

Titus 1:5-16

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[0:00] Well, good morning. I think I'm live and broadcasting here. Good morning, Shoreline. I'm so glad to be with you again this morning as we continue our time in the book of Titus.

! As we entered into this strange season of coronavirus, the first Sundays during the shutdown, we talked about what hasn't changed. We talked about Christ. He is seated on this throne. He is ruling and reigning. And he has promised to never leave us or forsake us.

And we can rely on his promises as we saw in Easter because he proved good to his promise to rise again on the third day, which means that we can walk by faith.

We can walk with our God. That's what has not changed. That will be true today, tomorrow, and forever. And then last week we turned to the book of Titus, and that's because we want to start considering what is it that has changed in the world right now.

Well, right now, even though we've leveraged digital technologies to help stay connected, we are separated from the church. So this might be one of the best times for us to put our attention, to direct our gaze to the Bible's teaching about the church and what it is that we're missing in the midst of this coronavirus.

[1:25] And for that we turned to Titus, one of the pastoral epistles. Epistles are simply letters and the pastoral epistles, first and second Timothy and Titus are those letters written to pastors, specifically Timothy and Titus, about their role as pastors.

And some of the best teaching, some of the most concentrated teaching on the church in the whole of the Bible. And so last week, as we saw in Paul's introduction to the letter in verses one through four, we saw that the church is a people who trust the God of the Bible and have taken him up on his promise to redeem sinners by the blood of the risen Messiah.

And who have been transformed in their hearts by the powerful working of the gospel and become a family together, all adopted into Christ and who have now become servants of God and of his church and of his mission.

All of that was wrapped up into the introduction. And so now Paul is going to start unpacking some of those things and developing them as we walk into the rest of the book. And so we're going to finish, we're willing five through 16 of chapter one. So we're going to finish off chapter one today and then next week move into chapter two. So will you join me in prayer as we consider the text? Father in heaven, Lord, will you help us not only to learn things as we look at this text, but also Lord, learn to love you and to learn to love your church.

[3:04] And to know what that's supposed to look like as we walk into your, your scriptures today. Lord, even though we're separate, I pray that you'd conjure up and excite in our hearts a love for your people.

And Lord, I pray that you would help us to see what we are to do together as a body of believers. Lord, I pray that you would help us to see what we are to do together as we walk into our hearts a little bit. Lord, I pray that you would help us to see what we are to do together as we walk into our hearts a little bit.

Amen. I'm just going to check here real quick to make sure. All right, we are good to go. Okay, so we're going to walk into chapter one, verses five through 16.

We'll start, we'll break it down into kind of two sections here. The first section will be five through nine. So here we go. Speaking to Titus, Paul says, This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order and appoint elders in every town as I directed you.

If anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife and his children are believers, and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach.

[4:19] He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but hospitable. A lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined.

He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict him.

And so the first thing we see is that Paul, in one of his missionary journeys, established churches in the preaching of the gospel on the island of Crete, but had to leave in apparently short order before the churches were really set up.

And so he left Titus there to set up the churches. And he had him set things in order, not by instituting a policy manual or by having each congregation write to an apostle for every matter that they encountered.

He didn't set up a flowchart so that they could follow in every new set of circumstances. Paul had Titus set things in order by appointing mature leaders.

[5:27] Now, this makes sense, following from last week. If the church is a family, it ought to be governed by a set, not a set of bureaucratic procedures, but by a group of those family members.

And so three principles seem to emerge from this list. In verse five, he says that they must be local. They're in each town. He says multiple, right? It's established elders in every town, as I directed you.

And so there ought to be a plurality of leadership. And they must be qualified. That's the rest of verses five through nine, right? Now, he says here elder, and he's going to use some terms interchangeably.

The terms elder or pastor or overseer or bishop. Those are the terms that the New Testament uses, and often very interchangeably. Because the terms, sometimes like Acts chapter 20, Paul calls the same group of people to their face.

He calls them different names, beginning with elders. But also shifting over into the other language for these other terms that are used to interchangeably to describe the shepherds of the flock.

