

Be the Solution

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[0:00] Be the solution. Be the solution. That's my message today. Talking about the church, the church of God. Now the church is made up of imperfect people, in case you hadn't realised it.

Who's with me on that? There's some imperfect people here this morning. Of course we've got some perfect people as well. But no, the church is actually made up entirely of imperfect people. And thankfully so. Otherwise we'd all be sunk, wouldn't we? And some have reckoned if you join the perfect church, you'd make it imperfect. Faulty people make up the church. Thank God for that. And the object of the church is to honour and glorify our great Lord, isn't it? To honour and glorify Him. That's our purpose. That's why we're here. And even with and by we frail human beings, failing human beings such as we.

Well, such as me. I'm not sure if you would consider yourself a frail, failing human being. But we're all subject to earth's foibles, aren't we?

[1:07] And failings, I put to you, if we're honest enough. And the word tells us that there's nothing new under the sun. You know, we might reckon, oh, the modern church is in a deplorable state.

It's in such a mess. The church of today is a bit of a mess here and there. But really there's nothing new under the sun because it always has been the case. There's been problems in churches from day dot, from the beginning, really.

There always has been problems in churches. And this has been true in the past and it's true even today. There's nothing new under the sun. But our object is still the same, isn't it?

That we glorify and honour our great Saviour. That's still our object no matter what. It still is. How we need to seek after God's best for the church, I put to you.

And I've got some things here pictured. Be the solution. We've got some problems on the one side and some solutions on the other side. And I've put to you this morning how we can be the solution, even in a problem-ridden church, which really every church has its problems.

[2:16] To grow closer to that biblical ideal that will honour and glorify our Lord. That's his object. That should be our intent. And the church is meant to have a good testimony in the world.

But we know that even through the pages of Scripture, we see man fails. Man is faulty. And the early church knew much of that failing.

It's always had its problems. But thankfully, we can be part of the solution. We can be the solution. We can implement scriptural solutions to church problems.

And this is what our Lord calls us to be. To be ultimately the glorious church. That's the church he's coming back for, isn't it? The glorious church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

What is God's will for his people? We know that the church is meant to be a beautiful, a wonderful, glorious bride. It's meant to be a purity to it.

[3:17] There's meant to be a wonder to it. There's a purity to the church. And for that to happen, there's needful measures for godly church discipline.

We know for protection for the church. To bring godly correction where it's needed against sin and error. And so there are sober warnings for the church, for us, to take heed of too.

To watch out. To avoid. To take heed. Now, I don't know if you're conscious of these things, but sometimes we leave some food lying around a while and it starts to change colour.

Have you noticed that? It starts to grow fur. Have you ever noticed that? It starts to smell, doesn't it? We get some tomatoes from the backyard, from our veggie patch occasionally, and they tend to just sit there for a while and they start to change colour.

And there's a kind of rottenness that sets in. And you've got to throw out the rotten tomatoes, don't you? Hopefully you don't throw them at me, but you throw out the rotten tomatoes.

[4:24] You throw out the rotten apples because they tend to corrupt the good ones, don't they? And it's the same in the church, isn't it? The rotten apples, as it were. You've got to deal with that.

As our brother shared about the leaven. You know, the word tells us that a little leaven can impact the whole loaf. It's like a snowball effect. If you've ever been in the snow and you roll that snow and ultimately you that have come from colder climates can relate how that snowball just builds and builds and builds.

And it just starts from a little something. And so the Lord warns us much about corrupting doctrine and just letting things go and we're not addressing them. And Paul talked of the church of his time. He related how that he had upon him daily the care of all the churches. That's 2 Corinthians 11 verse 28. 2 Corinthians 11 verse 28.

He just rattled off a whole list of things that he'd been going through of great sufferings. And then he says almost to top it all off that he had the care of all the churches. Now this word care, it means anxiety or worry.

[5:34] There's a sense where, and sometimes it falls on those that are in responsibility in the church, that they sometimes feel the impact of that.

The care, the worry, the anxiety. I know there's preachers and pastors and people in ministry, all of us here today, that there's a sense where we feel for the church when things aren't how we'd like them to be.

And Paul knew that of the church of his day, of the high maintenance, of the heavy workload, of the burden that he carried, and that he had much to battle against.

