself to others, but God still has to do the work. He does all the work.

All we can do is pray for our family, pray for our loved ones, pray for our neighbors, pray for our co-workers, that God would touch their hearts with the gospel. people. Now, I lost my place.

There we go. Not the end of the world when you lose your place. Oh, yeah. There's a thing that is just coming up in the text, which has really, really troubled lots of Christians because it seems to talk about predestination.

[ 26 : 35 ] In fact, not only does it claim about predestination, it actually talks about predestination and election. And this is very, very frightening and hard for a lot of us Christians. And it's funny, it's easy when, if you were doing a Bible study around this, that you get off the rabbit trail trying to figure out how it works without ever realizing that what's going on in the text continues to indirectly, directly talk about this human problem we have of people, pleasing.

But let's see what the text says. Look at verse 13. Remember, it's just talked about Revelation. And then there's a four there, verse 13. For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it.

And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people. so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers.

Now just pause here for a second. You know, one of the things you're supposed to do when you do sermons is you're supposed to cut out all the chaff and everything like that and just have your singular point. And so this next point actually doesn't really fit with the sermon.

But I just sort of felt compelled to point it out to you. Could you put it up, Andrew? Paul repents of his zeal for violence, his prejudice, and his pursuit of human-made tradition.

[ 28 : 03 ] But note, he does not repent of being Jewish. This is going to be really important for the rest of the letter. When a Jewish person becomes a Christian, they don't cease being Jewish.

They become a completed Jew. And when pagans, like most of us, become Christians, we become at one with our Jewish brothers and sisters who become completed Jews.

But God has not given up on the Jewish people and the promises have not ceased for the Jewish people. They still are part of God's plan. being Jewish doesn't make you go to heaven.

But those who are in the lineage of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and Moses and the inheritors of the promise, Paul never repents of being Jewish. Salvation is from the Jews.

That's what Paul says in the book of Romans. Salvation is from the Jews. So just want to point that out and it's going to become increasingly important because what's going on in the gospel in the book of Galatians is that people have come to the church and are trying to improve the gospel by saying that you have to keep all of the Jewish rules and all of the Jewish traditions and all of the Jewish laws.

[ 29 : 42 ] Not just the Torah but the traditions. and so it's going to be very important because Paul as the letter goes on is going to show how the gospel emerges out of the Old Testament and how

Jesus fulfills the Old Testament and this complicated relationship between Judaism and the Messiah and pagans and receiving the Messiah and so I just thought I'd throw it in.

But here's the troubling part for probably most of us about election and predestination. verse 15 But when he who had set me apart before I was born and who called me by his grace was pleased to reveal his son to me in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles I did not immediately consult with anyone.

And just pause here. It's those first few verses which are the first few words which are a little bit problematic to a lot of Christians. What Paul is going to do after this he's just sort of setting some of the facts straight to help make it known why it's just people who are going to doubt that he got all of this gospel from Jesus alone and why it's a reasonable thing to say he gives some facts.

And those of you who like reading commentaries a lot of commentary writers go to town on this bit because they try to fit all this in with the chronology and how long he the main thing is and this is actually sometimes things are a bit helped by knowing the original language in this case it's actually even starker in the original language Paul says in verse 16 or verse 15 that God set him apart before he was born in other words that God was working in his life in such a way preparing him for salvation that even when he was in the mother's womb his mother's womb God was at work and then just to make it even harder for us he says that God called him that it wasn't a matter of Paul calling out to God but whenever Paul did call out to God it was only because God had been calling out to him first so if you look at what Paul is saying here Paul is saying that even in his mother's womb God was at work preparing him for salvation that even in the midst of his violence and his prejudice and his pursuit of human traditions that God was calling Paul and that when Paul becomes a Christian it's not because Paul was on a religious quest but because God in the person of his son comes and actually reveals himself to Jesus and converts him and Paul is saying that right from the womb right throughout his life and even in his salvation it all the initiative comes from God and some of us get very very worried if you could put up the next point Andrew here's what Paul is trying to communicate God's grace is not a threat to my free will but it does remove every conceivable ground for my boasting when

[ 33 : 11 ] I was in my previous church out in the country in a place called Eganville I looked after a church in Eganville a place called Killaloo Tremor which is just a sign on the side of the road and Klontarf also just a sign on the side of the road and you know but there would be people as I got to know the people these working class country people very well I would start to learn a little bit about the rivalries and the way they viewed each other and it wasn't unusual for people for me to hear people say to their daughters or their sons well we don't act that way because we're a Smith oh you're a Smith when I did a funeral of a woman and this was this so I'm from Montreal when I moved to place so then I'm in Ottawa and I go to Eganville and Killaloo and Tremor and I discovered that there was a decades long prejudice

