

Addicted

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[0:00] It's called a good addiction that we can get.

subject to, I'm sure, and we can all be tempted to addiction.

But this is an addiction that is a good one, a really good one, and of course I commend this to you tonight. So 1 Corinthians 16 from verse 13, it reads, Watch you stand fast in the bay, quit you like men, be strong, let all your things be done with charity.

I beseech you, brethren, you know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints.

There's the word there, they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints. It goes on, verse 16, that you submit yourselves unto such, and to everyone that helpeth with us and laboureth.

[1:18] I'm glad of the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, for that which was lacking on your part they have supplied. For they have refreshed my spirit and yours, therefore acknowledge ye them that are such.

So here in Paul's salutation to the Corinthians, as he ends his letter to the church at Corinth, he comments about some believers, and he gives us some challenges through these words that he says here, as he talks about, in particular, the house, the household of Stephanas.

And he commends this household, this family, and in his comments here, he talks about, Watch you stand fast in the bay, quit you like men, be strong, as in be strong, be manly, be brave, be firm, stand fast in the bay, be courageous, be strong, act with love, act with submission.

And he talks about these people, in particular, the house of Stephanas. And he talks of people, these ones, he says that they're helpers, they're ministering, they're laboring.

And in one verse it talks about, they are refreshing his spirit. So they're commended for a number of things here. Now, it talks about the refreshing, that's verse 18, they've refreshed my spirit, and yours.

[2:46] He says acknowledge them. They're doing a good work, in other words. we all need refreshing, don't we? We can get, our spirits can get, what we're flagging. Our energies can be depleted.

I know there's a medical thing where you can get depleted. Minerals, vitamins and such. Paul talks about these ones, they give him a refreshing, a restoring, a giving of new energy and strength. That's a good thing. Isn't that good? To be such a person? Think of it, how can I be a refresher? To refresh others, to revive them, to restore, to renew them, to give them strength and supply.

Really, as we see, these ones here, Stephanus and his household, these are some people, who had an addiction. And of course, we know, as we talked about, addictions are usually, a bad thing. Now, some people have been addicts, for many years. You might have a, a retail addiction, a shopping addiction. You know, you just can't help, but go down the shop, and buy everything, you see.

[3:51] I prefer to be, a window shopper myself. But, you might have a, a food addiction. You just can't help, but eat that, you know, you drive past Hungry Jacks, and I'm a bit like that, I check my, my Hungry Jacks out, to see if I can get, get it a bit cheaper.

But you know, we can go, have a, a fast food addiction, that can do us harm. We can have a drug addiction, of course. We can, we can have a gambling addiction. Or, as I've heard, some actually have, a gaming addiction, where they just, just can't get away, from the screen, and they're just playing, game after game, and you can get these, gambling, games now, can't you?

I'm told. So, all kinds of, all manner, many more, addictions, that we want to steer away from. But today, I'm talking tonight, about a, good addiction.

It's a holy addiction. And I pray that you would, you would, have such an addiction. That you would be, encouraged to such an addiction, to be, as these people, the house of Stephanas. They were addicted, it says, as we read, addicted to, the ministry, of the saints. In other words, they were, consecrated to it.

[5:01] They were, devoted to it. Dedicated to it. This family, was devoted to this ministry. It was something that, that obsessed them. That they, they loved so much.

They, wanted to, meet needs, to show hospitality, to support preachers like Paul. They were consumed with serving, with opportunities to serve, other believers. And, they were addicted, friends, they were addicted to the right thing. The right thing. This is a rightful addiction. They were addicted to ministry. In other words, being a servant of God. Serve God.

To serve the saints, God's people. Paul says, it's a good thing, that these people were addicted. I think we can learn from them. Amen? And, we can learn about some good addictions, I've put to you. This is a good addiction to develop.

This is an addiction you don't want to get, to lose. It's an addiction you want to keep. To develop this addiction. Paul commends the house of Stephanas for this. They have addicted themselves, to the ministry, of the saints.

[5:59] So, they've devoted themselves, to work for the Lord. Think of it, friends, tonight. It's kind of a simplistic thought, really, but it's a fundamental one, and an important one, to serve the Lord.

