

A Call to Serve the Lord

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- [0 : 00] The scripture reading is taken from Joshua 24, verses 1 to 15. Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel.
- And they presented themselves before God. And Joshua said to all the people, Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, Long ago your fathers lived beyond the Euphrates, Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nahor, and they served other gods.
- Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the river and led him through all the land of Canaan and made his offspring many. I gave him Isaac, and to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau, and I gave Esau the hill country of Seir to possess.
- But Jacob and his children went down to Egypt, and I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt with what I did in the midst of it. And afterward I brought you out.
- Then I brought your fathers out of Egypt, and you came to the sea. And the Egyptians pursued your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea.
- [1 : 15] And when they cried to the Lord, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and made the sea come upon them and cover them.
- Then I brought you to the land of the Amorites, who lived on the other side of the Jordan.
- They fought with you, and I gave them into your hand. And you took possession of their land, and I destroyed them before you. Then Balak, the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and fought against Israel.
- And he sent and invited Balaam, the son of Beor, to curse you. But I would not listen to Balaam. Indeed, he blessed you, so I delivered you out of his hand.
- And you went over the Jordan and came to Jericho. And the leaders of Jericho fought against you, and also the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.
- [2 : 23] And I gave them into your hand. And I sent the hornet before you, which drove them out before you, the two kings of the Amorites.
- It was not by your sword or by your bow. I gave you a land on which you had not labored, and cities that you had not built, and you dwell in them. You eat the fruit of vineyards and olive orchards that you did not plant.
- Now, therefore, fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your father served beyond the river and in Egypt, and serve the Lord.
- And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your father served in the region beyond the river, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell.
- But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. Word of the Lord. And thank you, Andre, for reading for us this morning.

[3 : 31] It's good to be together, and I join both Clarence and Troy in wishing all the fathers a happy Father's Day today. It's good to see our brother Bradley back after being gone for some months.

And I think most of you have heard the good news that Bradley was successful in his exams that he was studying hard for, and so we rejoice with him that those exams are before him.

And then he says in two years he has another set. So we'll be praying for you, brother, as you study. Well, in two days, literally, two days, we are going to be celebrating 35 years of God's faithfulness to us as a local church.

And for this anniversary milestone, we have selected a theme.

And the theme is based on Psalm 78, verse 4, and it is faithful in all generations. And I appreciated the songs we sang this morning because they reminded us that God has been faithful to us.

[4 : 50] But they also remind us that he will be faithful to us in the coming generations. Psalm 78 is the second longest psalm of the psalms.

And in Psalm 78, the psalmist recounts the faithfulness of the Lord over the generations. And he also, on behalf of the nation of Israel, expresses the commitment that they will teach the coming generations, the deeds of the Lord, and his gracious dealings with his people, the mighty acts that he performed on their behalf.

And throughout Scripture, what we see is that this responsibility to teach the next generation, it falls squarely on the shoulders of men in general and fathers in particular.

That's what we see in Scripture. That this call to pass on to the next generation, the faithfulness of the Lord, and to teach them to expect that as God has been faithful, he will be faithful to them, and that they, in turn, are to be faithful to the next generation.

That, in Scripture, is repeatedly laid at the feet of men in general and fathers in particular. The church comes alongside families to raise children, but it's primarily the responsibility of fathers and men to do this.

[6 : 35] And this is what we see in the Scripture that was just read a short while ago in Joshua 24. We see that as a part of his final address to the nation of Israel, Joshua calls them to be faithful to the Lord.

Joshua knew that his days as Israel's leader was coming to an end, and so he called the people to be faithful to the Lord. A little over a week ago, I turned 63.

And having had the privilege to lead this church, and it has been the privilege of my life, I have given my best years to this church, and that has been a joy to do that.

The strongest years of my life have been invested over the 35 years that I have served this church. And I'm becoming increasingly aware that if the Lord tarries, the Lord doesn't return sooner, this church has a future beyond me.

And as I am becoming increasingly aware of this reality, my greatest desire for this church is that it will be a faithful church.

[8 : 03] It will continue to be a faithful church in successive generations. And this responsibility primarily falls on the shoulders of the men of this church and the fathers of this church to pass on a faithful heritage to the next generation, to live lives of godly examples before them and call them to do the same, to serve the Lord.

