

Approved By God

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Preacher: Awo Antwi

[0 : 00] Last week, Gosevan taught a message on four things you must know about Jesus Christ for salvation.

And he helped us to understand that the God-man, Jesus Christ being the God-man, he was man. However, he definitely had a God-nature, fully God, fully man.

And that made it possible for God to execute his salvation plan for us. And then also we have to recognize that he died for our redemption.

So he was killed. Anybody who doesn't believe that Jesus Christ was killed and he died cannot be saved. And so we have to believe that he was killed and that he died.

He actually died for our redemption. And after his death, he did not remain in the ground. He did not remain in the grave. But he was raised from the dead.

[1 : 04] He came back to life. Evidenced by those who gave various accounts of their communication and their encounters with him. And then he's now seated at the right hand of the Father through the ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ.

So these are the four key things that we must know about Jesus Christ for salvation. This morning we're taking just a little one aspect of it. Reading from Acts chapter 2 verse 16.

And he said, And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Ye men of Israel, hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you. By miracles and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you.

As ye yourselves also know. Amen. Okay, so today, by God's grace, we're just going to look at Jesus Christ, a man approved of God among you.

[2 : 50] Amen. Amen. And Gosevan in his teaching last week helped us to understand that Jesus was indeed a man. And that it is important that that aspect of his nature is not denied.

And of course he was also the son of God. So son of God, son of God. These are the two key titles of Jesus Christ. And it's interesting that when you go through the scriptures in the New Testament, Jesus is the son of man.

Son of God is one of his titles. And son of man. Son of man is used over 80 times in the New Testament. And the son of man is used by Jesus most of the time.

On only two occasions it's used by other people. Which is one by Stephen in Acts chapter 7. And also in the book of Revelations when it says that he stands in the midst of the seven land stamps. One like the son of man. But every other instance where the son, the title, the son of man is used. Over 80 times is used by Jesus himself. So it tells us that that was Jesus' preferred title for himself that he would use for himself.

[3 : 59] So if you met Jesus, you know there are some people, normally if somebody is a doctor, they are addressed as Dr. ABC. I've realized that there are some people who are engineers.

They call themselves engineer. This, this, this. Yeah, exactly. And which I found quite interesting. Because if every profession, people are using their professions as their titles, it's going to be very interesting.

But I realized that the engineers believed that they were also intelligent at school. But the doctor and the lawyer are, you know, getting extra credits. And so they decided that day to day would not have to make it a point to call themselves.

And I've seen a few people who also called architects. I said, wow. Those, we need, to be honest, everybody needs to find their title and start using. But if somebody likes that, so that means that that person who is, you know, is not a normal thing for people, an architect, an engineer, and all those other professions be used as a title, like a doctor or a lawyer.

Then you can tell that they really value their profession. And they like people to know them for that. You know, so that is why they are making a point to make that statement, that recognize that I am this person.

[5 : 09] So that means that if Jesus used, is the title that Jesus liked to use for himself, son of man, then that means that Jesus is trying to communicate something to us.

That I want you to know this about me. That as much as I'm the son of God, I'm also the son of man. And I want you not to lose sight of that.

And Jesus calling himself the son of man is referring, again, in Daniel chapter 7. Because we see, when we're doing Acts chapter 1, we saw how the apostles were referring to scripture to make decisions and to decide on what to do.

And the same Jesus' references regarding the son of man is taking from Daniel chapter 7, verse 13 to 14. I read, And there was given him dominion and glory and the kingdom that all people, nations, and languages shall serve him.

His dominion is an everlasting dominion. We shall not pass away. And his kingdom, that we shall not be destroyed. Amen. This is talking about the son of man.

[6 : 37] Yes, indeed, son of man. However, the son of man who is exalted, he went to the ancient of days and all of this was given to him. Dominion and power in all language and all people.

And his dominion was everlasting dominion that shall not pass away or be destroyed. So within the title son of man, you see Jesus' humanity. Once you hear man, you see humanity.

But also, Daniel is teaching us that in that same title is a man who will be exalted, who is going to have dominion that is an everlasting dominion. So within that title is Jesus' humanity, but also his own exaltation as well.

In his humanity, there will come a time of his exaltation. And so it gives us a bit of insight as to why Jesus would like us to know him as son of man. That in his humanity, and I believe God as well, that in our humanity, God has exaltation for us in Jesus' name.