When you hear of sports fans, music fans, fanatics, really, is what it is, isn't it? And, you know, that's probably largely harmless, to be a sport fan, a sports fanatic, unless it totally takes over your life. An addiction tends to be something you're fanatical about. You've got a zeal about. It's something you're controlled by. And that can be hurting, or it can be helping you. If you're addicted to some good things, that's going to help you.

If you're addicted to some bad things, it's going to hurt you. The question is, are you addicted? To God's service, that's something I urge you to be.

To have that addiction. To be addicted to the Lord Jesus, and serving Him, and His people. So, it's a, here, we see, as this verse reads, verse 15, it's a very healthy, and desirable addiction.

[7:04] It's a good thing. It's nourishing, it's wholesome, it's good for you. Now, when you get saved, don't you just want to, be active? Don't you just want that?

It'd be the opposite of the norm, life being in it, with his, remote, and his, and his cam, as the picture goes. To be the opposite of that. To be jumping out of our skin, to do something for God.

That will be, and they will be commended for that. And we'll be blessed by that. And we want our children, our grandchildren, to have that same addiction. That's what I want.

Nothing would please me more, than to see my children, and my grandchildren, to be an addict. For Jesus. To be addicted to Him. To be, and that would be, so, so blessed then.

And it would bless me to see that. That they would be, really, even more addicted, than me. Amen? Wouldn't that be good? We could think of our own loved ones, and I'm sure you'd share those sentiments.

[8:05] To be keen, to be captivated, obsessed, absorbed, gripped. We think of a fanatic, a fan, they're fixated. What about our, love for the Lord?

Have we got that same, addiction? Think of it, I don't know, I'm laboring it, somewhat, but it's something, it's a point, that we should consider, I put to you, to be so serious, about our faith. For some, faith is just something, they turn on, they switch on and off, they just show up, to a meeting, and they don't take their Christianity, really that seriously. It's almost, skin deep. We should really be, totally obsessed. We should be, totally fanatical. We should be the ones, that are saying, the holy rollers, the, you know, the Bible wing-ups, or what do they call us, Bible bashers.

We should be such, because we love our God, and we love his truth, such that we don't care, if the world would consider us, loopy, or nutcases. We'd be so strongly, impelled, and moved, and provoked, and pressed, constrained, it says, by the love of our Saviour, the love of Christ,

constrains us, as a prevailing, urging, driving force, such with the house of Stephanas, they were motivated, it talks about their charity, it speaks of charity, of their love, or in the context, verse 14, they had a love, a charity, a love of Christ, that was prevailing, and consuming them, moving them, activating them, and that's what moves us, to work, not out of a burden, or a drudgery, or a legal constraint, or a compulsion, that is onerous, and burdensome, but out of the love, for our Saviour, we cannot part, be blessed, to bless him, to honour him, to please him, to be activated, for him, and when we truly, say really, and truly, it should, and does,

[10:02] I believe, become an all-consuming passion, of course we need to be careful, we know there's fanatics, we know there's zeal, that's misplaced, as in Romans 10, talks of some, a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge, there's churches out there, that are, a whole lot of noise, and, and, feeling, but not much scripture, you know, I'm saddened to see, the way some churches, are shifting, people that we've had, association with, you know, singing Hillsong, they're using, a corrupt Bible, and they've gone, completely off track, and it just, so grieves me, friends, they've got a zeal for God, but it's not according to knowledge, they're missing the bone, it's a very sad, grievous thing, you see churches run by, women pastors, and, all kinds of, wacko things, it's totally out of, out of accord, with the word of God, they've got a zeal for God, but it's not according to knowledge, and friends, we must get, we've got to get it right, the zeal must be, scriptural zeal, it must be holy zeal, it must be righteous, and, and,

Bible, found it zeal, that must be the case, and, as our Lord had, he had the zeal, of his house, of, of the Lord's house, it has eaten him up, he's so consumed, by the zeal of God, as he went into the temple, of course we know the context, he's casting out, the money changers, he's driving out, the fleshly, and the carnal, and he wants God's house, to be, reverent, God, fearing, God, glorifying, people, so, think of this addiction tonight, and, think of how can I have, such an addiction, and what is such an addiction, when you think of it, really this is an addiction, that satisfies, it's an addiction, that satisfies, now, with some of these, addictions to, substance abuse, and such, not that I have, really much experience, of such things myself, but, I understand, when someone has, an addiction, to such, drugs, or drink, it leaves, a bitter aftertaste, it's, it's, there's an emptiness there, it doesn't really, truly satisfy, but, on the other side, of the coin, this addiction, to, the Lord, it actually, satisfies, there's a satisfaction, in Christ, it tells us how, there's an eternal peace, and it goes on forever, to love, the law of God, the psalmist, the psalmist, cried in Psalm 119, which is the first, in a psalm, packed full of, praise to the word of God, it says,