And not to serve him grudgingly, but to serve him wholeheartedly. And so brothers, bearing this in mind, bearing that today is Father's Day, bearing in mind that we celebrate 35 years as a church in two days, I want to follow Joshua's example this morning, and I want to call us to serve the Lord.

I want to call us to serve the Lord faithfully in our generation and then to prepare the next generation to do the same. And so though we are all being addressed this morning from God's word, brothers, we primarily are being addressed from God's word.

So may we hear, and more than hear, may we heed what God will say to us. But first let me pray for us. Heavenly Father, we bow our hearts before you and we thank you that we can join generations past and sing how great is your faithfulness.

We can join generations past and sing that the love of God still endures. And Lord, our desire is that this will continue to be true in this local church beyond our generation.

[10 : 03] we pray, Lord, that the next generation that will come will do the same. And the next generation after them until the day that you return and take them home to join those who have already gone home.

So Lord, speak to our hearts this morning, but especially speak to the hearts of the men who are gathered here this morning and to the fathers who are gathered. Oh, Lord, may we particularly listen and hear and heed all that you would say to us.

God, I ask that you would grant me your grace to be faithful to bring your word to care for your people. And we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

I believe that the overarching point of the scripture that was read this morning, if we were to try to encapsulate it, is something like this.

All people, but fathers especially, are called to serve the Lord and prepare the next generation to do the same.

[11 : 17] If there is an endeavor that is worthy of giving ourselves to, an endeavor that will last beyond our lives, it is this endeavor of teaching and training the next generation, first by our own example of serving the Lord, but then also by instruction to call them in their generation to do the same.

And so this morning, while we are all being addressed by God's word, fathers especially, we are being addressed from God's word.

For those who are taking notes, I've organized a sermon under two simple points. The first one is a general call to serve the Lord.

That's what we see in this passage, is a general call to serve the Lord. In verse 1, we see that Joshua, we're told he gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel, and they presented themselves before God.

And so the occasion was a national address that Joshua was giving to the children of Israel as the second national leader of the nation.

[12 : 47] When Joshua steps off the scene, God does not raise up another leader like him. God gives them judges instead. But Joshua is aware that he is about to die.

Earlier in chapter 23, in verse 14, he tells the children of Israel that he is about to go the way of all the earth. And that's a way of speaking about death.

The way of all the earth is the way that we will all go one day, all of us, one day, unless the Lord returns sooner, we'll go the way of all the earth.

We will go to our graves. And so it's in this context that Joshua is addressing the nation of Israel. He's addressing them as a leader who knows that his days with them are limited.

And he believes that the most important thing that he can do, and that's what he does, is he calls them to serve the Lord. Now, I think it's important for us to see that this final address of Joshua was not a pep rally.

[13 : 59] This was not just something that Joshua was doing. He was not on his own escapade talking to the nation of Israel. What we see is that God was addressing them.

Look again at what it says in verse 1. Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel, and they presented themselves before God.

Verse 2 says, And Joshua said to all the people, Thus saith God, the Lord God of Israel.

These were not Joshua's words. The words that he was going to give them from verse 2 to 13 were the words of God.

God was speaking to them through Joshua. And through Joshua, what God does is he summarizes Israel's history. It's a wonderful summary of their history.

[15 : 05] If you're halfway familiar with the history of the children of Israel, you read this summary. This is a wonderful and a gracious summary of God's dealings with them, how God cared for them.

And it's a gracious summary because God doesn't recount how they dealt with him. He only recounts how he dealt with them.

He doesn't raise their unbelief. He doesn't raise their rebellion. He doesn't raise their ingratitude. He only lays out for them what he has done for them.

And the point that God makes to Israel is an important point that is being made to us as well. God calls us to serve him in light of his gracious dealings with us.

And here the children of Israel are. They are at Shechem, the place where God promised to give the land to Abraham and his descendants. He promised at Shechem that he would give the land of Canaan to them.

[16 : 12] And now they've come into that inheritance. And the Lord calls them to serve him because he's been gracious to them. He's been gracious to them beyond anything that they deserved.