Amen. But Jesus was a man. Last week, God's even touched on it. I'll touch on it briefly and then we progress. He has ancestry. So when we look at Matthew chapter 1, he was a son of Abraham, son of David.

[7 : 42] We know about his natural mother, Mary. We, last week, we looked at his siblings, his brothers, his sisters who are amongst them. And so he had ancestry. You could trace Jesus' family within his community.

He had human nature. So Jesus had a body. He was physical here on earth. It's not some imagination. Jesus had a body. He had flesh. So the skin that some of us use for exercise, I mean, use for presentation, all kinds of things.

Jesus had the same. He had blood. He had bones. Because on the cross, when they pierced him on his side, actually, when they put the tons on him before his death, there was blood coming out. He, in the Garden of Gethsemane, he prayed and it was like drops of blood coming through. So that is evidence of his humanity. We saw that on the cross, after they went to check whether he was alive or not, in order for them to break his bones. Meaning there were some bones that they could have broken.

But when they pierced him on the side, both blood and water came out. That tells us that he was actually in the flesh. He was a real human being. He had a human being. He had a soul. We see Jesus had a mind.

[8 : 48] He had a will. He told the Lord, not my will, but your will be done. He had emotions. At the grave, at the tomb of Lazarus, Jesus wept. When Lazarus had died and was about to raise him, he wept.

That showed his emotion. Jesus had a spirit. He said in John chapter 13, verse 21, when Jesus had said these things, he was troubled in his spirit and testified. This was about when he was going to be betrayed.

So that is the component of every human being. Spirit, soul, and body. And Jesus had all of this. He had ancestry. He had his human nature. He had human experiences.

He wasn't, not even like Adam. He didn't appear like Adam. He was born baby in a manger and was carried and cared for like a baby and then had to go through the human process of growing.

He wasn't just born as a baby and all of a sudden he became a powerful man at 33 because we don't have time. We have things to do. We have a world to save. So let's just get on with it.

[9 : 48] No, he had to learn obedience as a child. He went to the temple to go and do, you know, stuff. And the parents came and called him to books and said, we have to go. And he obeyed. And he humbled himself to his parents.

And so it is okay. You know, if your children have to humble themselves to your instructions, it is all right. Even Jesus, the Messiah had to do that. Don't feel a certain way. If you have to bring your children under obedience, it's a good thing.

Yes, under obedience is a good thing. He worked as a carpenter. He had to. He had to find a job. He had to find a job.

You know, so none of us have any excuse unless there's a genuine excuse. So we really want to encourage us as Christians. I was preparing something.

I was working on a different material. I wrote down, believing God is not a replacement for work.

Yeah? I believe God is not a substitute for work.

[10 : 51] Okay? God himself works. When his son came on earth, he made sure he worked. Yes. God made sure his son worked. He put him under a carpenter and made sure that he had to learn the trade and work as a carpenter.

All this while he was still carrying the mission of saving souls, the mission of saving mankind. He did it for three and a half years and be a carpenter for more than that.

Think about it. God has value for work. God has value for work. Jesus was carpenter longer than Jesus Christ of Nazareth. The Messiah.

Yes. He worked as a carpenter longer. But I guess it was part of the preparation. He had human limitations. Human limitations. And so you see that Jesus had to walk from one place to another. As he was walking, he got stopped going to attend to Jairus' daughter. He got stopped. A child is dying. He's being called. And it was interrupted by the woman with the issue of blood.

[11 : 56] And you would think that since it's an emergency, Jesus just vanished and, you know, appear on the other side. No, but it was normal enough for the girl even to die.

Jesus said, we'll go awake. Thank God that there's the ability to wake the dead up. Hallelujah. Amen. Amen. But it shows that he had human limitations. Human experiences.

He went to the house of Mary and Martha and spent time. Spent time with them. As much as he was on mission, he had time to have fellowship with others, which matters in our human experience.

He was dependent on the Father. He said, I work as my Father works. I depend on him, the Holy Spirit. He depended on the Holy Spirit. And, of course, it's human beings who died. He died. And he was raised.

So it tells us that his humanity was real. It's something that we can all experience. But why does God make a point for us to see the humanity of Jesus Christ? So that he can connect with you and I.

[12 : 57] Yeah. He can connect with you and I. So that the scripture in Philippians 2, verse 15, that talks about let this mind be in you. If Jesus was not a human being, it cannot tell us that let this mind be in us.