Friends, I put to you this morning that fact is that churches can have problems. And it's normal, isn't it? It's normal that we have problems. It's not a new thing.

It's the normal thing. And it always has been the case. And why so? No. After all, we are the body of Christ. Aren't we a target for the enemy?

[6:30] Think of it. That you, we, collectively, us, are the body of Christ. And doesn't Satan hate Christ? He wants to attack us.

He wants to wear us down. And Satan is after us. It's like a lot to think that there's the crosshairs. We're in the target sites, as it were. He's always looking to pick one of us off, to knock us down. Paul was acting like a steward, a caretaker, a protector, a builder of the church. And he says, that which comes on me daily, the care of all the churches.

We should be like Paul, a steward, a protector, a caretaker, a builder of the church. All of us. God helping us to be such that we'll be part of the solution.

Amen? Part of the solution. So I'd like to look together through some scriptures that talk about problems in the churches. Not that we have any of these problems, of course.

[7:36] But, no, the fact is we are beset with these problems from time to time. As time goes by, you know, having ministered for 20 plus years now, you see much of these signs happening, even in our own fellowship.

And I'm sure in every fellowship there's these problems. But Paul gives us some scriptural solutions for these problems. So we'll talk through that today.

We trust in the Lord. It's his work, his church. He will do the good work. And we believe in his overcoming power, that he can transform us, his people.

That Christ will be formed in you, each one. Christ will be formed in you, in you, in you, in each one of us. That we'll be more like Christ. And we can trust him, that God can do great things through each one, individually, each human vessel.

There's a needful guarding of that precious treasure, the purity of the church. That we are that blood-washed people. It's precious, isn't it? You know, how moving it was just thinking of his blood shed for me, for you.

[8:45] A blood-washed people, a blood-bought people. To realise the great privilege, the great glory that he should bless us with salvation and call us to be his own special people.

What potential that he's truly designed us to be. And collectively so, as the church. Now, of course, we also need to reckon that all who attend the church, as in the church building, are not necessarily Christians.

You know, the old saying, you might stand in the garage, but it doesn't make you a car. Or if you go down to Hungry Jack's, it doesn't make you a whopper.

Or whatever it is. And there used to be a TV show where it said, would the real name of the contestant stand up? It had these people that were kind of making out to be a person, but they were pretenders.

They were false. They weren't the real deal. And likewise in churches too. People can talk the talk and use all the Christianese, the Christian language, and maybe put on the show and look the part, but not be saved.

[9:55] And that's a big problem. You know, I'll put to you, if you're sitting in that seat today, God can change that. God can save your soul. And he wants to. He wants you to be saved.

He's not willing that any should perish, but that you should come to trust in him. I urge you today, if you're in that number, you're feeling like, well, I feel like I'm a Christian, but I've never really put my trust in him.

I've never really called on him to save me, received his saving. You can change that right now. God can save your soul right now, right here, this very moment.

Let's not be one of the pretenders, the false, but be the real. And really, we encounter this all the time. I know I was in the backyard lately, and you might be able to identify with this.

You've got all those lovely blooming yellow flowers. Aren't they beautiful? The soursops. And you start to pull the soursops out without disrupting the ones you want to keep, the plants you want to keep.

[11:01] And it's the same, isn't it, in the scriptures. It talks about the wheat and the chaff. It talks about the wheat and the tares growing together. They look the same. Sometimes it's hard to tell the real from the false.

And when we come to a church and we think someone's a Christian and they don't act like it, sometimes it can paint that picture in people's minds. Oh, is that what a Christian is? And there are some in the church.

The church building, they might come morning, night, midweek and still be lost, not be saved. And it's important to get that right, to know that you're saved. And for all of us, sometimes we can't pull the soursops out without pulling out the plants.

We can't pull out the tares from the wheat. God will deal with that one day. When judgment comes, it will all be revealed. Who's real and who's false. We might be surprised at who's in and who's out on that day.

But for the true people of God, there's warnings for us about how we should live and interact and be the church, be the solution. What we should stand for, what we should stand against.

[12:09] And there are some various warnings. So I'm going to cover some of these things we've written here. Number one, we see there's warnings against a disorderly walk.