And if they were halfway thinking, they knew it. But the other reality about the children of Israel was that although God had been faithful to them, they had not been faithful to him.

And Joshua is aware of this. Joshua is aware that God has been faithful. Joshua is aware that he is going to be leaving. And he's aware that Israel is unfaithful.

is going to be on his heart. Because what we see is in verse 14, he transitions. God ceases to speak to them in verse 13, and now Joshua addresses them in verse 14.

He starts to address them, and he challenges them to serve the Lord in light of his faithfulness. Notice how he transitions. He says, now, therefore, now, therefore, in light of what God has done, now, therefore, fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness.

[17 : 41] Joshua knew that although God was faithful to the nation of Israel, they were hypocritical, and they were holding on to idol gods. They were holding on to the gods their fathers had worshipped beyond the river, and they were holding on to the new idol gods that they had come to know in the land of the Amorites.

And so it is with this in mind that Joshua says to them, now, therefore, fear the Lord and serve him with sincerity and serve him in faithfulness.

Israel and it's clear that Joshua is not calling Israel to sincerity and faithfulness in a vacuum. The fact that he is doing it is an indication that they were not sincere, they were not faithful in serving the Lord.

Now, why didn't they serve the Lord? why, in light of these gracious dealings that the Lord recounts for them, why would they not serve the Lord?

I think there are two obvious reasons that come to mind. The first one is Israel was ungrateful to God. Israel discounted God's gracious dealings with them and they did not see that serving the Lord was a logical response to how gracious he was to them.

[19 : 16] They made light of it. They made light of the fact that God had delivered them out of slavery and brought them into the promised land and he gave them a land that they didn't buy.

He gave them vineyards that they did not plant. And they took it all for granted because they were ungrateful people. A second reason that is obvious is they didn't fear the Lord.

They thought God was like the idol gods that their fathers worshipped beyond the river and that the Amorites had worshipped and they were embracing. They thought God was that kind of God. And they didn't fear this all-powerful God who could destroy them and take their breath away in a moment.

They did not fear him and so they had no problem pretending to serve the Lord yet holding on to idle gods. They didn't fear the Lord.

But there's a more fundamental reason why Israel didn't fear the Lord. It's true they had a lack of gratitude. It's true they had a lack of the fear of the Lord.

[20 : 30] But there's an even more fundamental reason that Israel did not fear the Lord. Why they did not serve the Lord.

Why they did not worship the Lord. But I want to move on and I'll come back to it at the end of the sermon. But brothers and sisters I believe this morning that in many ways we mirror the children of Israel.

In so many ways. Sometimes when we read the account of the children of Israel, we read their story, we could see echoes of our own stories. And I wonder this morning if our stories were recounted, if we were to rehearse the stories of our lives, here's what would be a common trait for all of us.

All of our lives will be marked by the gracious dealings of God. All of us without exception. that includes anyone who is here this morning and you are living a life of sin and you are living a life away from the Lord.

That includes you as well. The Bible says that God is good to all. In the Sermon on the Mount we read that God causes the sun to shine on the just and the unjust.

[21 : 52] God is good to all that he has made. God has been gracious to me.

God has been good to me. And so in light of God's gracious dealings with all of us, what is your service to him?

Your fear of him? Your worship of him? What is it in light of his gracious dealings with you?

Is the life marked by one of gratitude to him? Is it marked by one of fearing him? Is it marked by sincerity and faithfulness?

Or is it like the nation of Israel trying to hold on to God thinking that we are with one hand and then holding on to idols? With the other hand?

[23 : 02] Sadly, for so many people in our country, it is a cultural thing to be in church. It's a cultural thing to attend church. It's a cultural thing to pray. It's a cultural thing to read our Bibles and even quote Scripture.

It's also a cultural thing to do those things and not live a life that reflects submission to the Lord Jesus Christ and devotion to him. But we are called to serve the Lord in sincerity and faithfulness.

in verse 15, Joshua issues a challenge to Israel and look at what he says again. He says, and if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord.

It's a very interesting way that Joshua challenges them. He says, if it's evil in your eyes to serve the Lord. And what Joshua does when he says this is he gets to the heart of the issue for all of Adam's descendants.