[6:38] Now, the different terms seem not necessarily specifically. They don't refer to various different people in different offices in the church.

What they're doing is they're emphasizing different aspects, various spheres of the pastoral role.

And so elder and pastor talk about the idea of shepherding the flock, the preacher, the caregiver to the people of God.

And then overseer, that bishop, those terms are used of the same people to talk about the leadership and the oversight of the church.

And so Paul says that these people, those people who are charged with shepherding and leading the flock, they must be, he says twice here, above reproach.

And he explains what he means by that. And the first thing he says is the husband of one wife.

Now, we know historically that polygamy was not really an issue in Crete and most of the Roman world.

[7:38] Instead, what Paul probably wants to communicate here is that elders, pastors ought to be the kinds of men who are clearly faithful husbands.

Not men with wandering eyes or wandering hands or worse. And if they're going to set an example for the flock, it had better be a good one. And what we're seeing here is an example.

In 1 Peter 5, Peter expressly says that the leadership that elders and pastors give to the church is in their teaching and in their example.

And so we need the qualifications for elders are primarily that example of godly living. The next thing he says is that his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination.

This is a difficult, it's a tricky, it's a tricky part of the verse. A lot of people have gone back and forth and what exactly is he meaning here?

[8:36] Most translations actually don't say believing, they say faithful. The word could be translated either way. But we know that Paul knows that children, that any person, I can't change my children's hearts.

I can't make them love Jesus. So probably it would be a better way to understand that rather than believing children, that is people who believe in Christ, but are faithful to the home.

And then he says, Children are believers not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. Those two terms in particular are very unusual in a list about the household.

They're normally applied to adults. Debauchery, if you look in 1 Peter chapter 4, Peter uses those as an umbrella term, as a catch-all for, and then he lists out, he says living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry.

He calls all of that a flood of debauchery. And again, the next term, insubordination. In 1 Timothy chapter 1, Paul uses that sort of in a list of, he says, For murderers, the sexually immoral men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine.

[10:01] And so the charges that Paul is talking about here, that he doesn't want for the children of pastors, he says, These are serious, like, crimes, right?

That Paul is talking about issues that are normally committed by adults. So does he, is he thinking here then that the adult children of elders must be free of these charges?

I don't think so, and here's why. He gave in the letter to Timothy, the first letter to Timothy, a similar set of instructions about elders. And here's how he put that.

He must manage his own household well, with all dignity, keeping his children submissive. For if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?

That's 1 Timothy chapter 3, verses 4 and 5. Now, that parallel passage is helpful because Paul's concern is for elders and their children. It seems to have in view those children who are residing in the home, part of the household.

[11:05] And so it seems that parents don't bear the same responsibility for adult children who are no longer part of the household. And so with those two kind of pieces of information in view, he's talking about grievous sins, and he's talking about children who are still in the household.

And so Paul's concerned that elders lead their homes well, but he isn't looking for perfection. Like a child who doesn't want to eat their dinner does not disqualify a pastor from shepherding the flock. But he wants to make sure that pastors' children aren't open to charges of extreme rebelliousness and delinquency. And so on the one hand, be gracious to your pastors.

Their children need not be perfect. In fact, perhaps the best gauge of how well fathers manage their own household, 1 Timothy chapter 3, right, might be to watch how he handles misbehavior, right? He might keep them submissive, but he might do it with anger and violence, which is part of that next section that it says he must not be arrogant or quick-tempered, arrogant, quick-tempered, a drunkard, or violent, or greedy for gain, but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined.

[12:30] Here is the picture of a life transformed by the Holy Spirit. Here is a man who is putting off the old and putting on the new.

Here is a man who is following after Christ and not after the world. And he's going to, in fact, spread that. If you look to verse 9, we read, He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

What we're seeing here is that from the very beginning of the book of Titus, verse 1, right, the knowledge of the truth, that is, the embrace of the gospel, leads to godliness, right?