I love this book, oh how I love thy law, it is my meditation, all the day, that's a bit fanatical, isn't it, that's a bit extreme, a bit, um, addicted, that, that he loved this book, such that he wanted, to meditate on it, all of the day, and friends, there's a satisfaction, that really can only, be found in Christ, that eternal, perfect peace, that only he can grant, as it says, thou will keep him, in perfect peace, whose mind is, stayed on thee, because, he trusted in thee, that's a perfect peace, there's a, absolute, satisfaction, and it's only found in Christ, truly, it's only found in Christ, there's no other, addiction, so to speak, that can, replace such a, a wonderful, satisfaction, other addictions, will not satisfy, they will not satisfy you, they'll always want, you always want more, and more of whatever it be, but Christ, alone satisfies, he is the complete saviour, and he offers a complete salvation, and he satisfies, that greatest need, for us all, the most intimate, and, important, who we are, our soul, our very, core being, of our being, is, he only, only he can satisfy, that greatest need, of our soul, salvation, and so we know, what the world offers, is really transient, and passing, in comparison, nothing earthly, you're going to, it's going with you there, nothing earthly, the car you drive, the clothes, the bank account, whatever it be, your possessions, you can't take it, and as I've, referred to before, the only thing, we can take to heaven, is other souls, so introduce others, to the saviour, that you can see them there, so we have a satisfaction, in this addiction, it's an addiction, that satisfies, it truly does,

Christ alone, only Christ can satisfy, that emptiness, inside of your soul, amen, it's an addiction, that satisfies, secondly, it's an addiction, that fulfills, and can contrast, we see addictions, as the world, you put them to us, but really, they bring emptiness, and bitterness, and despair, it's a vicious cycle, it's just a trap, a mouse on a wheel, isn't it, it brings, it brings emptiness, whereas Christ, truly,

Christ brings fullness, he brings completeness, it talks about, how we may complete, in Christ, this is an addiction, that fulfills, and look at all, the fullnesses, that God grants, to us, as saved people, for example, I'm just touching, on a few, just as examples, of the fullness, that we have, that fulfilling, that Christ brings, to the soul, in Colossians 1.11, talks about, that we'll be strengthened, that we'll have, joyfulness, there's a joyfulness, isn't there, in Christ, truly, this is a joyfulness, there's a fullness of joy, we read on, in Romans 12, it talks about, how we should, show mercy, with cheerfulness, there's a cheerfulness, in Christ, we can, we can have, a sense of cheer, of gladness, that, it's beyond, the circumstances, of our lives, we can have, a cheerful heart, full, of cheer, Romans 15, 29, talks about, the fullness, of the blessing, of the gospel, of Christ, nothing beats, the gospel, the good news, of Christ, there's no greater news, no better news, than the good news, the gospel, of Christ, and there's a fullness, of blessing, in that, fullness there, there's also, bountifulness, it says, in 2 Corinthians 9.11, that we're enriched, in everything, Paul prays, that we're enriched, in everything, to all bountifulness, that we can be such, that we can be bountiful, we'll have more than, more than we need, such that we can give it away, that we'll be so bountifully, filled, and then, here's one, we may not want, there's some painfulness, Paul talks about, his experience, of weariness, of painfulness, now that's what, that might be one, we might want to miss out on, but nevertheless, it's our lot in life, there will be some pain, amen, you might, sometimes I've had it, I've had more than my share, I've got a bit of pain, and a few joints lately, there's some painfulness, that goes on in life, but nevertheless, he helps us even through that, and it's all part, at times of his plan, he allows it, and he helps us, get through that, here's another one, that we might be filled, with all the fullness of God, the fullness of God, wow, that's special isn't it, in the sense of our Lord himself, that he is filled, in him dwells all the fullness, of the Godhead, bodily, so we've seen all these fullnesses, these things that fill us, the fulfillment that we have, here's one to look out for, the deceitfulness of sin, we want to avoid that one, deceitfulness of sin, that, the deceitfulness of sin, will not fill us, or satisfy us, it will deceive us, and Satan would want, to deceive, to fill us with deceit, deceitfulness, false doctrine, evil fruits and such, that God's church be, confused and disrupted, with, with, with, with, strife, but God wants us to be filled, as his people, with those things, that we talked about,