He gets to the heart of the issue of our fallenness. In our fallenness, in our spiritual blindness, we actually see, we perceive that the way of the Lord is evil to us.

[24 : 20] This word evil, it speaks about believing something is harmful, something is not profitable, something is diminishing. And that is the reality of unbelievers.

Unbelievers are blind that to follow the Lord in righteousness, to follow the Lord in holiness, to follow the Lord in a life of goodness and devotion to good works, as we heard in the scriptures that we're repeating this morning, that's evil in their eyes.

And what's attractive in their eyes is the opposite of that, living a life of sin and rebellion, rebellion, a life of darkness and deceit, it's attractive to them, and they go towards that, but it's evil to serve the Lord.

And so Joshua puts it to them in a very frank and honest way, he says, if it's evil in your eyes to serve this God who's been gracious to you, this God who has been patient with you, given you a land that you didn't buy, given you vineyards that you didn't purchase, putting you in houses that you didn't build, he says, if it's evil that you serve this God, well then you choose whom you will serve.

Rather you will serve the gods that your fathers served in the region beyond the river, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell, but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

[25 : 52] Joshua tells Israel what their options are. The options are clear. Serve your idols if you want to serve them, or you serve the Lord, but he says you have to choose.

You can't think that you are holding on to God and also holding on to these idols. They were in the valley of decision, and Joshua is calling them to make a decision.

You know what, brothers and sisters, and perhaps I shouldn't say brothers and sisters at this point, I should say friends, because I imagine that not everyone this morning is a brother or sister.

Only those who have been adopted through Jesus Christ, can call God Father, and only those who call God Father can call those who have done that brother and sister.

And so we're a mixed congregation this morning. And to those of you who, you're not in that category of brother and sister, you're not in that category of those who have made your calling an election show where you're serving the Lord, you find yourself in a place where those standing before Joshua were, where they were called to choose.

[27 : 31] And what Joshua is really saying to them in a sense is it is not enough to have this trapping, this appearance of serving the Lord. You must serve the Lord, and in any event, you must choose whom you are going to serve.

The idea that we can hold on to God and hold on to this world is deceptive. Because essentially what you're doing is you're holding on with both hands to the world and not to God.

We cannot both love God and love the world. Lord. We cannot have fellowship with the world and say we love the Lord. We can't do it.

And this is the point that the Apostle John makes in 1 John 2, 15 to 17. He says, do not love the world or the things in the world.

If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. for all that is in the world, the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride and possessions is not from the Father but is from the world.

[29 : 02] And he soberly says this, and the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

This is God's word. He calls us to choose. We cannot love the world and at the same time say that we love the Lord.

Lord. The general call to all of us is serve the Lord and serve the Lord in sincerity and don't fool yourself in thinking that you can have the best of two worlds as it were, one foot in the world and one foot in the church.

It's an unreality to think that. The reality is if you think you're in that situation, both feet are in the world.

So the general call is to all. But in these two verses in particular, in verses 14 to 15, there's also a special call.

[30 : 18] There's a special call to serve the Lord and this special call goes to fathers. Joshua addressed the nation of Israel on God's behalf and he was speaking God's word to them and he begins by relating to them God's gracious dealings with their forefathers, starting with Abraham and then Isaac and then Jacob.

And here's the thing, God not only led those men, he led their families as well. They were heads of their households but their families came alongside them.

And that day as Joshua was addressing Israel, the men who were gathered were far more attentive to Joshua than their wives and their children.

As a matter of fact, it would have been the duty of the men to ensure that their families assembled when Joshua summoned the whole nation to come together. It was their duty to ensure that their families came along with them.

And it was expected that the fathers would be the ones who were primarily being addressed by Joshua and who would respond on behalf of their families.

[31 : 45] And this is clear from Joshua's own response in verse 15. He makes it clear. He says to the nation of Israel, choose this day whom you will serve.

If you don't want to serve God, the sincere and faithfulness, well then serve the idols. The old ones or the new ones. But then he says this, but as for me and my house, we're going to serve the Lord.

As for me and my house, we are going to serve the Lord. notice that Joshua spoke both for himself and for his household and he said, we will serve the Lord.

