

Installation Service For Pastor Andrew

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Preacher: Pastor Andrew

[0:00] We find in the book of James that faith without works is dead. And that's not that our faith coupled with works leads to salvation, but that faith coupled with works substantiates it. The biggest thing in deliverance from sin in eternal life should lead us as people to rest in the little things, family things, work things, relationship things, trusting God with every sphere of life.

As we are trusting and believing in God, it will work itself out in our life through expressions of faith and confidence in Him. He moves on then to a labor of love.

A labor of love. So a work of faith and a labor of love. And this is not just the action or the working of that love, but it really tries to emphasize the hardness and the difficulty, the exhaustion that comes along with that loving.

And we know that sometimes loving is difficult, don't we? Sometimes we know that it's hard to love certain individuals. It's hard to extend yourself for that person in your workplace.

It's hard in school setting to extend your love for that bully or that individual who's not making life very easy for you. Paul uses this word three times, this word laboring in 1 Thessalonians.

[1:53] Both of their ministry for one another, but also for his ministry to them. And he emphasizes the loving that they will have for one another. Seven times throughout this little epistle, Paul draws attention to the significance of love.

And certainly this was a church that knew how to love. He says in chapter 4 verse 9, concerning loving the brethren, you don't need me to tell you this.

You know it already. But abound more and more in your love for one another. Their work of faith, their labor of love, and their steadfastness of hope.

Steadfastness is the word for endurance and perseverance. Unlike the other word for patience that deals with individuals, this is patience or endurance that deals with situation and leads to hope, hoping in God for the future.

This was a church that had faced hardship. Hardship that had pressed in immediately and quickly into their midst. It was the reason why the apostle Paul could only be in this place for three Sabbaths.

[3:02] He was run out of town. We find in Acts chapter 17, the difficulties that this church experienced very early on. And here in this letter, the concern that the apostle has for this church in enduring hardship, will they be a church that succumbs to the temptation and trial of Satan or will they be a church that moves forward?

Steadfastness in hope. Moving quickly. We're already out of time, aren't we? Shoot! Point number one.

We've got three points to go. Showing Christ. We find in verses 4 and 5 that showing Christ was the substance of his gospel.

The substance of his gospel. The reason why Paul rejoiced in what he saw in terms of this church. The reason why his prayers were so dominated by thanksgiving for this church is because it was the objective of his gospel mission.

We find that here in verses 4 and 5. He says, For we know, brothers, loved by God, that he has chosen you. How do we know that?

[4:17] Well, we know that because our gospel came to you. Not only in word, but also in power. There were some aspects of the gospel message that showed up in this church.

God came down and he turned dead hearts to life. He turned blindness and darkness to light. He worked in their hearts to transform them from the people that they were to the people that they were now becoming.

We see that later on in this first chapter. And we'll look at it briefly. But particularly, we see here in verse 9, if you drop down, here's one of the examples of the powerful transformation taking place in their life.

It says, They report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, how you turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God. There was transformation taking place in this church. Not just religious duty, but there was a new love, a new desire, a new affection for Jesus that wasn't there before. The power of God had come and had changed this people around.

[5:32] The Holy Spirit had convicted their hearts. The Holy Spirit had breathed life into these groups of individuals. And it made them a people who were changed by the power of the gospel.

That's why Paul says in Romans 1.16, he says, I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God for everyone who believes.

The gospel brings power. Do we trust in the message of the word to work its power into the hearts of our children?

So often I find myself, and maybe you do too, in conversations with your kids, seeking to control and manipulate a little bit, speaking to them, and instead of using the word of God and letting the word of God work in their life, using your authority as a parent, which is necessary at some times, using the word of God to encourage and challenge and nurture them in the areas that you want to move them into.

And as the apostle Paul came with Silas and Timothy, and they showed up with the power of the gospel in hand, and the power of God working through his word, they saw a group of individuals whose hearts were changed.

[6:55] And so in these two first elements, we see the objective of the leader, the objective of the pastor. It's to recognize the faith, the hope, and the love in the church, and encourage that, and to pray for that, and to rejoice over that, but also to faithfully bring the word, to faithfully bring the message, and pray for conviction, and also to be convicted himself.

Notice, it says here at the end of verse 5, you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. The significance of example, the significance of internalizing the truth.

After all, the truth will mean nothing to you, if it's not shaping my life. So it's significant for us, for me as a pastor, for you as a church, to be molded and fashioned by the word, showing Christ through our understanding of the word, letting him show up in our life, in our spheres of influence.

So showing Christ was the substance of his gospel. Showing Christ was also the sign of their conversion. We find that there in the next few verses. Beginning in verse 6, it says, And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. We often think about how we can be potent, how we can be effective, how we can be fruitful in this culture.