A disorderly walk. For example, it says in 2 Thessalonians 3 verse 11. There we go. 2 Thessalonians 3 verse 11.

Paul writes, For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly. Oh, sure. Working not at all, but are busy bodies. So Paul's warning about some. They're walking among the people disorderly.

Paul warns against that. You know, the church is not immune to human factors such as strife and gossip and bitterness and discord because it's made up of people, isn't it?

People. And people can act like this. We know that. Paul says to those who have this disorderly walk, this walk that is not godly, he exhorts them.

[13:13] He goes on to say he exhorts them to work and to quietness. You know, there's a story told about some people out on the lake and the point made was if you're manning the oars and paddling the boat, you don't have time to rock the boat.

Sometimes the people that rock the boat are the people who've got the time on their hands to sit back and to spectate and to criticise. Isn't it so? It can be so.

Get behind the oars and row the boat. Then you won't have time to rock the boat, as it were.

There's truth in that, I think. If we get busy for the Lord, we'll have less time to be a busy body.

Amen. Get busy for the Lord. And Paul says it can get to a stage where we note such a person and we have no company with them. Now, that's when it gets to that nth degree.

He talks about admonish them as a brother. In other words, caution, reprove them gently. Look at back in the Old Testament days, the children of Israel, the congregation of Moses, and how they were often murmuring and complaining as they travelled.

[14:28] We see that, for example, in Exodus 16, verse 2. And the whole congregation of Moses, sorry, the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness.

The whole congregation. You know, if they put it to a vote, they'd have sacked him as the patriarch of the day because they all murmured against him and against Aaron. And in verse 8, Moses cautions the people.

He says, Your murmurings are not against us, but against the Lord. That's a danger, isn't it?

Murmurings and griping and grumbling.

The Bible warns us much against that. It's very much a repeated theme. Sin can cost you. It cost the Israelites. As they wandered in the wilderness, it cost them dearly.

So we need to speak against murmuring and causing such disorder. Paul says to the Philippians in Philippians 2.14, he says, Do all things, all things.

[15:32] A double L. All means all without murmurings and disputings. So there's the strong words there. The strong words in the word against discord. For example, Proverbs 6 verse 19.

Amongst numbers of things, it says these are some things that the Lord hates. One of them is sowing discord among the brethren. Sowing discord, causing strife and upset.

God hates this. The word tells of some who are unruly. Paul says, warn them that are unruly.

There's needful warning. And so there's needful warning about our walk.

How is our walk with God? As a church, we want to steer away from what can offend or hurt.

Disorderly walk is a big issue. And some would say, oh, they would excuse their unholiness.

And they would try to redefine sin and try to brush it over. But it's not for man to define. God defines what sin is.

[16:39] And there's needful warning to keep clear of that. Let's prayerfully consider. What is my conduct? Is it conduct becoming of a child of God?

What's my conversation like? Is it conversation becoming of a child of God? Now, even the military these days, they have conduct becoming of an officer, don't they?

There's even conduct becoming of a footy player. They can get in trouble. You imagine. I mean, there's a certain conduct becoming, isn't there? And a conduct that's unbecoming.

And Paul says, warn the unruly. He tells of Euodias and Syntyche, a couple of females in the church at Philippi. He urges them that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

You know, let's find that godly harmony and blessing. And Galatians 6, it tells, Galatians 5.13 talks about, by love serve one another.

[17:36] He says, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. But if you bite and devour one another, take heed that you be not consumed one of another. Walk in the spirit and you shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.

So there's a sense where the walk that we have, it can be a disorderly walk, which is the problem, or it can be a godly walk, which is the solution, isn't it?

To walk in the spirit. To not walk in the flesh, but to walk in the spirit. In other words, get on with each other. Let brotherly love continue. And then Ephesians 4, it tells us, with all lowliness and meekness and longsuffering, forbearing one another in love.

There's that sense where we should forbear, forbear. In other words, let's not be selfish.

Forbearing, forbear one another. Disorderly walk or forbearing?

Loving one another. The unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. So there's a warning there against our walk, disorderly walk, that we walk orderly, that we walk in the spirit, not in the flesh.

[18:43] The next one is warnings against the world. Believe it or not, the world can impact the church, can't it? Should be the other way around, shouldn't it? But the world can impact the church.

