

Epaphras 1: A Fellow Servant

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[0 : 0 0] Welcome. Thank you for listening to this wholesome word by David Entry. The word you catch will change your world. May your story change from this message.

Be blessed. Colossians chapter 1. Permit me to read from verse 1. This time I'll read all the way to verse 11.

Today I'm reading from the New King James Version. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy, our brother, to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are in Colossae, grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints.

Because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you had before in the word of the truth of the gospel, which has come to you as it has also in all the world and is bringing forth fruits as it is also amongst you since the day you had and knew the grace of God in truth.

[1 : 2 0] As you also learned from Epaphras, our dear brother, fellow servant, sorry, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, who also declared to us your love in the Spirit.

For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that he may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God, strengthened with all might according to his glorious power, for all patience and long-suffering with joy.

Here ends the reading of God's holy word. Amen. In our previous session, I spoke about a few things about the gospel, that the gospel in the verse six, the gospel comes to people and the gospel is in all the world.

And then I spoke about how the gospel brings forth fruits. And as amongst you since the other day, and I spoke about when you hear the gospel, you get to know the grace of God in truth.

And you can learn from others the gospel, faithful servant. So I just mentioned these few things in our last teachings, and I want to pick it up in the verse six again, talking about the gospel.

[2 : 5 2] Verse five makes sense. Because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you had before in the word of the truth of the gospel. And I spoke extensively about the word of the truth of the gospel, that when you hear the word pointing to the contents, the doctrine, and the truth of the gospel pointing to the reality, what you experience in God when the gospel is exposed to you.

And verse six says, which has come to you as it has also in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit as it is also amongst you since the day, watch this, since the day you heard, all right?

When you hear the gospel, the true gospel, the gospel is meant to be heard anyway. It's not primarily meant to be lived. The gospel is history to tell, not a lifestyle to live.

It's history. The gospel is about Christ, God becoming flesh, living human life, dying a human death, and being buried and resurrecting on the third day.

He died for our sins, resurrected for our justification. So that's the content of the gospel. You can't be so good that someone just looks at you and understands that information.

[4 : 18] The gospel is news. But, of course, good news in every sense of the word. You turn it good news to anybody. You can be the vilest offender, and the gospel is still good news for you.

The gospel is not condemnation. It's actually good news. So when you hear the gospel, you just feel, oh, this is too good for me. Can God be that good to me?

The gospel tells you how God has paid for our sins. And so the charge of the sin against you has been taken out of the way by Christ. And if you can believe in him, if you can believe in him, then the benefits of the work of the cross is activated on your behalf.

It's as simple as, sometimes it's too simple for people who like complex things to appreciate. You say sometimes, can the gospel be that simple?

Yes, it is, because it's good news. And you don't have to be highly educated to understand the gospel. That's why it was fishermen who were preaching the gospel, even though there were some doctors amongst them too.

[5 : 24] Fishermen. Peter was a fisherman. John was a fisherman. And they were preaching the gospel. The Bible says that when the elders of the people, when they saw the boldness in Acts chapter 4 from verse 13, when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, they perceived that these guys, and they knew that they were uneducated and untrained.

Sometimes you can be educated, but not trained to handle the matters of religion, the matters of religious weight. You must be trained. But they knew that these guys have not gone through formal training.

They were not educated. But the way they were speaking was more than just someone who is educated. They had accuracy of the content of the teachings of Judaism to another level.

And they were bold. So when they saw the boldness of the guys, they realized that these guys have been with Jesus. When you spend enough time with Jesus, he passes himself through you. Oh, you didn't hear what I said.

When you spend enough time with Jesus, he passes himself through you. So the gospel is so simple that anyone who spends much time with Jesus will be able to articulate it clearly.

[6 : 44] Unambiguously that the unschooled, the untrained, and the highly schooled, and the highly trained will still understand. Anyone who says, I don't understand the gospel in its purity, when it starts, doesn't want to understand.

Ephesians chapter 4 talks about, I think verse 18, talks about because of the blindness of their hearts, through the ignorance that is in them. He says that having the understanding, that can be alienated from the life of God.

Why? Because of the ignorance that is in them. Because of the blindness of their hearts. So now, this ignorance is not, I didn't just know, it is a willful ignorance.

I don't want to know. That's the ignorance. The Greek word points more to, when they don't, you know, at times you'll be trying to tell somebody the truth, but they don't want to know. Like you're telling this girl that, girl, this boy has other girls.