[8:44] Here is how it happens. It happens when people see Christ in you. This is now the first responsibility of the church.

This is the expectation of God for you as a church, to know Christ and to show him up in your life, to follow the, to mimic the example of your leaders as they're mimicking the example of your Lord.

That's what this church has begun to do. They're becoming imitators or mimickers. The Greek word is *mimike*, from which we get mimic, to follow, to reproduce.

And because they were so effective at following and mimicking their Savior, notice what that qualifies them for. So that you became an example.

You became the mandrel in that form, in that press, to stamp out the image of Christ now on your culture. As you let Christ show up in your life, now his imprint will be able to be pressed into the culture that you are rubbing shoulders with day by day.

[10:00] Christ calls us to be imitators of him. And we will be imitators of him as we allow his word to saturate our life and to change us. All too often we find ourselves to be just as cutthroat in business, or just as impatient in traffic, or just as annoyed at inconveniences, or just as critical of authority, or just as suspicious of people, just as distant from our neighbors, just as busy with our agenda, just as caught up in the rat race, just as preoccupied with our grades and performances, just as interested as being on the field and not on the bench, just as consumed with our stuff, just as driven by the consumer mentality, and not to be like Christ.

You are called to be imitators of him. is his image stamping itself in your life so that you can press it in gently and lovingly into the culture that God has allowed you to be part of.

And then finally, showing Christ was the strength of their witness. Showing Christ was the strength of their witness. We see that here in verses 8 to 10.

It says, For not only has the word sounded, the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere so that we not need to say anything.

For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

[11:52] Notice the extent of their witness. Not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but Paul says, Your faith has gone out everywhere. And what was the result?

The result was, they weren't even the ones sending the gospel. Notice in verse 9, They themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had.

Who are them? Who is it talking about? It's talking about the individuals who have been touched, who have been impacted by the testimony, by the faith, by the commitment and transformation of this church in Thessalonica.

They're the ones going out. They're the ones saying, Have you seen, have you heard about the church in Thessalonica? What a church! God is there! What an opportunity for us to show Christ. And we see Christ again showing up in these three ways. Their work of faith, we find in verse 8. Notice it says, in the middle of verse 8, Your faith in God has gone forth everywhere.

[13:08] Their work of believing in God is what sounded forth. The impact in the hearts and lives of those around them was so impressionable.

Coupled with the message of the gospel, went forth into the known world. We find in verse 9, their labor of love. We find it showing up in three different ways.

It says, They turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God. First, their love shows up in a kinship with Paul and his team.

They had a reception among Paul, Silas, and Timothy. There was affection for one another. There was a zeal and a love for that team. But secondly, and probably primarily, there was a love for God. They turned to God from idols. There was singular devotion, singular worship. And third, they served the living and true God, which certainly included loving and serving the community of saints that they were in.

[14:10] We find in Galatians 5, 13, Through love, serve one another. And then we find there's steadfastness in hope. Showing Christ through steadfastness in verse 10.

It says, And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come. Their hearts were expectant.

Their hearts were hopeful. And not just, I hope he's coming, but I know he's coming. And because he's coming, my life will change. The planter and initiator of the seed in my life is coming.

There will be a day of reckoning. And my hope, my expectation of that day is leading me to a whole new life. There was steadfastness of hope through tribulation, through difficulty.

So how will we be judged as a church? How will I be judged as a pastor? We will be judged as we line ourself with the things we find in this passage.

[15:15] Showing Christ through our work of faith, our labor of love, and our steadfastness of hope. May we be that kind of church. May we be that kind of church. Just a moment to control myself.

Turn in your Bibles to Hebrews chapter 12, verse 7. Let me read the text.

Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. I am going to preach on the first statement alone.

Hebrews chapter 13, verse 7. Thank you, Byron. Byron. I want you to know that I'm preaching to you as God's people and congregation, but I'm also preaching to myself.

First of all, because a preacher in the study and prayer of the word of God should never approach it with the idea that it's for someone else. First and foremost, it is for as a person.

[17:02] But secondly, I fully anticipate should the Lord Terry and He grant me life that I will sit in your place for the first time in some 30 plus years with my wife besides me on a consistent Sunday.

And I will be a listener and a prayer as Pastor Shear preaches the word here. So this text is mine as well as yours.

I want you to look at what it says there. It says that you are to remember your biblical leaders and in this context, you are to remember your pastor. It's appropriate to remind ourselves that this verse and its practical counsel comes at the very end of a breathtaking view of the glory and supremacy of Christ.

That's what Hebrews is all about. I kind of imagine that Luke chapter 24 played out in practical terms. The wonderful overview of Christ in the Old Testament in particular.