He didn't say as for me and myself. He says as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. Now, for whom was Joshua speaking?

We know that Joshua was about 110 years old at this point. As you read further on in Joshua 24, in verse 29, we're told he was 110.

[32 : 55] So, we're not sure whether his wife was living. She could have been living at the time. We don't know. We don't know if he had minor children. I mean, in those days, men had children late, and so we don't know if he had minor children.

But I think what is reasonable to conclude is that he did have adult children. And this is a startling part of what Joshua actually says.

Since it's highly likely that he did have adult children, this statement that Joshua makes, as for me and my house, is a bold statement of leadership for his household.

He took responsibility for his household as a whole, including his adult children. Now, it's important, I think, to think about what Joshua is really saying.

Joshua is not obviously saying that he could force his children to serve the Lord. The only person that we could really speak for in terms of serving the Lord is ourselves.

[34 : 16] We don't know the hearts of other people, but I think Joshua was saying something else. He was speaking about an outward display, an outward demonstration of serving the Lord.

He says, this is a commitment that I make for me and my house. We will demonstrate in a visible way that we are serving the Lord. Now, what's going on in the hearts of any individual?

That's something else. I think Joshua was saying, as much as it is within my power to do, we're going to live a life that demonstrates that we're committed to the way of the Lord.

We're not going to have any visible idolatry in our lives. You're not going to see us living a dual life, holding on to God with one hand and then holding on to idols with the other hand.

He says, we are going to serve the Lord. I think Father Joshua's example is a very good one for all of us to consider.

[35 : 22] To take very seriously this responsibility, not just for ourselves, but also for our households and how we lead our families. To see the responsibility beyond just ourselves.

And I would even extend this because I believe it's applicable that certainly there will be some of our children not in our homes. The extent to which we can serve the Lord and take responsibility for our children is to be in their lives as much as we possibly can, holding on the gospel to them for those who do not know Christ.

Reminding them of the way they were raised, reminding them of the goodness of God to them, holding out this good and faithful God to our children.

We can't coerce them, we can't save them, but we can do that. We can be an example before them, we can hold out the word of God to them.

notice the commitment that Joshua makes. Joshua makes a commitment that is in two parts. The first part he has responsibility for and he has control over, he says, as for me, as for me.

[36 : 46] This is where it starts, fathers. It starts with us as for me. It starts with our own commitment, it starts with our own example of living a life of faithfulness and dedication to the Lord before our households.

It's not don't do as I say, or don't do as I do, but do as I say. It is to say to our children, as for me, I'm going to serve the Lord.

That's where it starts. And I believe that we're in a better position to call them alongside, to join us when we are in fact doing that. And I think we all know that our families know us better than anybody else.

Because they see us when our guards are down, they see us, they have a 360 view of our lives. Have you missed anything that I say this morning?

Or if you want to find the place where emphasis needs to be, emphasis needs to be on this first part. As for me, I'm going to serve the Lord.

[37 : 59] We start with our own example. And then the second part is my house. Joshua took responsibility for his house.

Fathers, let us take responsibilities for our houses to the best of our ability. God and this takes wisdom. And more than wisdom, it actually takes the grace and strength that God provides to be able to do this.

To do this in a way that's helpful and not harmful. Taking responsibility for our wives. Taking responsibility for our children.

Again, which will be easier to do when we ourselves are walking in the way that we are calling them to walk in. I'm very aware this morning that we have single mothers among us.

Sadly, some 75% of the homes in our country are held up by single mothers. And they have to do double duty. They have to be both father and mother in raising their children.

[39 : 19] And I think any single mother who takes seriously this responsibility and gives herself to it would certainly be among the unsung heroes in our country who are taking on this double duty of raising children.

And if you find yourself in that situation this morning, I encourage you to hear these words from Joshua as the head of your house. family, as best as you're able to control it, will outwardly serve the Lord at least.

Today we have a little book that we're giving to all the men a book called How to Lead Your Family. And if you're a single mother here today, please take a copy of that book as well.