And she has chosen, I don't, it's not true, I don't want to know. Yeah, you know, that's the kind of ignorance that the Bible is talking about here. And there's many of the times, people who lack the life of God, sometimes they can't even be in church, they can't hear all kinds of preaching, but they have made up their minds, that means this, I won't take it.

- [8 : 00] I won't take it. It's called the willful ignorance. And Bible says that because of the willful ignorance that is in them. Okay, amplified.
- Their moral understanding is darkened, and their reasoning is beclouded. That's why when you are preaching the gospel, don't try and leave it, it's just in the realm of the intellect.
- Why are you preaching without praying? You are doing evangelism, but you've not been praying. You are making a mistake. Because we are not just going to appeal to the minds of people because their understanding is darkened.
- By reason of, their reasoning is being clouded. They are alienated, estranged, estranged, self-banished from the life of God with no share in it.
- Wow. That's the description of a non-believer. That's the description of a non-believer. If you are not in Christ, that's you. But I'm a very nice person.
- [9 : 04] That's you. I'm a very intelligent person, but that's you. I'm a very good person, and I do everything right, and I don't hurt anybody. I don't try bad things.
- I don't just... That's you. It's not your portion. It's actually you. It's describing you. It's all these church people. The reason why you have so much problem with the church people, even though you think you are one of them, is because of this.
- You are not one of the church people. You are a church attender. It doesn't make you a member of the church. You can be a member of a church. It doesn't make you a member of the church.
- There are two different things. There are two different things. You can be attending a church, and yet not part of the church. God, it says that Christ love the church.
- Ephesians chapter 5. Husbands, love your wives. Verse 25. As Christ loved the church. I'm talking about the church, not a church. There are a lot of churches around, but not all the churches are part of the church.
- [10 : 08] So you can be part of a church, but not a member of the church. He loved the church and gave himself from the church. But the truth is, if you are a member of the church, you will always find a church to be part of.
- So someone will say, I'm not a Christian, I'm not a Christian. I'm not a Christian. You actually, it's a sign that you are not a Christian. It's a sign. Because one of, one of the genuine fruits that gospel bears in a changed heart is you begin to be part of the community of the changed.
- It comes naturally. You won't see a child who is born and they are trying to feed their child. Maybe a lot. No, no. So that child is born, it's actually looking for the mother's drink.
- Who said a drink? That is a sign of life. Human life. Human life is present in that child even though intelligence might not be developed.
- Well, of the world, but there's one thing. Once there is life, life looks for. When you plant a seed, a tree, a seed, for some reason, it will look for the direction of the sun.
- [11 : 24] Trees don't grow down. No tree grows down. If you have that life in it, every life begins to grow up. So how come you have that life of God and you are growing down from church?
- I'm just reasoning. Sometimes, since you like reasoning, it's good to reason. See, so let me describe one who is, again, Ephesians chapter four.
- We will go back. Is that okay? Sometimes we have to cut to the chase and define, you know, I'll go back to that. Many times, the devil will also use biblical terminologies with a different dictionary.
- So, the fact that someone says that church, we might have to find out what dictionary he's using.

If it's the biblical dictionary of church, to find a definition of biblical church or a different definition. So sometimes, the world speaks about things we do in church, they speak about church, and they may use the same terminologies we are using, but they mean something different.

[12 : 39] When somebody tells you that in our religion, we also accept Jesus, let's find, if this Jesus, the dictionary of the, look for what dictionary they are using to define that Jesus they are talking about.

You'll find out that, in fact, he's a very strange Jesus. He's a different Jesus. So sometimes, we need to get to the chase, and that's one of the jobs of a pastor, to help people have a clearer definition and understanding of the biblical terminologies so that when you are saying that you know exactly what you mean, and when someone is also using that word and is referring to something else, he says, no, no, no, I don't mean this.

No, no, no. That's, that's, that's, that's, that's, that's not. I was traveling some time ago, oyster. I realized that oyster just works somewhere, but you are going to Edinburgh, you can't use oyster.

Oh, but not every train should accept oyster. No, no, every, no, no, no, no, it opens some doors, but this one is, so sometimes, it's good to have proper definition of the things we mean.

The fact that someone is going around saying that I'm a pastor does not mean, let's find out what is actually, what does it mean by being a pastor? What, what does it, what do, people sometimes on the, the world have a definition of a pastor, a minister of the gospel, and they, they, everything, so the, someone is saying a minister, but they don't know, it's different from what the Bible says is a minister.