And so as we take this passage up, I want to encourage you to recognize that it is worth reminding ourselves that God's commands are never just thrown out there in a vacuum.

[18:29] They really into a larger context and it's important to understand that context. And the reason I say that is because really at the heart of it, every command that God gives to us stands on the merit of His character and His wisdom.

And so to obey in one sense is no more than to honor His name. I want you to have that to obey this passage is nothing other than just to say, God, I am me and I willingly and gladly submit to your supremacy and your wisdom and I trust you.

the closing verses of Hebrews actually give practical counsel to the children of God regarding a number of different things and in that frame I pick up on this one statement here in which we find God giving instruction to the children in relationship to the attitude that they are to have as leaders. in Hebrews chapter 13 but turn back just for a moment to Ephesians chapter 4 verse 11.

I made a statement earlier I said that this practical verse applies to the response that God's people are to have towards their one that God gives to the church.

[20:07] I hope that doesn't just fly over top of you. A pastor is a gift from God.

It's important to understand that. The man that God has called to serve among us in the days to come is not just the result of an exceptional search wisdom or no, no, no, no.

It's the work of God. I think it's important to recognize that. What's Ephesians chapter 5? It says that he gave the apostles the prophets the evangelists the shepherds and teachers and if you'll notice frames on the issue of God.

I remember my first sitting in a church in North Eastern Ohio and reading history and work.

I was one morning just reading along and I was struck by the thing to me.

[21:47] and he had to and he continued to be a lover of the bride.

And so I remember this morning his old well we find that the Hebrews chapter 13 verse 7 and he summarizes it this way he says hey you are to remember your leaders now remember just telling us to kind of acquire information information now we all went to school and we remember those days when we studied simply because we were kind of carrying that load and truthfully after we dumped it we were thinking what gone done never remembered again right that memory cards little devices you know things to help and our anticipation was once it was done is gone now this is not a word that communicates that idea at all it's a word that not just holding on to the information doing something for them

God God God remembered remembered God God remembered remembered remembered k you find that over and over again and so in relationship as it's carried back here to us we put it this way that that that the command favorably did you hear me remember I'm going to be sitting where you sit and I want you to remember that the things I say today will someday apply to me and they are expected of me!

So what does it mean to remember that to think favorably toward him and act favorably toward him? I want you to turn in your Bible this morning from the passage that sets the command in front of us I want you to turn in Thessalonians chapter 5 verse 12 and 13 Thessalonians chapter 5 verse 12 and 13 so what does it mean to to respect those who labor among you and are over and the Lord and admonish you and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work let me highlight those two words and I would encourage you to consider them in your that you don't forget them respect esteem them very highly can I tell you that by nature because of the fall we are all inclined to think much of ourselves and little of other people isn't that right?

[25:38] we don't need any practice getting that but here is the word of God giving us explicit instruction and saying when you think of Pastor Shearer in the future you are to think of him with respect because of the work that God has called him to do among you and because God has put him over you oh he hired him really?

I want you to listen to me no one has ever written my check I am here because of the Lord Jesus and Pastor Shearer is here because of the Lord Jesus and our obligation is first of all to him and you partner with us in that glorious work get it?

clear Pastor Shearer did not come here as a hireling he came here under divine appointment and he is to be respected in the office that God calls him to I want to remind you that as you think about what the text says here it says that you are to respect him because of the work that he does here and he is over you and he will acknowledge you I can tell you that I have confidence that as Pastor Shearer's ministry plays out there are going to be days where he tweaks my nose in case you didn't know it I am not a complete package and I haven't got there yet when I do I will be room temperature and until that happens I will need admonition and counsel and encouragement and correction and I trust that in fact I have been praying that the man God calls would be one who speaks the word of God clearly and helps me with progressive sanctification and I remind myself even as he was preaching this morning that the man will listen to the future for your spiritual progress and development now he's not the only voice because we have the word of God and we can rely upon that but I will listen

I want you to understand that it also says that God's people are to respect and esteem their pastor and look at the text there because it says that you're to respect them very highly in love because of their work how many of you understand that every personality has idiosyncrasies things that irritate us and you are to respect this man because God's called him here and you are to respect him with value and high honor because you love him listen to me love is a conscious and deliberate choice in most cases and I can tell you and being reminded that the Holy Spirit tells you love him love him and you're in the honeymoon it's great if you survive me for 30 years it'll be okay love him listen to me love doesn't keep a record of wrongs love hopes the best one of the reasons that I have endured in this congregation for 30 years is because you have loved me you owe it to that man second