And Paul tells of Demas, he says, He's forsaken me, having loved this present world. Demas shot through on Paul. He was one of the workers and he shot through.

He said he's loved this present world. He deserted Paul. And in the context, Paul's telling of those who are truly saved, that they are the people who love his appearing.

That's at the end of verse 8. But in contrast, Demas, in contrast to those who've loved his appearing, who are looking for the second coming, looking for Christ's coming, watching and working and waiting for the Lord's return, are contrasted with Demas.

He's not loving his appearing, but he's loving this present world. Let's be aware of that. We can all be subject to that.

[19:44] We're the love of the world. As 1 John 2 talks of, the love of the world can be a hindrance for us. Demas had let the values and the ways and attitudes, the thinking of this world system to govern his lifestyle.

We can all be like that. Let's be honest. We're constantly barraged by the world's signals and messages. And the world can get a grip on people. You see, some people, they're so gripped by the world, they're playing these games, they're living in an unreal world, in a godless world, where some people get so addicted, they get addictive behaviours, and they call it gaming disorder. They're just gaming disorders. Of course, we know there's an evaluation of such things we all need to make.

I'm not saying it's sinful or wrong to play a video game, but when someone gets so obsessed with it that that's their whole world, it's a sense where it's throwing your life away, isn't it?

And the world can get hold of people so that they fall out of God's active service. Demas is such a man. He loved this present world such that the world just preoccupied him and obsessed him that he deserted the ministry, the work.

[21:04] In contrast to Demas, Paul talks about others in the context in verses 10 through 12 of Crescens, Titus, Luke and Mark, Antichicus, that they were commended.

They were co-workers. Demas loved this present world, but these others, Paul talks of, they were commended as co-workers, standing fast, faithfully serving the Lord.

Demas chose the ease and the allurements of the world. Friends, be conscious of this. I urge you today, be conscious of being careful of what you love.

To not love this present world, it's going to disappear. You know, don't get so attached to it that you're campaigning for climate change. Climate, God is going to deal with the climate one day. Let's not get obsessed with this present world as such that it obsesses our mind. But let's be loving his appearing.

[22:04] Amen. And likewise, it talks about the love of money is the root of all evil. Some, they've coveted after it. They've erred from the faith. They've pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

And for some people, they've got so detoured by the world and the attractions of the world or the things that can detour us that they've got really sidetracked and go wayward like Demas.

What is the solution of the world and its allurements? 1 Timothy 6 verses 11 through 12 talks how Paul tells Timothy, he says, in the context, he's just talked about the ones who, the love of the world, the root of all evil.

He says, in contrast, he says, but you, man of God, people of God, he says, but thou, O man of God, flee these things, the world, the chasing the almighty dollar, flee these things, those things that would sidetrack you and rather follow, pursue, run after these things, he says, righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

That's a contrast, isn't it? Rather than get detoured by the world, flee that and follow that which is godly and will bless your soul.

[23:25] Another warning is against flesh, fleshliness or carnality. 1 Corinthians 3 verse 3, Paul tells the Corinthians, he says, for ye are

yet carnal, in other words, fleshly.

For whereas there is among you envying and strife and divisions, are you not carnal and walk as men? He's saying you're carnal, you're fleshly. It's like the flesh has got that driving control of you and the church at Corinth had a reputation this way, that they were faulty and fleshly and the people were acting quite immature and Paul called them like babes in Christ.

He says, I can't speak unto you as unto spiritual but as unto carnal. He says, I can't talk to you as spiritual people but I have to talk to you as fleshly people, as babes in Christ.

Quite a contrast there, isn't it? Carnal or spiritual. Walking in the flesh or walking in the spirit. Now friends, a church can get backslidden.

Backslidden. And we see the churches the Lord addresses in Revelation that they were backslidden. Some were quite carnal. And believers can be carnal.

[24:35] Let's be honest. I can be carnal. I can be fleshly. I can think fleshly thoughts and live fleshly ways. And it's a battle.

The word tells us about a warring, a struggle between the flesh and the spirit. It's in all of us. And the Corinthians were called carnal even though their lives had once been dominated by the sins of the flesh.

And he says, such were some of you but now it's different. Such, he didn't say, such are some of you. They weren't controlled by that anymore. They were declared new creatures in Christ.