[14 : 09] And so the church folks must be well schooled and educated with the definitions of the scripture of who this is or who Christ is. When we say redemption, what do we mean?

When we say miracles, what do we mean? I actually feel like preaching, you know. Some people have problems with congregation speaking back.

See, so that tells you it all boils down to definitions. This is a fellowship. It's a family. We, we, we respond to God's word.

We, we, we, we speak to God's word. If you have a problem, maybe you don't know what this whole church thing is about. In the early church, all right, so, let me finish the, the definitions.

I think it will be helpful. Their moral understanding is darkened and their reasoning is be clouded. They are alienated, estranged, self-banished from the life of God.

[15 : 16] Can you imagine there are people who are alive and they don't have the life of God? Yeah. We are other children of God. You just, you just don't know what you're talking about.

Some people don't have the life of God. That's what it means to be born again. It means to have the life of God. Self-banished from the life of God with no share in it.

Oh, come on. That is why I don't allow someone who is not, who doesn't have the life of God to, to dictate and educate me on how to relate to God. Your auntie who is a Muslim is telling you or is a Hindu or is that, it is telling you how you should go to church.

Your uncle, he said that me, I don't do this church thing. I can't sit down for 40 minutes in a church. For what? He said, because they don't understand what church is. You're going to be in church for three hours?

But this same person can be watching football for four hours. Nollywood, thank you. Nollywood, nollywood, even not Hollywood. Nollywood.

[16 : 28] I can't be, I can't be in a church service too long, but you can be in other things very long. It depends on where your heart is and who you really are. Who you really are.

Who you really are. Have you noticed that when you are in love with somebody, you never finish talking to them on the phone? All night, all night, sweet talks.

And you know you are going to work. You have actually an interview at eight, but still at 3 a.m. you are having sweet talk. And you, the same person are telling me, I can't stay in church too long for one hour, for two hours.

The devil is a liar. You watch Nollywood, part one, part two, part three.

Episode four, episode four. Ephesians, he talks about loving Jesus with an undying love.

[17 : 36] Love dies, not dying. We love him. We love him. But, let me finish that. Yeah, Ephesians is right at 24. No, I said the undying.

Okay, that's it. Grace to all those who love the Lord Jesus with an undying love. When you are really in love, nothing Christly is enough.

Nothing. Sometimes you just definitely have to tell the guy, you know, go to sleep. You have an exam tomorrow. Girl, we'll continue talking. How many of you know what I'm talking about? Yeah, if you have been in love before, you realize that you just can't hang.

You can't hang. And then you are breathing on one another. There is silence. There is silence.

Are you still there? Yeah, he said, okay, bye. You two, bye. But go first. I'll go. You two, go first. You are telling me that the church service is too long. You.

[18 : 45] Let's finish Ephesians, please. Forgive me. Okay. Forgive me. The life of Christ because, because of the ignorance, the want of knowledge and perception, the willful, it's a choice.

It's a choice. Willful blindness. So, the gospel is so basic, it's so straightforward, it's so simple, it's so uncomplicated complicated, that a child can even understand.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. A child can even understand. The basic message of the Bible is so straightforward. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. simple. Because it's good news through and through.

Yeah. No condemnation. Jesus said that, I did not come to condemn, John 3, 17, not John 3, 16. Most of you are, are only John 3, 16 people.

But, John, John 3, 17 talks about, God did not send his son into the world to condemn. What? He did not, Jesus said that, he didn't come so people would be condemned.

[19 : 51] That's not why he came. He was sent by the Father, not so for condemnation, even though we deserve condemnation through and through. For God did not send his world to, but that the world through him, come on.

God's system of salvation can only be through Christ. 2 Corinthians chapter 5, verse 19 says that, God was reconciling the world.

Come on. That is, God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself. The only way he could do that was through Christ, reconciling the world to himself. 2 Peter chapter 3, verse 18 talks about how Christ died for sinners.

He died to bring us to God. Come on. The reason why he's dead on the cross is so he can bring us on the cross. He was reconciling. In fact, God himself was reconciling.

But Christ suffered once for sin, the just for the unjust, that he might buy. Like that bit, that bit is so good. That, that, he might, the purpose for his dying is that not because he did anything wrong, not because he had just, he was dying as a martyr.