As it was in Christ Jesus. Because he's God. How can we have the same mind? So it would be an unfair expectation of God to tell us, let this mind be in you.

Which was also in Christ Jesus. Because Christ Jesus was not a human being. He didn't have human experiences. He didn't have human limitations. So when we read the Gospels, when we read about Jesus Christ, God made it so obvious that he was a human being.

So that we can connect and see ourselves in him. And see that his experiences is being made available for us. How he worked with God. How he worked with God.

The fellowship he had. God desires the same for us. And so we don't read it and see like, oh, this is very fantastic stories. But then God is speaking to us that this is what is on offer for you as well.

[14 : 00] It matters to God that we see Jesus not only as son of God, but son of man. And the scriptures today are emphasis, which is Acts chapter 2 verse 22. Says that he was a man.

So we have clearly defined. God's event did last week. We've added a bit to it for this week. Clearly defined that and shown that he was a man. But then a man was approved of God.

Yeah. And so today really, if he was man like us and was approved of God, then God wants to say that we all can be approved of him.

Amen. To be approved means is to be examined. So God had examined him and deemed him satisfactory. He meets the standards.

He does it. And in that meeting of the standard, that is what he, that was the basis of the, is like the currency for our redemption.

[15 : 03] Because if Christ did not meet the standard, then he couldn't die for us. And so he met the standard and he died for us. And there was an exchange for us. So in redemption is our first approval.

In redemption, we have our first approval. We have righteousness that has been passed on. Not our righteousness, but his righteousness. But then when we come into faith with that approval, it's like you have to be checked.

When you buy a ticket, you're going on a flight, you're entering a concert, whatever. And it's a ticketed event. You have to show your ticket. So Christ's death and resurrection and that perfect life that he lived, that God approved, that he passed on to us is our ticket for entry.

So the Christian is first of all approved of God because of redemption. But there's further approval through our sanctification, through the life of healing, the work that the Holy Spirit is doing on us and our cooperation with him.

And so we'll focus on that because for everybody who is saved, the first approval is in place. And so God used miracles and wonders and signs to say to Israel that this man, Jesus Christ of Nazareth, is approved of me.

[16 : 25] So the miracles God was doing was saying that I'm backing him because they are not natural things. You can't just go about and raise a human being from the dead. You know, somebody who is dead, even the family have accepted that, it's four days, so it's enough.

There's nothing we are crying. We have accepted that our loved one is now dead. But then Jesus is able to call forth a man dead. It is believed that by day three, day four, he starts decomposing.

And so they said, by now the smell is started coming out, meaning there's decomposition happening. And so there is no hope anymore. If he had come earlier, we know that you could have done something because they've seen him do it for the widow of nine.

It wasn't a problem. They just raised the boy. So they know that Jesus can raise the dead. That's not an issue. But they know that this case is gone. Jesus, we know you can, but you were a bit late in arriving.

And he had given up and got back Jesus with a sign like this, that this is supernatural. This is not ordinary. This is not ordinary. This is supernatural. Even in his tears, as a human being, you see God at work, evidencing that I am with him.

[17 : 41] May God's works in our lives be evident that he's with us. May the difficult things that we cannot overcome, may the things that look impossible before us, may God raise a sign, may God raise a wonder, may God raise a miracle to evidence that he's with us.

In the name of Jesus. God does. He's interested in showing. God has a thing of where he's able to show off that these are my people.

You can tell that it didn't have to be a big spectacle of crossing the Red Sea. But it's nice. Sometimes just let's believe God for some nice things.

It's not only the necessary. Some miracles, some testimonies, they just make you smile. It's almost like it's not needful. But it's just nice. There are things you do for your children because it's just nice. It's not necessary. But it's just nice. You give them. How can the Father not do the same for us? I want somebody to be encouraged. Don't look at God that. It's some mean man sitting at the top and he's checking this and checking that and checking that.

[18 : 51] And only when you get one small tick, then he gives you a sweet drop, you something small. That's not our Father. Whoever has told you that about God is a liar. He gives generously. He gives generously.

Let's believe him. Let's believe him for the impossible. Let's believe him for things that people think is not necessary. Still believe God for it. The other time I was thinking, in actual fact, I actually ended up telling God.

I said, nobody goes to anywhere with all the treasures on the earth. The best you can do is to will it to somebody. So that you feel like at least you still have power after you have died.