Therefore, if any man be in Christ he's a new creature. Old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new. Yet, there's still times when they walked and lived as mere unregenerate men as we see here.

He says, he's addressing the Corinthians as brothers, as sisters. He says, but sometimes you're carnal when you're acting like this. And it goes to show really we're all a work on the potter's wheel, aren't we?

[25:43] We're still a work in development. A Christian can be carnal and can grieve and quench the spirit of God. As did Peter. He denied his Lord three times.

Yet, later he boldly confessed Christ to thousands at Pentecost. Consider David. He sinned grievously. A wicked sin with Bathsheba.

Adultery. And then he engineered that a husband be killed in battle. How long did it take David to take care of his sin? It's interesting.

Some have reckoned the time between David's sin and his confession of sin was close to one year. One year. That's through comparison of a couple of scriptures in 2 Samuel.

So apparently he continued unrepentant for a number of months. And the point I'm making is that a believer can be in disobedience and can fail.

[26:48] A believer can be barren and unfruitful. of course we need to make sure we're saved. We might be just a professor and not a possessor of eternal life.

And that's certainly the worst state because you're damned without Christ as your saviour. But sometimes Christians too can slide into backsliding.

They can be subject to carnal ways that struggle within, the battle that rages. And our Lord gives us strength to overcome the flesh.

In Galatians 5 Paul lists the works of the flesh and then he says in contrast to the works of the flesh he talks about the fruit of the spirit. He says the works of the flesh are manifest.

He lists them in Galatians 5 but then he says but the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance against such there is no law.

[27:53] And they that are Christ have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. So there is an antidote to the flesh is to crucify it. Amen. Is to stand and to allow God's spirit to control, bring that godly fruit.

Another warning for the problems of churches is false doctrine. False doctrine. In Titus 2 3 verse 10 it says a man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition, after you've warned them one or two times, reject.

Heresy, divergent doctrine. You know it boggles my mind when you think sometimes we've had this in time past here in the church there was a man who attended for a time and he made a habit of

handing out various pieces of paper with some controversial teachings and some of his teachings I could agree with in fact but it was that element that was controversial that was really divisive doctrine that was a problem and he wouldn't listen to me and he had to be told it wasn't accepted, it was rejected.

And heresy is divergent doctrine. It's very needful that we stand against that and I know some people correspond with me and they say oh pastor what do you think of such and such a preacher and they send me a video and I say look there's good in it but there's danger.

You pick the bones out of things, we can discern that as we get as an older Christian we can discern various teachings but if someone wants the straight out answer and they say would you recommend such and such a preacher and if I have strong biblical reasons why I would not support such a preacher I will tell you because I must.

[29:54] It's very important that we have sound doctrine and that we issue a biblical warning against deception. We must know that we know that we know what is right doctrine, what is sound doctrine.

There's no sitting on the fence with that and we have to follow the word, be founded on the word. It's going to be one of the hardest things for a preacher or pastor to do but necessary and it's the crucial hour for the church.

There's so much out there on the internet just manifold teachings and just contradictory teachings and so it's important that we are very careful about doctrine and Paul tells Timothy he's saying that the word is literally gangrene of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus who concerning the truth have erred saying the resurrection is past already and overthrow the faith of some.

He's saying that their teaching, the teaching of Hymenaeus and Philetus he says it will spread like gangrene. Now thankfully we don't have much gangrene in Australia today but it can happen can't it?

I know you get an injury and you leave it long enough and you'll end up losing your limb. Gangrene it can spread corruption it can destroy life and it's a medical term of a saw that eats away at the body and likewise Paul says the words of these false ones were like gangrene and spreading contagious and in his time when this was written the only way to deal with gangrene this canker was to cut off the affected area amputation and friends much false doctrine much false teaching threatens the church and it always has done this is not something new but I put to you I think it's escalating that's my reading of it I think there is an escalation of it because there's much more accessibility to it people in some small setting can have a worldwide influence on the internet and false doctrine should be dealt with strongly as Paul says to the Romans he says mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which you have learned and avoid them there's a strong stand and as