[20 : 57] He could have chosen not to die, but he chose to die because when he said, who are you looking for? They all fell down. So dying is not a problem. He can choose not to die. That's why I told Pontius Pallet, you don't have what it takes to kill me.

Neither do you have what it takes to release me. Can you imagine? Pontius Pallet said, I have, don't you, John chapter 19 said, don't you know I have the power to release you? He says, hey, hey, hey, hey, hey, don't go above your pay grade.

You don't have the power to release me. If I don't, Pontius Pallet said, why are you not speaking to me? Do you not know that I have power to crucify you and power to release you?

Huh? You? You don't have what it takes. You don't have what it takes. He said, Jesus answered and said to him, you could, you could have no power at all against me unless it's, so just go ahead and do what you, I came, I chose to die.

So you can, and he says that no one takes my life, John chapter 10 verse 18, no one takes my life from me. I chose to, I let, hey, human beings can speak like that. He said that no one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my, he just took his life like a coat and laid it down.

[22 : 13] Lay down his life. He said by myself, I lay it down and I'll pick it up again. No, that's not an ordinary human being talking. I have the power to lay it down and I have the power to take it again.

He said, Pontius Pallet, don't think you have the power to lay my life down. So I have the power to do that. That's how Jesus is talking. So the reason why he died on the cross was not because they killed him, but he died because he said, guy, kill me.

Kill me. So that in dying for the sins of mankind, I will be able to bring man to God. I will be able to reconcile because in the cross, God was reconciling the world to him.

Come on, that's beautiful. God was reconciling. He was drawing the world to himself, not imputing their sins against them. That's what the cross can do.

So that all the sins, God, you mean all the sins, every, the battle, I've done, why, he said, yeah, even the way I fought the pastor, I fought the church, he said, no, don't worry, sin is sin. He said, I'm not, I'm not imputing it against you because of the cross of Christ.

[23 : 19] I'm drawing it to myself. He died to bring us to God. Somebody shout hallelujah. Hallelujah. The essence of the cross is so important. So now, going back to our text, because these things are so sweet, you can go on and on and on, but it says, you know the grace of God in truth, amen.

Verse seven, it says that, as you also have learned from Epaphras, everybody say Epaphras. Wow. Don't have even time to unpack all this. Say Epaphras.

Who is Epaphras? Who is Epaphras? I've written eight things to know about Epaphras. Eight signs of an Epaphras.

You got to know about Epaphras. Epaphras is an amazing person. So, as I told you, Paul hasn't seen the people he was writing to because he didn't witness to them.

He didn't preach to them, but it's believed by his scholars that it was Epaphras who went to preach to them. So, Paul, according to Acts chapter 19, you know, when he was in Ephesus, the people rebelled against the preaching, so he withdrew the disciples to one, verse nine and verse ten, Acts chapter 19, to one school of Tyrannus and for two years, daily, he was daily, he was daily for two years, it continued for two years, but verse nine tells you what he was doing there for two years.

[24 : 51] Some men spoke evil of the way, so he departed from them and reviewed the disciples, okay, reasoning daily in the school, every day for two years and someone who's telling you going to church twice a week is too much.

We should go to church every day. Huh? You see, that huh is a sign of where your heart is. Yeah, you did, you know, the acid test, you know, the litmus test has just shown, huh?

Yeah, that's a sign, it's a sign, it's a sign, it's a sign of where your heart is. So, but can you imagine if they say we should go for holidays in Spain, the whole one year holiday, who will say, huh, no, no, will you say that?

You will say that? You will say that? You see where your heart is? You see where your heart is? You say, wow, this is so good. Your boss, your company, maybe work with Barclays or something, they tell you that they want you to go on holiday for two years in Spain.

Just stay there, everything paid, accommodation paid. What would you say? Wow. The pastor is suggesting that we should come to church, not like 24 hours, but let's say a couple of hours every day for two years.

[26 : 11] You say, oh, and yet, you don't, you don't, you don't, you see, God deals with us based on our heart disposition.

That's why the lockdown really revealed people. It helped people to know where your heart has stood, the lockdown. Some people are still in lockdown so long as church is concerned.

It's the only church the lockdown applies to. They go everywhere. They go to the train stations. They go to the shopping center. They go to the supermarket. They've gone on holidays.

They've even been in the plane. Can you imagine the plane? Yeah, but church, you are telling me pandemic. Pandemic is still in the church, but it's not in your house.