Apart from that. You can't do anything. We're not taking it to heaven. We're not taking it to hell. And so everything that is here will remain here until Christ comes and come and clear all of this.

In actual fact, heaven and earth shall pass away. And all the glory in it, including their money, their cash, it is passing away. Just use whatever you want. Use whatever you want.

[19 : 48] Believe God for whatever you want because all these things are passing away. There is nothing wrong with believing God for a nice life. There is nothing wrong. Absolutely nothing wrong.

Poor or rich, heaven and earth shall pass away. It's passing away. So whether you use it, it's passing away. You don't use it, it's passing away. You sit down and struggle.

We will all be in heaven. We will get to heaven. But how you arrive is, I'm looking at you all like, how you've arrived there, you have been battered and scattered. We will all be spending eternity with the Father.

Once we are approved. And so don't, let no, it's not humility. It's not humility to be poor, you know. No, no.

Poverty is not humility. They are different words. They are different words. No. Some of us have music. And poverty is not spirituality either. It's not.

[20 : 50] It's not. It's not. It's not spirituality. Don't let anybody lie to you. We are not serving God or mama. It's like we know we serve God. But our Father owns this.

This is His creation. And so we can take as much as you want. You are free to. Some of us, you say you don't want. You are humble. Stay in your humility. You are humble. Believe God for big things. It doesn't cost Him anything to give it. It's already here on earth. God doesn't need it in heaven.

Heaven, the sheets are made of gold. He doesn't need it.

And so it's here. If you want, you can take. God, we see how extravagant He backs Jesus with various kinds of miracles that ministers to all aspects of our lives, all manner of life, to the point that even at a wedding, He makes provision for drinks.

That's how interested God is in our lives and our needs. When you look at the story of the wedding in Canaan, it wasn't necessary. No, He didn't have to.

[22 : 00] That's why He says, it's not my time. These are no important things, Mary, my mother. But He still responded. And when He gave, He gave the best. He gave the best. The people say, this is not normal.

This kind of drink we are drinking, it's supposed to be served early so that we can all know that you've provided good drinks. But rather at the end, God could have given very inferior or could have said no.

But He did it anyway. It wasn't necessary. But just to communicate something to us. He communicates something to us. He speaks to us about wherever we are in life.

He's interested in wherever we are and our needs. He's not blinded to our needs. He's not blinded to the state of our being. Sometimes we're overwhelmed.

God is not blinded to that. But most of us don't believe, really, that God is even interested in the little things of our lives. Sometimes in the faith, if you are not careful, you think that God only wants you to work, work, work, work.

[22 : 59] Work for the Lord. Work for the Lord. We work for the Lord. We must work for the Lord. What else are you using your spare time to do anyway? So we have to work for the Lord. You'll be watching TV and YouTube.

So work for the Lord. Do something for Jesus. We are in Jesus' campaign. Please, don't exempt yourself. Even if you are not in the department, find somebody, please. Can you help me join you? Take a step for Jesus. Some of us who are not in the department, this whole year, you haven't won one so yet. So this is a fantastic opportunity. Don't miss out. Some of you two came just about a month ago.

You didn't even know there's something like this. I'm telling you, it's great fun. When we go out, we talk to people about Jesus. It's such a joy. We come back rejoicing that the Lord has used me.

You have encountered all kinds of people. Oh, what a joy to preach Christ. And as we are preaching, we are preaching Christ, the one who is able to transform our lives.

[23 : 54] And after somebody, you know, you give birth, you don't leave the baby on the road. No, you bring the baby home, which is called caries, okay? Yes. And we care for baby. A baby will grow up.

It will become, you know, my children of, a man and a woman of responsibility. And so God is really interested in our lives. He's a father. You could have chosen to name himself anything, but he calls himself father.

To be approved is not necessarily meaning to be accepted. We have acceptance with God. We have our initial approval, but then ongoing approval, which is our sanctification, we need to also work on it.

To be used, let me say this in our charismatic church, to be used doesn't mean God's approval. Yeah. We desire for God to use us. It's a good thing, desire it.

It's the best thing, the most glorious thing that can ever happen in your life, for God to use you. But please note that to be used by God and to be used of God does not necessarily mean you have God's approval.

[25 : 03] Why? God used a donkey. If you can use anything, Lord, you can use me.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Yes. God used a donkey. Doesn't mean the donkey had pleased the Lord. No. It's just a vessel to be used.