Killaloo has 700 people in it but people would say well I'm from sorry I'm from Killaloo I'm not a hillbilly like those people in Tremor and I'm thinking you're from a village of 700 people this is a ground of boasting that you're not a hillbilly like those Tremor people I've been there like six years the Tremor congregation become richer and more populous in the Killaloo congregation there was always problems relating to them and it's a decade long self perception of they're Killaloo people compared to hillbillies they're in Killaloo sorry I didn't say that I really hope my face didn't register complete and utter shock when they let it slip you know but here's the thing we can be proud of our lineage we can be proud of our family we can be proud of our community we can somehow think it gives a special status and what the

Bible here is saying is that the initiative from the beginning of the beginning of the beginning to the end is all God's God's he does everything I do not he does not love me because I am a Sinclair he does not love me because I was born in Montreal he does not love me because I am a Canadian he does not love me because I have university degrees he does not love me because I maybe am a most of the time an all right dad and an all right husband he doesn't love me for any of these things I have not contributed I have nothing that I can ever boast about there is no secret that might come there is no childhood memory there is no memory from something early in my marriage that might come to me now or come to me later on and that when I realize that it will mean that God will no longer love me because he knew me from the time I was in my womb and he did everything to save me there is nothing that might happen to me next week or in 10 years that

I do that now it means that God is going to say I'm not going to love George and Jesus isn't going to die for him on the cross anymore because if one of the reasons I have problems with being a people pleaser is that I think that my there's times that I think my worth and my identity come from my ability to please people but we can see here that as the gospel begins to grip us then the one who's created us the one whom we were made for the one whom we will be with for all eternity that for him what does it say in the beginning of our service almighty

God unto whom all hearts are open all desires known and from whom no secrets are hid and it means that in the gospel when I receive the gospel God there is no secrets in my past present or future everything was open to God and still he loved me still he sent his son to die upon the cross for me it's not just that he declares his love but that his love was costly his love dealt with that which for which I should be justly punished his love dealt with the righteousness that I really need to be clothed and clean for heaven that at every point in time from my moment of birth to the moment of my death for all eternity the initiative was all God's all was known by God all was done by God all was accomplished by God I can add nothing I can subtract nothing it is all done by God and God is unchanging and as this grips a person it starts to bring a healing to this whole complicated mess of being a people pleaser

[ 38 : 40 ] I lost track of my points can you put them up we'll just as I am gripped by the gospel I die to people pleasing and move to living for God's glory and moving to living to God's glory is not that we then become indifferent to people the irony is that the more we are free from being people pleasers and the more we're gripped by the gospel to live for God's glory because God is the creator and sustainer of all things and loves people it means that as we live for his glory we actually can effectively love people like the love and well being of people get thrown in as we pursue God's glory gospel the more I know that he knows me perfectly deeply and personally yet he loves me and he loves me because he loves me God's love is pure it's not motivated by need by emptiness it's not motivated by calculation by quid pro quo it's not motivated by him proudly waiting for us to meet certain standards it's not that he sort of forced to love us he loves me because he loves me and on one level for human beings that's a terribly frightening thing because we want to have some degree of control of the other person loving us but in dealing with

God we have no control he loves me because he loves me Andrew if you could put up the prayer could everybody stand I don't do it every week but often I sort of try to put together a prayer to try to weave together the different things in the sermon it'll be available on the web page it's a version of the prayer which is also in your bulletin but it'll be on the web page if you find this helpful I'll just read it out loud and then I invite you to pray it with me heavenly father I confess that sometimes I am a people pleaser sometimes I am proud and narcissistic true confession I needed spell check help to spell the word narcissistic but sometimes I am cynical and despairing I thank you that even though you know me perfectly still you love me and sent your son to die for me and save me please pour out the holy spirit upon me and make me disciple of

Jesus gripped by the gospel learning to live free and well by living for your glory in Jesus name amen so I just going to invite you to join with me in praying that prayer heavenly father I confess that sometimes I am a people pleaser sometimes I am proud and narcissistic sometimes I am cynical and despairing I thank you that even though you know me perfectly still you love me and sent your son to die for me and save me please pour out the holy spirit upon me and make me a disciple of Jesus gripped by the gospel learning to live free and well by living for your glory in Jesus name amen father that is the prayer of may may you you work powerfully in each of our lives and us as a congregation that it might be true in Jesus name amen who and him don't