The knowledge of the truth which accords with godliness. And so the people who lead the church ought to be the kind of people who clearly embrace the gospel in their words, their sound teaching, and that we ought to see in their lives that it has taken root in their hearts, that they are changed people, that it accords with godliness, that has brought forth fruit in the life of that person.

And so this list is an explanation of what does it look like to have a transformed life. And the character qualities of an elder, the people that we want, that the Lord expects to have leading his church, we're looking not necessarily, I was talking with my wife about leadership, and, you know, the world sometimes, and I'm sure you've seen in churches as well, I think Shoreline does a pretty

good job of that.

[14:24] But sometimes mistake the loudest person for the best leader. And there's a gentleness, perhaps a quietness, that might be involved in great leadership in the church.

I won't speak for myself, but I know of the other, the three other pastors here at Shoreline. They're men who I admire. I admire their character. They are the kinds of men who are hospitable.

They are the kinds of men who are not greedy or violent. They're not arrogant. They are quiet in a good way kind of men. They're men who love the Lord and love you.

And so I want to commend to you, the elders that are presently serving and leading our church, we are lucky to have men in whom the Lord has been working and is still working.

They are actively pursuing Christ. They're actively trying to serve you, and they're actively trying to put on Christ and the things of Christ in their lives.

[15:32] And that's a wonderful thing and a wonderful example to the flock. And Paul also says here that he wants elders to instruct in sound doctrine and rebuke those who contradict it.

And Paul says, the gospel is deadly serious. If we look to the book of Galatians, where there was probably a similar issue, and we're going to see here in the second half of this passage today, there's an issue about Judaizers, as Paul calls them.

Paul did not mince words when he saw a similar issue in the book, the city of Galatians, of the Galatian Christians.

If you look to the book of Galatians, he introduces that book by saying, I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel. Not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want us to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we are an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.

[16:48] Friends, when someone turns to a different gospel, a corrupted gospel, even not just like a completely false one, but one that has been twisted, they don't just have a difference of opinion.

They have left, Paul says, Christ himself. I'm surprised that you have abandoned him by believing a different gospel, is what Paul says to the Galatian Christians. Friends, right doctrine is a matter of life and death.

Your soul hinges on whom you are trusting and in the way you are trusting. If you're trusting in Christ and your works to save you, you have not believed the true gospel of Jesus Christ.

The true gospel of Jesus Christ is this. There's nothing we can do. We have offended by our sins so great a God. There's nothing I can do to make up for that.

Only the blood of Jesus Christ, which he freely shed for me, can atone for my sins. And so I am separated from God and completely cut off from him, except to be an object of wrath, until a rightly deserving it, until I receive simply by his grace, as an act of my own faith, just receiving, crying out for his mercy.

[18:03] And the Lord lovingly and graciously and freely bestows on me grace, not by my works, but by his work on the cross and through his empty tomb.

And then I am brought into his kingdom. And then I am made his child. And then I have a future and a home secured for me forever. And I am numbered among his saints, the church, the church that Paul right here in the book of Titus is so, so zealous, right?

To make the doctrine right. And he cares about doctrine, not because he wants to control them, not because he wants to exert his influence over them, not because he's just a dry academic kind of guy, but he loves people.

And so he wants to steer them away from falsehood and into truth. And he says that he wants to have instruction in good doctrine, verse nine, sound doctrine, and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

And that's because a farmer can't plant a vineyard on an uneven field full of trees and rocks and brambles. First, he clears the field. Then he plants the vineyard.

[19:19] Otherwise he'll have no harvest, right? A chef doesn't start cooking a meal with dirty pans, right? It doesn't matter how good the

ingredients and the recipe are. First, she cleans the cookware and the utensils.

Otherwise the meal is ruined before it begins. And that's how we're transitioning, right? Into verses 10 through 16. Paul says, For there are many.

This is all sort of under that subset of rebuking those who contradict sound doctrine. For there are many who are insubordinate, empty talkers, and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision party.

They must be silenced. Since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach. One of the Cretans, a prophet of their own, said, and that prophet of their own is actually a poet whose works we have.

It said, Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons. This testimony is true, Paul says.