God used Cyrus, a heathen king. Was Cyrus pleasing to the Lord? Not necessarily. But it was a vessel God could use, an instrument God could use. God used the enemies of the people of Israel. And sometimes he used your enemies too. The enemies that you've been praying that you should kill. He said, no, no, no, no. They are very important for my agenda. They have to say, die by fire. He said, why is this enemy not dying? I've been declaring things over this enemy. Die by fire. Die by fire. They are well alive. Why? They have very good instruments in the hands of the Lord. Yes.

[26 : 05] So God using people, being used by God doesn't mean you have God's approval. So above the desire to be used by God, desire to be approved of God.

Above the desire to be used, desire to be approved. Because it's on the basis of his approval, we saw the effortless miracles flowing through the life of Jesus Christ because he was approved. the miracles were not approving him. Because of the approval, the miracles followed. Jesus makes a statement in John chapter 8, verse 29.

He said, and who sent me is with me. The Father has not left me alone. Why? For I always do things that please him. He said, he always does things that please him.

So he pleased the Father to back him with the signs, wonders, and miracles. When we read Genesis chapter 4, verse 6 and 7, the story of Cain and Abel.

[27 : 10] I'm sure everybody who goes to Sunday school would know about Cain and Abel and their sacrifice. But verse 6 talks about, and the Lord said unto Cain, this is after they've offered the sacrifice, and Cain realized that his sacrifice was not acceptable to God, meaning what he had presented was not approved by God.

He said, why art thou worth, and why is thy countenance falling? Meaning you could tell that he's not happy. If you do well, would I not be accepted? He said, if you do well, would I not give you an okay?

I'm not mean. I'm not using a marking scheme that you can't pass. I'm not an unfair God. If you do well, will it not be okay?

Just like I accepted Abel, if you did just like Abel, I wouldn't have rejected it. And so you see that somebody is in the act of doing.

Because sometimes we can focus more on the doing, and we think that once we've done something, then we've ticked the box. However, we can be doing, and it's still not approved, it's still not accepted of God.

[28 : 16] Korah in Numbers chapter 16, they rebelled against Moses. And when you get the chance, you can read it. But in that rebellion, really, really unfortunate what happened with them.

Because God had to attest that Moses was indeed his choice servant. And so the people of rebellion had to be swallowed. The earth opened like this, boom. And then closed that door, boom. I said, wow. I mean, there can be, when you look at the Bible, you can make all kinds of movies in the Bible. Even horror ones, I'm telling you. Because how can we be standing here, the earth opens like this.

and just right at the spot of the people who are supposed to enter, they enter it. Wow. Oh my days. If you were watching it, you'd be so sure, you can't believe that this, how can this happen?

It's in the Word, it's in the Bible. It's in the Bible. I would encourage you to read it. You swallowed it like that. I think we should turn to Numbers chapter 17, verse 1 to 13, which we're just going to look at.

[29 : 20] So we see, Jesus was approved, Abel was approved, Moses was attested, and then we're going to look at Aaron. God's servant has a powerful message on this subject.

Numbers chapter 17. And the Lord speak unto Moses. So this is after the Korah situation, God has sorted the whole thing out. The people of rebellion have died.

But you know when rebellion happens, information travels. People talk, people are wondering why, why did the people leave the church? You know, sometimes good people get a bit worried that what is going on.

You know, when they say, oh, the church is funny, they worship their pastor, their cult. I mean, it makes people a bit concerned, you know. But anyway, God has a way of defending his church. He said, I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. It cannot. And the Lord said unto Moses, saying, I'm reading Numbers chapter 17, speak unto the children of Israel, and take of every one of them the rod according to the house of their fathers, of all their princes according to the house of their fathers, 12 rods, write thou every man's name upon his rod, and thou shalt write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi, for one rod shall be from the head of the house of their fathers, and thou shalt lay them upon the tabernacle of the congregation before the testimony, where I will meet with you.

[30 : 54] And it shall come to pass that the man's rod, which I will show, shall blossom, and it will make a cease from me the murmuring of the children of Israel, whereby the imamah against you.

And Moses speak unto the children of Israel, and every one of their princes gave him a rod apiece, for each prince, one according to their father's house, even 12 rods, and the rod of Aaron was among their rods.