Early in the sermon I said that I would pick up a point that I left hanging. And what I said was that although there were those two reasons that Israel didn't serve the Lord, they were ungrateful and they were also lacking the fear of the Lord, I said there was a more fundamental reason why they were not serving the Lord.

And this reason comes to the fore as the dialogue between Joshua and the children of Israel continues and it's in verses 18 to 27.

[41 : 06] In verses 18, 21, and 24, the children of Israel, in response to Joshua's challenge, they repeatedly say to him, we will serve the Lord.

Repeatedly they say to him, we will serve the Lord. And then in verse 19, Joshua says to them, you are not able to serve the Lord. Now, Joshua challenges them in verse 14, he says, you are to choose this day whom you will serve, whether you will serve the idol gods or whether you will serve the Lord.

They come back to Joshua and say, we're going to serve the Lord. Joshua says, you can't serve the Lord. Now, what is going on with that? How is it that Joshua will call them to serve the Lord when they say we're going to serve the Lord?

Joshua says, you can't serve the Lord. Is he playing games with them? No.

He's being honest with them. And the reality is that their situation is all of our situation.

[42 : 29] None of us, even though we are called to serve the Lord, none of us in and of ourselves can serve the Lord. It is a humanly impossible task in and of ourselves to serve the Lord.

And so, what Joshua called them to do, they were basically saying to Joshua, yeah, we're going to do this. We're going to do this. And Joshua was saying, you cannot do it. Look again at what he says to them in verse 19.

You are not able to serve the Lord. Here's why. For he is a holy God. He is a jealous God. He will not forgive your transgressions or your sins.

And in these words, Joshua points to the dilemma that renders sinful men and women incapable of serving God, no matter how sincere they are, no matter how well-meaning they might be, God is holy and we are not.

God is a jealous God. And because we are unholy, we aren't able to appreciate his holy jealousy. That he will not share glory with another.

[43 : 48] He will not share allegiance with another because he is the true and the living God. And in these words of Joshua, we see the reason why God had to send Jesus Christ from heaven to this earth.

Jesus came as the only perfect one who could serve and please the Lord. And every place where we fail, every place where we fall short, Jesus has succeeded.

he has perfectly obeyed the Lord. He has perfectly loved the Lord with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength. And God credits his perfect life and his substitutionary death that he died on behalf of sinners to all those who put their trust in Jesus.

Jesus not only lived the sinful life, Jesus also died a substitutionary death for sinners like you and me to pay for all of our failings.

And it is only through him that we would even have the desire to serve the Lord. It's only through Jesus that we would not see the life that God calls us to as evil in our eyes and we turn away from it.

[45 : 19] It is only through Jesus that we would see that life as an attractive life and we will pursue that life. And even though we will not live that life perfectly, God credits Jesus' perfect life and his atoning death to all those who trust in him.

God and that's the only way that we are able to serve this holy and jealous God. And this was the point that Joshua was making to the children of Israel.

And brothers, even as we hear this this morning and we hear this call to serve the Lord, we hear this call to prepare the next generation, we cannot do this in our own strength. We can only do this relying on the Lord, trusting in the Lord, that even after we have done our very best, we're not going to trust in those efforts.

We're going to look to Jesus, we're going to trust in him because he is the one who has succeeded at every single point where we have failed.

This is the only way that we and our families can serve the Lord. And God knew that. Joshua knew that. And this is why Jesus has come.

[46 : 43] And so brothers, may all of our hearts be encouraged this morning. Yes, let us be provoked and let us be motivated to serve the Lord by our own examples and to the best of our abilities to bring our families along.

But let us not trust in our ability. Let us not trust in our efforts and in our results. let us look to Jesus, the one who has faithfully served the Lord, perfectly served the Lord, and then was atoned for every failing that you or I might have.

Let's pray. Lord, we thank you this morning that you do not call us to do what you have not enabled us to do.

Lord, you sent your Son who perfectly served and loved you and he did it on behalf of all those who had put their trust in him.

Lord, as we hear this call to serve the Lord, may we do it with our eyes set on the Lord Jesus Christ. As we take seriously this responsibility, for our households, may we do it with the grace and strength that only comes through Jesus Christ.

[48 : 14] We ask that you would do this for us, Lord, in Jesus' name, amen. amen.