It's not in your car. It's not at work. I work from home, but your children's school. So, yeah, these things I'm saying, it's really, I just, I just, I just think that sometimes it's good for us to redefine certain things and our position in God and in our pursuit of God.

[27 : 24] So, it helps us be clear about where we stand with God. Because sometimes it's very easy like a Pharisee to believe that me, I'll do anything for God.

But when God shows up, you crucify him. Yeah, yeah. Paul said it to them. Acts chapter 13, verse 27. He said, you read this thing every Sabbath.

You've been reading it for those who dwell in Jerusalem. That Jerusalem got my attention very strongly. Our Messiah is not a Russian Messiah.

Yeah. It's not a British savior. Yeah. He's not an American Messiah. He's not a Chinese Messiah.

He's a Jewish Messiah. And we have Jerusalem in Israel, in Palestine where he grew up. And we are going to have the New Jerusalem, not the New London.

[28 : 26] New Jerusalem. It's in the Bible. New Jerusalem, the last one. New Jerusalem. God said the new, not New Paris. So, it says that those who dwelt in Jerusalem, I'm going off, but that's just, I just threw in it.

Those who dwelt in Jerusalem, that's interesting. Those who dwelt in Jerusalem, those who dwell in Jerusalem, and they are rulers because they did not know him, nor even the voice of the prophets which are read every Sabbath.

They fulfilled what the prophets, the prophets said, one day God is going to come. God is going to come. And some people will kill him. They say, who can do this? And they are reading every Saturday. And then Jesus came, God came, they killed him, and they are still continuing reading.

Who can do this? So, sometimes, you might mean well, but you might be awfully off so long as the wisdom of God and the will of God is concerned.

It's important. So, back to our text, how Epaphras said, you have learned from Epaphras. I was talking about how Acts chapter 19, he rejuvenated the disciples, and that was within the territory of Ephesus.

[29 : 33] So, verse 20 says that, and the word of God grew and multiplied and prevailed. So, this is all in Ephesus. So, Paul didn't move away from Ephesus, but theologians believe that he sent Timothy and Epaphras and a team to go to the nearby surrounding towns because Colossae is not very far from Ephesus and to witness there.

So, Epaphras, who was one of the team Paul sent, who actually originally comes from Colossae, went to Colossae to go and do the work there. That is why he said in the verse 7 of Colossians chapter 1 that about the gospel, as you have learned from Epaphras.

So, they learned it from somebody, not Paul himself, but they learned the gospel from Epaphras, which is right. And they see the credibility of Epaphras. Number one, I think we should learn about Epaphras.

Number one, permit me to jump to chapter 4 before I come about Epaphras. Let's look at chapter 4, verse 12. Someone say Epaphras. Oh, there you go.

Is it okay if we read it from the screen? All right, shall we all read it? Let's go. Epaphras, who is one of you, among the servant of Christ, will reach you for his neighbor and cleverly to hear your prayer that you may be and complete in the work of the Lord.

[30 : 56] So, Epaphras, the first thing is about Epaphras, who is one of you? Epaphras, who is one of you? I think God has this way of reaching out to people which is very beautiful by using one of us to reach out to us.

The reason why you are in your family and you are the only one who is born again is not to see how bad your family is. I don't like them. Please, that's your family and you have an assignment there.

One of the reasons why God saved you is that believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved, you and your household. God is a household God. Cornelius and his household.

We study the scriptures very carefully. Dorcas and all those who lived in her house. So, God is a household God and God likes using one of us.

He always likes using. So, when God wants to reach out to certain people, he will reach out to one of them. That's why when God wanted to save us, he had to be like one of us.

[32 : 06] In fact, in Hebrews chapter 5 from verse 1, it gives the requirement of a high priest that every high priest is taken from among men. And what is his job? He's appointed for men.

All right? But his appointment has to do with things pertaining to God to offer both gifts and sacrifices. So, the qualification of a high priest, number one, the greatest qualification of a high priest is he must be also from amongst men.

That is why angels cannot represent us before God. Angels can't be priests. They can't be a high priest. So, if Jesus had not come in the flesh, he would have been disqualified from becoming a high priest.

Because one of the qualifying factors of a high priest is he must be taken from amongst men. So, if Jesus is going to be a high priest, then he had to be like us. In Hebrews chapter 2 verse 17, it talks about how he had to be like us in all things.

So, therefore, in all things, he had to be made like his brethren. That he might be a merciful and a faithful high priest in things pertaining to God to make propitiation for sins of the people.