And Moses laid up the rods before the Lord in the tabernacle of witness. And it came to pass that on the morrow, Moses went into the tabernacle of witness, and behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was badded, and brought forth bats, and blossoms, blossoms, and yield almonds. And Moses brought out all the rods from before the Lord unto all the children of Israel, and they looked, and they took every man his rod. Hallelujah.

So, in context, as we read, the people were murmuring against the leadership of Moses. The key orchestrator of this situation, of murmuring situation, had been dealt with by the Lord himself.

[32 : 09] You know, we are in a generation where you say, God has killed somebody. People are a bit uncomfortable. Even suffering, they say, why are people suffering? If God is there, how much more is, you know. So, the Lord had dealt with the situation.

And therefore, it looked like that had been taken away. You know, that problem within the congregation had been taken away. However, God found a faith that Moses, I need to back your leadership with a unique sign.

It was necessary. When you go to work, believe God to back you with unique signs. Sometimes, it would take certain ideas and certain inspirations.

Believe God that your mind will be activated in your workplace. That when you are looking for people to start here, you are not the first one to start. Because the things you have contributed to the organization, based on the things you've said and you brought to the team, you brought to the organization, they can't just get rid of you.

I tell Christians, anytime they have to get rid of you is because God is getting ready for the next level. That has to be the only reason. You cannot come up. I mean, I believe it to be honest that why are you getting rid of me to be honest?

[33 : 19] Why? Why? I feel like I must decide when I leave. I must decide. When I come, I come with authority. I control the atmosphere because I come with God.

Come on. Don't be timid at your workplace. Don't be timid at your place of influence. No. You carry God. You arrive with God when you sit in your chair. You have sat down.

A daughter of the Messiah, a son of the Messiah has sat down. You are in charge. Nobody should just come get up in the morning and come and talk anything to you. No, no, no, no, no. Something must trigger them.

Not this one. Let me move to the next desk. Let me move to the next office. You must be determined. Just know it. Know it. And live it. No, people, when they know they have influence, they are not intimidated.

You should have the same attitude. So anyway, God said, Moses, I have to back you. I have to show that you are still my chosen vessel. And in spite of the things the people were saying, you're still my chosen vessel.

[34 : 22] So then, we know Israel is made up of 12 tribes. So then God instructs the leader of every tribe to bring a rod. You know, so it will be like a, I don't know whether it's a shepherd's staff

or something, but a rod.

And when you're using a rod, it's not a fresh cutoff from a tree. You know, so it shouldn't have a life. It's supposed to be dead wood. You know, normally if you look at a staff, very hard dead wood. If you look at a shepherd's staff, it's very dried out so that you can use it for what you have to do with it. And so, there should be no expectation. God is very intentional.

There should be no expectation of anything coming out of that rod. But then God chooses to use that as a sign of who he's backing and who he's approved and who he's attested.

And so, they all present it and Moses follows the instruction God gives him, go and put it in the tabernacle of witness. And he leaves it there and the following morning, they come back and out of the 12, only one has budded.

[35 : 28] And God was, again, extravagant. It wasn't just a few leaves. The leaves came out all right, which is a miracle. It's a miracle for dead wood.

Imagine, you go to sleep and your sofa with the wooden parts, the following morning when you come, it has leaves on it. My God! This is a strange thing.

You know, you're a chair in your living room that you sit on every day. And some of you, you have, the arm may be a wooden, wooden arm. And you go to bed and you wake up, you come in the morning, there is leaves on the thing.

I mean, think about it. It's a strange thing. It cannot be natural. It's supernatural, but that's why it is God. And okay, so you saw leaves on the arm of the chair.

And then, it wasn't just leaves. Because you know, leaves appear first. Then it takes a little while. Then now flowers, see. It's like, how? Full-blown flowers.

[36 : 33] on the arm of the chair. And they're not just that. They have fruits to eat from the, oh, I think you will run from that house yourself.

You will call your care group leader. This is a horror movie, isn't it? You will call your care group leader. You will call your departmental leader. You will call every pastor. You will call all the pastors in the chair.

Please, come to my house now. I can't even enter the house. I'm outside as I'm calling you.

Because it's a strange thing. But that's what God did.

Just to tell the people that I'm with this one. I approve of him. He's my chosen leader. God doesn't have a problem to be extraordinary, extravagant concerning your situation.