[32:33] I referred to this fellow that had some influence in our church and there's been others before that it's important to deal with it strongly and when this controversial material was handed out it was causing division it threatened to spread false teaching and confusion and false teachers have to be withstood it's a difficult subject but necessary Paul tells Timothy he says this preach the word be instant in season and out of season reprove rebuke exhort with all long suffering and doctrine reprove rebuke exhort these are strong words with long suffering there's a persevering with doctrine with teaching and then he goes on for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine they won't endure they won't adopt sound teaching but after their own lust they shall heap to themselves teachers having itching ears there's this itching ear problem and then it says they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables you know there's a lot of the preaching these days there's a lot of fables there's a lot of storytelling and look

I've told you some stories about sour sobs and things but it's almost like that it's the emphasis there that is all they go on about and some they're yarning on about testimonies and visits to heaven and miracles and this and that but dreams and visions and you name it they can get away from the word that's a danger isn't it you know the bible talks about standing fast on the word of God holding fast the word of God holding forth the word of God it seems like some they're preoccupied with these

their imaginations and their storytelling such that the word of God is scarcely opened and expositied it can be a real issue you must hold fast the word of God brothers and sisters so important we must have scripture for it and when someone says oh I've got a word from the Lord for you chapter and verse that's what we need don't we not thus saith the

Lord and some supposed latter day revelation now the bible talks about it's extra biblical revelation that's a big danger now can God reveal things outside of his word yes he can but we have to test it don't we test it prove all things hold fast that which is good be careful about what you hear when it's supposed extra biblical revelation it's a danger we'll go on to Titus 1 Paul tells hold fast the faithful word hold fast the faithful word by sound doctrine exhort and convince and so it's necessary for such as that and he goes on to say there are many unruly and vain talkers deceivers he says whose mouths must be stopped we must counteract false doctrine with sound doctrine very important brothers and sisters and search the scriptures be a Bible student dig deep and try to study reliable sources be careful where you get your information from that it's from sound biblical ministries and look you might want to send me an email and say what do you think of such and such a preacher

I'm not the be all and end all of all truth I don't have a monopoly on knowing what's right and wrong but I'll give you my opinion and that will be a God fearing opinion counteract false doctrine with the faithful word amen the faithful word this is the faithful word if they speak not according to this there's no light in them amen and then another warning just lastly another problem area that the church faces is evil speaking evil speaking we see Paul tells Timothy he says war a good warfare he says war a good warfare according to the prophecies he says this is how we war a good warfare by the word and he talks about verse 19 he says holding faith and a good conscience which some have put away concerning faith have made shipwreck of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander whom I've handed over delivered unto

Satan that they learn not to blaspheme Paul is saying of Hymenaeus and Alexander now we don't know if it's the same Alexander he talked of elsewhere because Alexander was a common kind of name but he's saying of this man Hymenaeus and of the man Alexander he says he's delivered them unto Satan that's pretty strong language isn't it so basically he's they're going to be subject to some attack and some they've come under out from under the protection as it were and he's saying of evil speaking blasphemy is an issue now blasphemy is saying something with the intent to hurt or harm or hinder it's speaking evil of people it's defaming and slandering and spreading destructive rumours and malice and such we can all have our opinion about people but we must not drift off in where we're attacking one another we should support one another and encourage one another it tells of Hymenaeus and Alexander that they had drifted into this dangerous rocks of false teaching they'd wrecked their faith and Paul links faith and a good conscience together in other words righteous behaviour and living truth and Paul tells of

[38:53] Alexander be on your guard against him now of course Paul was warning about the man Alexander and of the man Hymenaeus he wasn't blaspheming he was telling the truth whereas he was saying of them that they were blaspheming they were opposing his message it says that they opposed his words in the context I haven't got that verse but in the context it's saying that he withstood our words that's verse 15 I'll just see if I can locate that yeah that one there 2 Timothy verse 14 and 15 he's saying of Alexander he's greatly withstood our words so basically he's withstood Paul's words which as we know Paul's words were the word of God he was withstanding the word of God and friends just to draw things to a close here what is the object of the church to honour and glorify our Lord that's what we're here for we're not here to have a social club or to have some kind of worthy cause or be something like the rotary club where you've just got some goodwill and good purposes we've got a godly purpose haven't we to honour and glorify our Lord that's why we're here and we need to be together in this to be glorifying God together and