[33 : 19] So, he had to be like us. That is why the devil is not like us. Sometimes he uses demons, his angels, and all that. But the devil is not a human being.

So, the devil wants you to believe that Jesus was never a human being. He wants you to believe that there is no way God came in the flesh.

In fact, in 1 John, I think, chapter 4, he gives a clear definition of an antichrist. He said, anyone who says that Christ has not come in the flesh is an antichrist.

Christ is God. He said, because the devil doesn't want to admit, he says that every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God.

It's not of God. It doesn't matter how good a religion might look. It is not of God. Anyone who does not confess that Christ has not come in the flesh, what does that mean?

[34 : 18] Christ is God. And God manifested in the flesh. And he said, any spirit that denies that Christ is a sign that the enemy has gotten involved. So any doctrine, even in the name of the church, that denies the fact that Jesus Christ, like God, was manifested in the flesh, he said, it's not.

Now the fact that he said Christ came in the flesh, that means he was before he became. Do you understand that? He came in the flesh. If he wasn't in the flesh, why would he come? If he wasn't already existing, why would he come?

But because he was already existing, so he was existing and he came in the flesh. Did you see that? But Christ came in the flesh. That means that he could have chosen not to have come in the flesh and he could have only come in the spirit.

And the Pharisees wouldn't have had problems with him because he lost so God. But he had to come in the flesh. That tells you that he was actually pre-existing before he was born. In the beginning was the word and the word became flesh.

That anything that denies that the word who is God has become flesh, he said, it is not of God. That whatever denies that is not of God. Anybody who claims that Jesus is not God cannot be a Christian, he's not a Christian.

[35 : 29] He said, it's a clear antichrist. Because it's in the Bible, he said it's not of God. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. All right. So, back to what I was talking about.

He said that Epaphras, somebody say Epaphras. Epaphras. Who is one of you? So, one of the signs of an Epaphras is always one of us.

But, do you know the problem with God using one of you? Because one of you tends to look too much like us that we can be familiar with one of you.

That's why a prophet is not without honor except in his own and among his people. Because sometimes you are wondering, why should you make this person so important? He's too much like me. But that's how God works.

He always reaches out to us. That is why you have to be very careful how you treat people who God is using, but you are close to. It can be your husband, your wife, your daughter, your son, your sister, your brother.

[36 : 34] You have to be careful. Because God always uses one of us. And sometimes, the Bible puts it this way. He said he came to his own. By his own.

John chapter 1 verse 11. He came to his own. Verse 11. He came to his own. So Jesus Christ, God raised him for his people. He came to his own.

His own. Verse 11. He came to his own. And his own received him not because he looked too much like them. Be careful how you are treating the epipharas. People who don't understand the workings of God and don't have the revelation of God always trivialize the people whose God's hand is on.

Say, but this is just a man. This is just a human. God don't mind him. Those of you who have delight in talking against pastors, you have to start preparing for your funeral.

Not physical death, but something is going to die. Because God can help you outside of the vessels he has chosen from amongst us who should be able to identify with.

[37 : 42] Am I preaching at all? Epipharas. One of you. One of you. So number one, Epipharas is what?

One of you. Moses said to the Jews that God will raise a prophet from amongst you. It's repeated in Acts twice in the book of Deuteronomy.

It said, the Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your midst. Epipharas. One of you.

Number two. Let's go to the original text. As you also learned from Epipharas. An Epipharas is someone you always learn from. When you meet an Epipharas, you tend to learn something godly.

And I think you should surround yourself with people, Epipharasic looking people. I like to hang around Epipharasic.

[38 : 45] People who are Epipharasic. Because you learn from them. You learn good stuff. And what was he talking about? They learn about the gospel. They learn the gospel from Epipharas.

Not from Apostle Paul. Epipharas was not an apostle. He wasn't a big guy. But when they came close to him, when he came towards them, they learned from an Epipharas. They learned the gospel.

They learned some of the things that, please, please, sometimes people are in church. Instead of winning souls, they are ruining souls. You can be in church and not be a soul winner, but a soul ruiner.

by the negative things you keep talking about the church and about this person, this person, this guy has come to church.

His heart is new. He really wants to be serious. And normally they like recruiting people like that. When they see your heart is fresh, when they see you are zealous, they also want to look important.