He doesn't. So God showed his approval of Moses with this sign. Galatians chapter 1, verse 10.

The apostle Paul says, For do I now persuade men or God?

[37 : 37] Or do I seek to please men? If I please men, I will not be a born servant of Christ. So the apostle Paul sought to please God so that he can be a proper born servant of Christ.

This scripture I love so much. Romans chapter 16, verse 10. I've meditated on this over and over and over. Romans 16, I just love that chapter.

It talks about the scripture gives us insights of different people. So we know apostle Paul and we're all excited about what God used him to do and what God lived through him.

but then every now and then, God gives us an insight to the people behind the scenes. The people that there won't be a book coming through their hands.

However, they matter to God and what God was doing. 16, verse 10. It's lovely. It said, Salute a palace approved in Christ.

[38 : 45] That's all. That's it. It said, greet him. He's approved in Christ. Not approved by men, but in Christ. So it shows us that, yes, Jesus Christ was approved.

We saw God approving Moses, approve Abel, Paul. Oh, yeah, maybe Paul was a special man. But this one is, sentence is even a struggle.

It's almost like a phrase. Meaning, there isn't much to be said. But this says a lot. It's in one short sentence of a man called Apelis.

We don't know his mom. We don't know his dad. We don't know anything about him, where he lived, who he said, what he did, whether he was rich, whether he was poor. All of it was irrelevant. the key thing that is to be said about his testimony, that when we come to Apelis, he's approved.

Approved in Christ. One, it tells us that men, ordinary men, can also be approved.

[39 : 54] So we don't leave it only with Jesus Christ, but ordinary men like you and I can be approved, just like Apelis' testimony. testimony. That God says, yeah.

There's so many people here. We know of Phoebe. We know Priscilla and Aquila. They had their own testimony. They were helpers. We know Mary. She labored a lot. Andronicus Jr. They were prisoners. They served God in a capacity. Urban helper in Christ. People who are beloved. Different kinds of people. I like this name. Tryphena and Tryphosa. They labored. Perses. There are so many people. Rufus. I know somebody in this church who is called Rufus. He's been hiding it. I said, release the name. I said, it's a good name. Release it. It's in the Bible. [40 : 54] So Rufus is chosen in the Lord. Different people's testimony. All they could have was a sentence, a phrase.

But it mattered for God to show as that as much as I'm using the apostle Paul to do this, there are others. There are others. When you go into any great man's house or, yes, you know, oh, yeah, a great man.

But wisdom teaches you to find out who are the people behind the scenes. There will be people. For every great man, there will be people behind the scenes making you look good.

And Romans chapter 16 tells us that as much as, as glorious as the ministry of the apostle Paul was, there were people behind the scenes.

And today, we meet a gentleman called Atheles. And the scripture says, he was approved in Christ. Just want to draw three lessons from what we have spoken about today.

[42 : 05] How do we become approved? What are our motives? It has to be a motive that we have God's approval, no man's approval. The apostle Paul said in Galatians chapter 1, verse 10, we just read it, he said, do I seek to please God or please men?

Peter also told the Pharisees, are we to please men, to please God or to please you? To obey you or obey God? We see Saul who was wanting to please the people, completely missed his destiny. Whilst David, on the other hand, was a man who sought to please the Lord. It's all over the Psalms how much he desired to please God and do the will of God. And we see who was victorious even in their humanity with God as compared to a man who was not conscious of seeking to please God and having God's approval rather than focusing on men.

So our motives matter. It has to be your life's motive, your life's aim, your drive. Your underlining motive should be, I want to please God. I want to please God.

And so that should influence all your decisions, all your choices. I want to please God. in the face of difficult choices, difficult decisions, your motive must be, how does this please God?

[43 : 26] As a student, how does my life please God? As a worker, how does my life please God? In my workplace, as a spouse, a husband, a wife, how does my life please God? As we do life, how do we please God?

How do we seek God's approval in our lives? And so that would call for sacrifices. We'll call for hard decisions. We'll call for us sometimes to suffer. Even though you may be right or you don't deserve, but the drive to please God will make us make choices that sometimes will cost us dearly.

But that is our underlining drive. In spite of the cost, our aim is to please God. If we have that underlining motive and drive, it will make a huge difference.

It will completely detect the cost of our lives. The desire to please God. Jesus said in John chapter 8 verse 29, I always do things that please him.