[18:06] I'll just recap, my notes there, joyfulness, cheerfulness, bouncefulness, the fullness of the gospel, amen, the fullness of God, he grants us that, God's people, as God's people, we can be filled, with his filling, filled with good things, not bad attitudes, or gossip, but, not filled with doubts, or fears, but filled with truth, and there's an addiction, that fulfills, it's Christ, it's knowing Christ, now, with addictions, they can become, as we know, a habit, a drug habit, they call it, don't they, oh, I've got a drug habit, what about having a, I've got a praise habit, well, we can actually, have a praise habit, amen, that's what David had, here he says here, in Psalm 145, a Psalm of David, I will extol thee, my God, O King, and I will bless thy name, forever and ever, he had a habit, his habit was praise, well, that's a bit good habit, to have, wouldn't it, to have a habit, of praise, amen, and Hebrews 13, 15 says, therefore let us, offer by him, the sacrifice of praise, to God, continually, that is the fruit of Aleks, he thinks to his name, that he would, that we have such a habit, that we'll have a continual praise,

God wants us to have, a continual praise, to be devoted to praise, to be devoted to prayer, and make it a habit, Luke 5, 16 says of our Lord, he would drew himself, into the wilderness, and pray, it could be understood, I understand, that it could be understood, to say, he made it a habit, that he withdrew, habitually, he made it a habit, to pray, and if our Lord, made it a habit, to pray, we should have, a prayer habit too, shouldn't we, and also talks about, it was his custom, to go into the synagogue, so he had a, he had a fellowship habit, there's some good habits, amen, a praise habit, a prayer habit, a fellowship habit, Paul talks about, continuing instant, in prayer, I think it's something, that, that is continuing, and pray without, ceasing, so again, think of these things, the habits, that are good things, you know, sometimes we can replace, a bad habit, with a good habit, you know, think about, those addictions, you might want to get rid of, actually I'm going to, I'm going to start, a new addiction, I'm going to have, a praise habit, I'm going to have, a prayer habit, a fellowship habit, you know, when you think about, fellowship, can you devote, two hours,

out of your, 168 hours, a week, it's only a small, portion isn't it, only one hour, tonight, out of 168, can't we spare that, he wants us, to pursue these habits, that are good for us, to long for, such things, that are going to, bless us, so when church is on, we won't say, oh I don't feel like it today, or I have to get up, for work in the morning, I've got something else to do, and we'll actually think, actually this is a habit, that I want to keep, that's a good habit, for my soul, so, another thing about, an addiction, about this addiction, or this holy addiction, that we can know, that we can be like, the house of Stephanas, is that this is an addiction, that does not disappoint, there's no hangover, there's no harm, there's no regret, there's no harmful side effects, at least not harmful, in a way that really matters, as I say, sometimes as a believer, we're on a vessel, that is on a stormy sea, but we know, who the captain is, don't we, and we know, that he's steering our vessel, whatever those choppy seas are, whatever those storms, that buffer, if Christ is our captain, we can, master that, we can, we can overcome, we can go through, it's not going to be, all plain sailing, and calm seas, but we've got the quiet confidence, that Christ is the captain, he's the captain, of your vessel, even if it's tossed, and rocked about, in the high seas, you've got an assurance, that, you and God, can handle things together, he's promised,

I'll never leave you, nor forsake you, he's promised, to give, that which is for your best, the best interest, he has for you, at heart, and you can place, your absolute trust in him, that's the assurance, that a believer has, and there's no artificial high, with this addiction, it's not an artificial high, it's just going to, burn, you know, you're going to, crash and burn, there's no crashing low, as with drug addictions, this is, a constancy, of your saviour, holding your hand, guiding you through, there will be valleys, but he will walk, with you through them, he'll be through, even the valley, of the shadow of death, as we even talked about tonight, we're all going to have, those times, loved ones are going to pass, and this old, carnal, devil filled world, cannot give you, what Jesus can give you, truly, there'll be disappointment, after disappointment, men will disappoint, women will disappoint, preachers will disappoint, churches will disappoint, a lot of professing,