[39 : 52] And they start coming alongside you. They start coming alongside you. They start coming alongside you. By the time you realize you who came to the choir with the big heart, whatever the church you do. Now when they call for me, they say, do you have to stay this long?

Now you started passing negative comments. You didn't get close to an epiphra. You got close to a dimas. Or some people, they win.

Instead of winning souls, winning, W-I-N-N, they win, W-E-A-N, they win from active service. They win people from heartfelt commitment to church and the church work.

You were a faithful giver until you became friends with a winner. Someone who wins people from active service. They are in the church.

Some of them even manage to find themselves in some kind of leadership, but their hearts in their heart, they win. They win the child from their mother's breast. Win you.

[41 : 04] Some of us are family members who are also in the church. They brought you to the church. I say, hey, my friend, take your time. Take your time. I was there before you came.

Take your time. You don't know things, but I'm telling you, take your time. You see, that's a soul winner. So a winner. And they end up becoming so ruinous.

They ruin souls. But Epaphras, you learn from Epaphras. Sometimes some wives are like Epaphras. Say, honey, my darling, don't worry, this usher, the way it's not personal, he's just doing his work.

Please ignore the usher, let's go. Just appreciate, maybe even if you were an usher, you would have done worse. The way I know you are strict. that's an Epaphras type of wife.

Epaphras type of husband. Your wife gets up, I'm leaving the church now. You come to church and you take your bag and walk out of church. You need an Epaphras, and then the husband says, okay, my wife said we are going on, he's taking a car, so you're like, ah.

[42 : 13] Win, win the person. No, sometimes you are at the door, you see someone walking away because has been offended, because people can offend you because it's just one of us.

God always used one of us to be an usher. He's one of us. One of us, so he's not an angel. So someone will pass a comment that can offend you.

It might be unpleasant. You must be able to overlook it. But if something is too strong, you just need an Epaphras. You know some people if you go and talk to them, this matter will be escalated.

So don't tell them. You know sometimes what your family member said, you won't tell your husband now. You won't tell your wife because you know if I tell my husband this thing is not good. So you can't tell your husband everything his mother-in-law said.

You can't tell your wife everything your family has been saying about your home. You are not being a smart man. Some of you are thinking about what you have said.

[43 : 17] You are thinking about what you have said. Some things don't say it. You know your mom can talk. Your mom can talk and pass comments.

Everybody in the family knows your mom can say wild things. Don't tell the other members of the department what the leader said in their absence.

It's not necessary. You are phoning them and saying come and see what they are saying. And the way they have said I feel that they are implying you. You are the one they are talking about. You are a dimmer.

Dimmer. Dimmer. You are not an epiphra. You are spoiling the church. God will always take one of us who still talks like one of us. Sometimes they even talk on push like the way you speak.

Some people just speak. They speak. They speak. And the way they say sometimes the things they say. You know so you must learn how people are especially in the church and let's compensate for their natural deficiencies because it might not be a reflection of their genuine heart towards God.

[44 : 24] You know some people really can cry for God. But when you meet them and they are talking to you they tell you sister why is your shirt so short. And sometimes they won't even tell you. They will tell her this.

And it can be very offensive. But that's what I told. Why are you going to tell her? If she wanted them to know she would have told them. Epaphras.

You learn from Epaphras. I can't believe I didn't. I was going to finish on the will of God but I don't think we can. Is someone learning something at all? I need to run up now because of it. Number three.

Epaphras is a fellow servant. When you look at the verse again it says that as you have learned from Epaphras our fellow servant our fellow doulos. In chapter four verse twelve it says that a bond servant a slave doulos is a Greek word.

Our fellow doulos. Because fellow servant means that we are all in the same wake. What he's doing is not different from what we are doing. What he said is not different from what the rest of the team are saying.

[45 : 35] Why is it that every time the leader says something you bring a different version? You bring a different version of the gospel. remix. I like that.

Those are the people who spoil churches. And some of them they come like very holy and as for me I just very pious but when you look at the fruits of their don't judge people just by what they say and what they do.

Look at the fruits of their lifetime. Your association with them where has it landed you? Since you became their close friends what has happened to you? You can't stand your leader anymore.

Since you became their close friends everything your wife says is annoying to you. That's why your wife told you from the beginning I don't want you to befriend that guy. Don't befriend that guy. You are fighting everybody.

See the outcome? Everything your wife does. He's telling you don't let a woman control you. But your wife is not controlling you. She's not making such intelligent wise suggestions that can save the family from death.