Always. I always do things that please him. And in our humanity, when we miss it, quickly come back in repentance and let's pick it up again on a journey of pleasing the Lord and having his approval.

[44 : 36] Look, men can have your, you can have, in this day and age, people you don't know you are even liking. You don't know them. You don't know who they are. They are just in presentation mode. And you say you like them.

You don't like them. You don't know them. What are you talking about? You like them. They're sending likes all over. You don't know them. God knows all of us. And so you may be getting the likes of men.

The approval of men. And the nice thing about the like is it comes up with thumbs up. You know? Such a, such a good idea. Yeah. Thumbs up. You know, thumbs up means approval.

Yeah. Cool. Good. Yeah. We're all right. So the fact that men give you many approvals, it doesn't necessarily mean you have God's approval.

And so we don't say that we don't like the approval of men. You know, some people can be funny when you tell them, oh, well done. Oh, I know they, I think we all know God did it. But we are just recognizing your efforts.

[45 : 35] That's it. The fact that you're doing it tells us that you can, you believe that you are also part of it. God, why, why do you think that you are, when we say, well done, how, why do you even, the fact that you're doing it, you're taking, oh, please.

No, we know he's not you. But God used the vessel. We're just recognizing the vessel. That's all. So, you just say, oh, I appreciate it.

Oh, we found God. It's just, yeah, oh, praise God. It's like, it's just, you know, hallelujah. I mean, it's not a, it's not that, deep.

Okay. It's not that deep. Yeah. He said, I always do things to please him. And so, our motive and our desire to please the Father should be a driving force if we want to live a life that's approved of God.

God. But the desire is one thing. Okay. But if you don't know, you may have a good desire but genuinely wrong. Yeah. Genuinely wrong.

[46 : 39] Because some people have missed their visa applications for staying in the UK and have become illegal because they didn't know the requirements of those applications.

I remember when I used to do a circular role and people would apply to certain organizations and when I look at the applications, I say, you will never get a job in this place. It's not a case.

Oh, I'm just... I say, you will never get a job the way you are doing your application because they have a set way of assessing applications and it doesn't matter how nice your story is.

If it's not in that format, nobody bothers to read it. So it will not be read for us to find out what your story is and how fantastic you are. So if you want to apply for jobs in this area, this is how you do it. So you have to know what God expects another to be able to... that desire to live an approved life for that to work. Because you are doing it based on knowledge.

[47 : 41] Because people are genuine, have good desires but genuinely wrong. Okay. And so, that is why the scripture tells us in 2 Timothy 2, verse 15.

Most of us know the scripture. It said, be diligent to present yourselves approved of God. Some other version says, study to show yourselves approved of God.

There is no way we'll be able to please God and have his approval if we don't know what the word says. Last week, God was teaching us that when the gospel goes to any community, the gospel will be embellished by the community's cultures and beliefs.

And so, there are people who genuinely, you know, they believe they are genuinely serving God. But their service, they are given 90%, but really, it's about 10% God and the rest is all culture.

Why? Because they haven't opened the scriptures to find out what God is saying. So, that's the benefit of reading the Bible. That your desire to live an approved life is influenced or executed by actual things God has said, this is how I want you to be.

[48 : 55] This is who I want you to be. And therefore, that desire can be realized, that desire can be lived out. the Bible is for living. The Bible is for living. Reading is important, but it's for living.

And so, it is important that we find out what God says in order for us to be approved. Our steady lives will help us to live an approved life.

Have a motive, a desire, let it be your driving desire in life that I want to please God. I want God to be happy, not to be happy with me, like, you know, God has got issues.

No. But, I want God, I want to be approved of God. And the approval will be evidenced in various ways. But in executing that desire, I have to know what God is saying.

I have to know what he expects of me. I have to know how he wants our relationship to flourish, our relationship to develop, our relationship to be like. what pleases him, what doesn't please him.

[50 : 01] And so, it is important that we have knowledge, and not just knowledge, we have wisdom in all thy gettings. Get our understanding. Yes, it's important.

And so, Jesus Christ was a man approved of God. Aaron was approved. Moses was approved. Paul was approved.

a palace, a man we don't know much about. Probably just like you and I. The world may not know much about us, but we can still be approved of Christ, of God and in Christ.

Amen. Let's pray. Father, Father, Lord, Lord, thank you.

José Allah's desenged DONALD ez. .

[51 : 11] . . Thank you.