Hebrews chapter 13 verse 17 you are to obey your pastor's biblical teaching Hebrews 13 17 obey your leaders and submit to them for they are keeping watch over your souls as those who will give an account let them do this with joy and not with groaning for that would be of no advantage to you I appreciate the fact that at one point in our search process I had Pastor Shearer talk Pastor Andrew talk Pastor Shearer ask a very pointed question of Pastor Saul he said what will it take to succeed at Maranatha that's an intelligent question Pastor Saul would prefer that I not quote him but I'm at liberty to do so here's what he said

[30 : 33] Maranatha has depended upon clarity in the pulpit and the preaching of the word of God Maranatha has depended upon biblical foundation for decisions and for good scriptural explanation for why we do things and so when I encourage you as God's people to remember Pastor Shearer I encourage you to follow before I go much further on this I just want to remind you that there is a clear connection between the pastor's office which here instructs you to obey him but also his relationship to the word of God in verse 7 it says remember your leaders those who spoke to you the word of God the word of God is profoundly clear

I almost find myself getting in a little bit of a flummox or a snit when I hear people give me this business of well there are many different interpretations hey I can't tell you God is pretty clear about what he has to say now there are parts of it that I struggle with understanding and some other people do too but at the end of the day God is not waffling about what he means to preach the word of God and for God's people clearly and plainly the root of a pastor's authority is not his training or his personality let me tell you something some pastors run around like dictators and when the dictator's gone everything descends into the because it's the personality that was holding things together but when the word of God is the thing that has supremacy it stands sure and settled and people are at peace because they know somebody else is making the rules and it's not the guy who's up front

I encourage you as God's people when you have a question ask me for a Bible verse help me understand why I'm doing something at the end of the day I remember you hear and it struck me because he is such a model of godliness he says from the word of God and so when I say God's people and I remind myself that someday I'll sit where you sit and I will remind myself I trust that by God's grace I willingly submit and follow the biblical leadership of the man that God will put up here in the front third turn in your Bible to 2nd

Thessalonians chapter 3 how would I end a sermon on caring for your pastor this is how 2nd Thessalonians chapter 3 verse 1 and 2 it says finally brothers pray for us that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored as happened among you that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men for not all have faith so why should you pray for your pastor and that's what the instruction is here and I want to charge you you who are part of the family of God and under the teaching of the word of God and submissive to the authority of God I instruct you on his behalf that you pray for your pastor why well one because the Holy Spirit has commanded it got that one as recorded in the scripture as part of the duty of God's people secondly because according to chapter 4 verse 7 of 2nd

Corinthians your pastor happens to be an earthen vessel you know what that means crack pot he is an incomplete package he will struggle with the same things you struggle with he is an example model but that does not mean that he is he is free from the challenges of life and flesh and when you pray for him you remind yourself that you have a part in his effectiveness that you may never see this side of glory I cannot tell you how many times in counseling or when I am in an unexpected situation and environment where I am empowered and strengthened by the word of God and the spirit of God to speak life and hope into other people or admonition and instruction into other people and where that came from is not from

[36:18] Tim Kroyer's limited P brain it is the work of the spirit of God responding to the prayers of God's people who pray diligently and faithfully and have no idea where I have been at that moment third your prayer is part of what makes his here's Paul by the way if you were to work your way asking for prayer over and over again here's Paul and there in verse three he says at the same time pray also for us that God may open to us a door of the word to declare the mystery of Christ on account of which I'm in prison he said hey

I need God's help now look at verse four that I may make it clear which is how I ought to speak how many of you understand what that's saying I had someone say to me not long ago pastor as I listen to you preach the word of God is clear how does that happen oh that's because of the education I had I'm a pretty smart person and I've got it all figured out blah blah blah who is so full of themselves to think that they can communicate the glory of God on their own and Paul understanding that he prays help me I want to make it clear don't be sitting out there being a critic of how incomplete and imperfect a pastor is pray him on to glory do you understand that in part you will have the pastor you pray for we're not hiring a man to be perfect we're calling to be our senior pastor elect and to grow into the task

I've been different things apart from here and one of the things that I've kept on coming back to as I debate those questions in the past is this who will pray for me and when I've not been able to answer that question clearly it's like I'm not going there I'm asking you no on the authority of the Lord Jesus I am commanding you in his stead that you will add to your prayer life pastor sheer from this day forth for the glory of Christ and for your good let's close in prayer this morning is a special morning for us it's a morning when we gather together as believers part of your family thankful for what you've done and in making this day come to being first of all because of the clarity with which scripture instructs us to think carefully about the role of a pastor we're thankful for providing pastor sheer here and for a congregation that has waited patiently for you to provide in your own way and so with humility we submit to the authority of the word of

God and recognize that that pastor sheer has given to us a picture of what his calling is and Hebrews chapter 13 tells us what our job is help us to be a people who hear and obey for the glory of Christ and we ask this in Jesus name amen