Christians have disappointed me, we're not to put, trust in men, confidence in the flesh, not to lean on the arm of flesh, but there are arms, underneath you, that you can trust in, you can rest in, I just love this one, the early part of it, in particular, that the eternal God, is thy refuge, and underneath, underneath, underneath you, are the everlasting arms, those arms are everlasting, and he will hold you, even when there's an enemy, before you, he's going to hold you, in those, eternal arms, now friends, some Christians, live roller coaster rides, they can have a faith, that's up one minute, down the next, you know, like a roller coaster, or like, they're like a kite, flying high, and then crash, they fall like a kite, to the ground, that God can help you, to go steady through, that, he'll help you through, the extremes of most, highs and lows, and really, there'll be, a growing, as it talks about, here's a great scripture, to take to heart,

[24:31] Proverbs 4, 18, but the path of the justice, as a, shining light, that shineth, more and more, unto the, perfect day, Christ, as your saviour, helps you to see, a brighter, brighter day, until, the brightest day, until, glory itself, it's an addiction, that, satisfies, it's an addiction, that does not disappoint, it's an addiction, that sets you free, think of, bad addictions, they will enslave you, they will actually, captivate you, such that they will, hold you prisoner, yet, you'll be a slave to it, they may, they may captivate you, in an endearing, pleasant way, but we know, such things will, hold you prisoner, the Bible speaks about, sin as being like, a slavery, like being a prisoner of slaves, sorry, a prisoner of sin, like a slave, so captive to it, an addiction can be, just like that too, whereas there's this, vicious cycle, chasing the next high, and, sometimes people get driven, to desperate acts, as, as we know, you know, some, they're penniless, they're penniless, because, they had to, empty their pockets, to, to buy the next fix, it's a tragic, way to live, sad, sad, situation, to, to be forced, to hock your possessions, so you can get, your next fix, and we know, that's the reality, for people, that is the sad reality, of life, for people, all around us, and it's, it's grievous, isn't it, it breaks my heart, but this addiction, to Christ, it's not going, to be harmful, to you, it's going, to be a blessing, to you, it will not blind, you to lash out, and hurt your loved ones, while you're

under, its control, it won't motivate, you to take your money, and squander it, and waste it, at the expense, of your family, on the contrary, this will make you, honour your family, and place your family, in that right place, to place your family, in that first place, as Paul told Timothy, he urged, that if any provide, not for his own, he's worse than an infidel, it's that situation, of providing for our own, is a fundamental, and this addiction, this addiction to Christ, will help you, to be that honourable person, to live a life, that's wholesome, and honest, and productive, you'll employ yourself, to sustain your household, to shed the harmful, and destructive, ways, of the past, and you won't want, to go with your, old worldly friends, that are going to, take you down, that evil, dark path, because God has given you, freedom from that, you don't want, that old stuff anymore, you found something best, best, and far better, than any of that, that you might have enjoyed, you take, he's taken all those, old harmful addictions, and attractions away, to help you get victory, free, and this addiction, to Christ, the addiction, that the household, of Stephanus had, is something, that releases you, and sets you free, because it's Jesus, it's Jesus, and you'll want, others to know it, you'll, you'll, you'll love, and be so, fired up, and enthused, and joyful, in your saviour, that you want, to spread the news, you cannot contain, it for yourself, it'll give you that, drive, that compulsion, that energy, to share it, and that's what really, the household, of Stephanus had, the great object, of their addiction, was to bless others, and sense, of the household, of Stephanus, that they, were such, that they wanted to minister, they wanted to serve, the saints, and make them stronger, you know,