God's purpose is that there be a godly unity and it's something we need to keep working on I put to you now I'm going to tell you a story here while I was out in the back paddock and I was pulling out these ourselves I saw the sheep there and they're all moving together and it just struck me sheep

always move together don't they but generally they well 99% of the time the 99 move together you know the sheep move together generally they stay in one flock and we are the church aren't we we're meant to be together together in godly unity in godly togetherness to be firmly together planted together growing together flourishing together as a flock that is looking after one another like sheep look after one another don't they they care for it they stay together there's something about that and that's what god wants us to be godly togetherness of course there's wolves we've got to fight against the wolves the foxes you know those that would attack the sheep the lord wants us to be of the same mind of the same precious faith to stand together against wrong teaching to be a committed people and paul faced the corinthians who had contentions and divisions he's saying by the name of our lord jesus speak the same thing speak the same things that there be no divisions among you but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment you know friends today we have a work to do we have a work to do in nehemiah's day they had a mind that was together they had a mind to work nehemiah rallied them and they took their stations and had their trowels and swords and they worked together to build the wall around jerusalem god's work and why did it succeed because they had the same mind a mind to work a mind to work and paul says muzzle not the ox let's get behind the church let's set the workers to the work let's get behind this mission and carry it forward there's much work to do let's put our shoulder to the wheel let's work together and i've been encouraged by some who have come up to me saying we want to get more involved in this church amen that's music to my ears we've already got a job here look they've constantly got that job but there's a million all the workers helping in the tech area we've got other things to do amen but let's work together let's get behind the wheel as it were let's be those faithful people that will have that commitment that loyalty and now some will place loyalty on a church or a teacher but where the leader does not abide with the word we need to stand against even the leader even the pastor because no teacher is above scrutiny or accountability now that's why built into our constitution we have measures where I can be sacked if I get off into wrong teaching or into immorality it has to be the case because you want a pastor a preacher you want the ministry to be accountable yeah so it's better to put the trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man if you put your trust in a man sometimes you'll get let down that can be a big deflating thing can't it for any church especially when the pastor gets off into error when they set a man on a pedestal it's danger isn't it we must all come under the mighty hand of God we're all brothers and sisters so let's have the same mind the same book the same unity of the faith let's be that body like a flock moving together productively fruitfully guarding against the wolves helping and encouraging one another let's not be afraid of godly rebuke where it's called for rebuke me where it's needful mark and avoid false doctrine or practice so there's some things to warn against our walk let it not be disorderly let's forbear let's encourage let's lift up let's not walk in the flesh but walk in the spirit let's guard against the world and the allurements of the world and rather follow that which is rightful and godly and fight for the faith let's guard against the flesh instead of having the works of the flesh let's have the works of the! spirit the fruit of the! let's guard against false doctrine such that we stand for the faithful word we won't be detoured from this book this is the faithful word the word of God if it's not according to the word of God we question it we deny it and then a guard against evil speaking so that we will have a good conscience the same mind we'll go forward in faith together and we'll see a glorify and honour our Lord that's the ultimate purpose and one day he is coming back for the glorious church believe it or not we're it we're it those churches that are godly those churches that hold fast the word of God we are all part of that glorious church the people of God and one day our great saviour will come and he'll see that church that he's designed and encourage one another in these times ahead and be encouraged friends

I've been preaching really to Christians here this morning I'm not taking it for granted that you're a believer in Christ I urge you put your trust in him trust in him now for time and for eternity let today be the beginning of your new life in Christ born again by the spirit of God because you say yes Lord you receive your forgiveness now I believe in you Lord Jesus and then for all of us as one body as one people let's have that togetherness that is rightful and godly as we stand fast in the faith together let's pray Lord we bless you that we can be as you help us Lord the solution as it were when we see a world where many there's many problems Lord we can stand fast and to stand against some things Lord that our walk will be right that our thinking will be right

[47:36] Lord that our love will be for your word that we'll have a standing fast together we'll stand against the flesh and we'll walk in

the spirit we won't walk disorderly Lord we'll have a heart that wants to
serve that wants to stand fast for true doctrine and to love to forbear
one another and to be that glorious church that you've purposed us to be
in Jesus name we pray Amen