[46 : 44] So I think it's important. We learn from people like Epaphras and he's a fellow servant. The real thing is the gospel but it also plays us in the church life.

In day to day life. You are complaining why your bosses keep promoting this particular one because that's their friend. Nobody promotes their enemy. It's against common sense.

You have teamed up with those who are always speaking against the boss and you are expecting to be promoted. No. Those you have teamed up with they can't promote you. And you are not at work for friendship. You are at work for income.

Right? Yeah. No, no, no. But the preaching must help you to learn something new in God's word. Epaphras. You will learn from Epaphras. Am I not being on Epaphras? I feel like preaching, you know.

Let me add one more so I can't end. So I said eight but you know, you made me talk too much. Pastor, but why didn't you just teach what you are teaching?

[47 : 46] Because I'm one of us. I'm one of us. Number what? Let's look at the text again. Oh, I like that.

Let's read it from the screen. Let's go. I'm one of us. I'm one of us. I'm one of us. I'm one of us. I'm one of us. I'm one of us. I'm one of us. I'm one of us. A faithful minister. Ah! A faithful, that's my secret with the youth.

I make sure I remain a faithful minister of Christ. So that when you get close to me, you will find more about Christ. It's not about how I fit into your world.

I don't have to fit into your world. I just have to present you with Christ. The word translated minister is diaconos. Greek word diaconos. A faithful minister of Christ.

When you are, watch this, this is a very important point. When you are relating to an Epaphras, he's so faithful to Christ that you hardly will deviate from the Christ. When there are some people, when you relate with them, you will end up becoming a faithful Christian.

[48 : 52] Yeah. Because they are faithful minister of Christ. Christ, sometimes they know your wife is actually almost like a devil. Almost like, or your husband is almost like a proper, fresh demon from the pit of hell.

But they will never, they know that what is going on is so complex, naturally speaking, you have to divorce. But because they are faithful minister of Christ, they don't put their emotions ahead of what Christ has got to say.

They can't put their emotions ahead. They can't put their feelings, they can't put their personal philosophies, and they can't put it ahead of what Christ has said.

That's a faithful minister of Christ. So Christ first before their convenience. Christ first before their fame. Christ first before their popularity. Christ first. Christ. So it's a faithful minister of Christ.

And as I told you last week, a minister of Christ is not just someone who is serving the people, but he's also serving Christ. So he's a minister not just for Christ, but of Christ.

[49 : 58] Minister of Christ. Who is a minister of state? He's ministering or doing it on the behalf of the state. When you listen to a minister of state speak on the behalf of the state, you know that you're going to say, things about the government and all that.

When you listen to a minister of religion, it should be religion, not football. Not politics. Are you a minister of religion and you don't open the Bible?

You're not a faithful minister. Minister of Christ. What we have got primarily is Christ. Other things we can run comments on, we can pass comments on, we can share our opinions on, but what we actually stand for is what Christ stands for.

He said, this guy is a faithful minister. There are people who are ministers, but they are not faithful ministers of Christ. And it's easy for any of us not to be a faithful minister of Christ. Because when you have some rich people and famous people, very soon, and they will tell you, you can't say this, you can't say this, very soon, but because of your association with them, you might be diluted, your faithfulness to Christ can be diluted.

Can be diluted. And it's human. That's why church people have to pray for their pastors. You have to pray for your pastor. So, because all of us want to be liked.

[51 : 15] Who doesn't want to be liked? Everybody wants to be liked. So, no one doesn't want to be liked. So, then, we have the human proclivity to say things that will make us be liked, sometimes unconsciously.

It can escape your attention because by the time you realize you are falling into the category of not being faithful to Christ. Like Moses went to strike the rock instead of speaking to the rock.

Moses is a faithful guy, but at that point, he missed it. Anybody at all can miss it. That's why we also have to be patient when we find people missing it. Be patient. If whatever you have said about tithe, be patient.

Whatever you have said about others, be patient. because we can miss it. Anybody at all can miss it. But if you stay on the missing track, that is concerning. Because if your heart is faithful to God, for some reason, he will draw you back.

He will prompt you. He will send someone, and Epaphras will come and talk to you. Somebody. And you realize, actually, that's true. Faithful minister of the gospel. Next week, I will continue the other four of the Epaphras.

[52 : 25] Did you receive something? Thank you for listening to this message by David Entry. You're welcome to connect with David Entry on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

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