really, when you're saved, you want to see other people, become saints, don't you, see some other people, get saved, and you want to see them, strengthen, think of it friends, around 200,000 people, will die, around the world, in the next 24 hours, that's a big sum isn't it, 20, 200,000, 24 hours, most of them, let's face it, will not know the saviour, they won't know Christ, as their saviour, that's about 200, per minute, how many have passed away, just since I started here, friends it's a serious thought, that, life is finite, the Bible says, if therefore the son, shall make you free, you shall be free indeed, this is a freedom in Christ, there's a, there's a setting free, when you're saved, you're truly set free, the Lord does not control you, against your will, he gives us that, that volition, doesn't he, he gives us that, that will power, and that way power, he gives us that, it's in our, domain, in the sense that, he gives us total freedom, and, the true, complete freedom, is to trust Christ, it's to know Jesus, some are addicted, to mind control religions, there's all kinds of, wacko ideas out there, we know there's false cults, and people get, you know, zeal without knowledge, they're following some, guru, some, philosophy, that's vain, we're not advocating that, this is an addiction, in the context of John 8, he talks about, you should know the truth, and the truth shall, make you free, and this is truth based, it's founded on truth, this addiction is a freedom, it's not a bondage, the old, hurtful addictions, that we can all be subject to, they will do us harm,

Christ will set us free, the old addictions, will enslave us, and imprison us, Christ will set us free, it's quite a contrast, this is a total liberty, a liberation, and Christ has come, to set people truly free, that we are unchained, as saved people, our bonds are broken, we're loosed, he's struck the fetters, of our hands and feet, he's torn the prison bars, he's opened the cell, and we're loosed, we're set free, there's total freedom, and liberty, that's the picture of salvation, that we who are chained, and bound up, and confined, behind the prison bars, of our sin, have been totally released, and yet for some, they stay behind the prison bars, and not only do they suffer, but their families too, are you bound up, with an addiction, that threatens your life, some are so, enslaved by an addiction, that it actually threatens, their very life, and that they would even consider, doing themselves harm, that it so tears them apart, it steals their energy, their time, their wealth, damages their health, and well being, hurts the ones they love, what is it that you are addicted to today, let go of all that, let go of all that, that will hurt you, and find Christ, who will heal you, who will deliver you, that addiction, find that addiction, and I think we're all safe here tonight, that you will actually, want to get more addicted, more addicted, to Jesus, amen, that you'll want that, that you'll want him, to, to, to, to, to, to, to, to, so

captivate you, to so, lead you, to so, encourage you, and captivate, and obsess you, that you'll allow him, to control your life, in a blessed way, to have control, because he only wants your best. He doesn't want to hurt. And maybe this addiction to our Lord and his service is something, let's face it, I think it's true to say sometimes our love for the Saviour can weaken.

The Bible speaks about such a thing, of losing, of lessening that love, of that love weakening, of that waxing cold. The love for our Saviour, sometimes, friends, let's be honest tonight, sometimes it can weaken.

[33:07] Maybe you're suffering some withdrawals. The love that you once had for the Saviour, maybe you missed that. Have we quenched the Holy Spirit?

That's a thought, isn't it? The Holy Spirit would want us to be ablaze in a fire, but we've poured cold water on. It's snuffed, fizzling out, just as fizzling smoke.

Friends, I encourage you tonight, I'm using kind of picturesque thoughts to just think of that through. Think of that through spiritually. Christianity is not meant to be a take it or leave it thing, that we're committed one day and can't all the next.

Christian living isn't meant to be a when I feel like it thing. It's meant to be a living, breathing, a walk, a life, a covenant with God, a devotion, an engagement that transforms our life.

And it's not a casual feeling-based thing, such that we can have an emotional reaction, and then it kind of just kind of dwindles and goes dull.

[34:15] But then our love for Christ should be something that should be growing. It should be brighter and brighter until the perfect day. That's God's desire I put to you.

All those other harmful addictions we could all be taken prisoner to, they'll lose their attraction.

When we think of Jesus, we think of what He is, what He has done, of who He is, of what He wants for us, all of those other things will lose their appeal.

And we'll get the realisation that our body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. They set us free. These vessels of clay are really for only a short span of time on earth.

We want them to go the distance and not come to a premature end. And I thank God for some of my dear friends and folk that we love that have been able to shake off the, for example, the nicotine hammer.

Thank God for that. I just praise God that God has set some of our dear friends free from such a thing. And that's just, in a way, it's a trivial matter. But God doesn't want you to have a premature end.

[35:22] God wants you to go the distance. Make that body last as long as it can last so you can get the best, get as much mileage out of it as you can. Amen. We want to walk about in this temple without premature ending it.

Amen. And so, friends tonight, think of these things. The house of Stephanas. Can we be like them? They were commended because they had a love for Jesus.

They had a love for His service. They were overwhelmingly devoted. Such as they were called addicted. That's a kind of strange thought in a way, isn't it? But yeah, it's a good thing to think, how can I be more addicted to my Lord?

It's one of the greatest things about this addiction, if you think about it, as the song goes, when all of life is over and our work on earth is done and the world is caught up yonder.

One day we'll be there, brothers and sisters. One day our work on earth will be done and the role will be caught up yonder and it's all thanks to His mercy that we'll even see His face, that we'll even be given some admission into the realms of glory.

[36:34] And it won't be for any works that we've done, but only for our faith in Christ as our Saviour. And yet, shouldn't we be so engrossed with Him? Shouldn't we be so overwhelmingly in love with our Saviour that we'll want to be addicted?

We'll want to be addicted, this side of glory. And we'll actually be Jesus dependent. Wouldn't that be good? Instead of being drug dependent, we'll actually be Jesus dependent.

Amen? I like to say that, you know, just in passing, we're not an independent Baptist church, we're a God dependent church. That's what we need to be. We need to be a God dependent people,

don't we? That we are so depending upon our Saviour and we depend on Him for every breath that we take, for the blood pumping through our bodies.

One day the role is going to be caught up yonder and by His grace, by faith in Christ, we'll say, yes, I'll be there. I know I can be there. And friends, where that day comes, as we know, the parable account, our Lord says, of a servant answering before His Lord and the Lord says, well done, thou good and faithful servant.

Answering into the joy of our Lord. You know, of course, it's just a parable that speaks of that theme of serving God, of having that addiction to service, if you like, what the house of Stephanas had.

[38:03] And think of it, friends, will He say to you, well done? Or will He say, partly done? Half done? Now let's not be like that, amen?

I know we can all think, I could think, what more could I be to do, to serve, to love, to be more addicted to my Saviour?

And friends, tonight, really, I'm exhorting Christians here of that thought, how can I be like the house of Stephanas? We started there, how Paul exhorted the Corinthians to stand fast, to have little charity, to, and then he says, to acknowledge these ones, the house of Stephanas.

We want to be in that household, don't we? A household of faith, to be like Stephanas and his family. I like the thought, really, too, that not only was Stephanas commended, but his household. Amen. I know some of you got believers, many believers in your children, your grandchildren, what a blessing. I thank God for that, what a heritage. Wouldn't that be good to see our children, our grandchildren, following the Saviour?

[39:12] Oh, it's such a precious thing, isn't it? Such a precious thing. Of course, every individual has to make their stand, their choice, their stand, whether they trust Christ or not.

But, think of Stephanas, what a blessing that, not only was Stephanas, a ministry, an addict, but his household, too. We want to communicate that, with our households, don't we?

With our sons and daughters, with our extended families, that we would, be such a testimony, as Stephanas was, that it won't be just us, but it would be that, all the people, that we can reach, that we can infect, with this addiction, that we can, that we can transmit, this addiction, that we, that, and God helping us, that those we love, people we reach, that they'll be even more, addictive than we are.

So, thoughts to consider. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you that your word, does exhort us to, to the commendation, of the house of Stephanas, and Lord, we'd like to be like that, I'm sure, Lord, we know there's, harmful addictions, and yet, there's that, addiction, that you grant, it satisfies, it leaves no, bitter aftertaste, it's complete, it's the fullness there, it's a, a, a satisfaction in Christ, Lord, that only you can give, to the saved soul.

We pray, each one might know, tonight, what it is, to trust you, our saviour, to be saved, and Lord, each one, as believers, we might not quench the spirit, but rather, that you might, set us ablaze, Lord, quicken us, enliven us, revive us, restore us, Lord, help us to re-fire, re-kindle, that, addiction, if it's grown, weak Lord, we want to be, ever so more, dependent upon you, and ever so more, almost fanatical, if the world, would consider it such, that, nothing matters more, than we be obsessed, with you, our Lord, and what, you would have us to do, that we would have a heart, that we'd have a habit, of, a habit of prayer, that we'd have a God habit, we'd have a prayer habit, we'd have a praise habit, a fellowship habit, Lord, give us that, that kind of dependency, that is a good thing, for us to have, that we'll do, and Lord, help us to, to be a testimony, like Stephanas was, to his own household,

[41:42] Lord, we pray for that, in our own situations, Lord God, we praise you, for these things, in Jesus, precious name, Amen, Amen, Amen, Thank you.

Thank you.