[20:19] Therefore, rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, not devoting themselves to Jewish myths, and the commands of people who turn away from the truth. To the pure, all things are pure.

But to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure. But both their minds and their consciences are defiled. They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.

What we see here, and probably what's going on, is that there are some people who are saying, yes, believe in Christ, the Messiah. But also, and he calls them the circumcision party.

What's probably going on is they're saying, in order to be saved, you must trust in Christ, and you must do these other things. And likely what they're talking about are some of the Jewish observances of the time.

If we add, this is back to the Galatians, right? If we add to the gospel, we have shown that we are actually proud people. If we think that we can save ourselves, that we contribute to our own salvation, we think either much too highly of ourselves, or much too lowly of God.

[21:31] That if the blood of Christ does not wash away our sins, that if something that we add to it, that either means I think I'm something special, or it means that we think that we've not offended a very holy God, or that Christ's blood really wasn't that effective, that great, that we need to add on to it something for our salvation.

No, no, friends. That's an assault on God's character. That is incredible pride. And so Paul says that elders need to have, need to correct anything like that.

And so sound doctrine is so important to the people of God. Which means expect robust preaching and teaching from your pastors.

Make sure that we are teaching the truth. That means hold us accountable, please, right?

Encourage us to keep at it, at the task of unfolding the scriptures for God's people.

Encourage the whole congregation to grow in the knowledge of the word. Be a part of that yourself, because we need more qualified pastors in the flock of Christ, in our church, and everywhere that the Lord will take you.

[22:43] Expect to see correction where it's needed, including humble your own heart in case you need it, right, at some point. And the way that the shepherd should go about that, Paul's already sort of outlined in the character that he expects in elders.

And he began with that before he ever got the doctrine. And so, friends, will you please pray for your current elders? Myself, for Jordan, and Matt, and Mike, that we would be growing in all of these attributes that Paul has outlined here.

And hold us accountable. Show us where we are stumbling in any of these things. And please, not just only point it out, but pray and encourage us and help us to put off sin and to grow in holiness where you see that we need to.

And then, also, as we walk next week into Chapter 2, we're going to see that the whole congregation is being built up into exactly these same things.

It is not as if this list of character, of godly life, is for the super Christians or for the leaders only. It's for the whole people of God.

[23:54] And so, pray for yourself. Pray for your whole congregation. And pray also for Shoreline's future leaders that we would all be growing in

this.

And so, in this time of separation from the church, we've picked Titus so that we can set our eyes on the church.

Christ has set his eyes on the church, and he has set his heart on her. He has sacrificed himself on his cross for her. And one of the questions we're going to be asking throughout this book of Titus is, while we're separated from the church, what does this passage tell us about the nature of the church?

It's sort of an added question we're asking throughout this time. First, the first thing that we see here is that the mission of the church is about life transformation, right?

What kind of entity, what kind of organization is the church if these are the leadership qualifications, right? It's not about efficiency, like a business.

[25:03] That's not what these qualifications are about. And it's not about reach, like entertainment. It's not about any of those things.

It's about, verse 1, being servants of God who have been transformed by the knowledge of the gospel. And so, Paul puts the leadership focus on formed Christian character.

Why? Because, like we just said about chapter 2, the whole church is being transformed. And that same life transformation is being transmitted, so to speak, being taught, being, they're leading in life transformation for the whole congregation.

The character qualities that we see in verses 6 through 9 aren't just for the super Christians.

They're for everyone. They're for every demographic. Older men, younger men. Older women, younger women.

Slaves, free, everything. Everyone who is a member of the church ought to be growing in this. And so, everything he's doing here is to instruct Titus to be spurring the people of God towards the same mature Christian character that he expects in the leaders.

[26:13] And so, the power of the gospel to transform lives isn't just reserved for the elite few. The power of the gospel to reshape and grow your heart is for every member of the church.

That's what the church is about. And so, a church isn't just an organization that schedules certain Sunday activities. It's a gathering of people who have been transformed in a certain way.

And so, if the knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness, the first one, and the church, which is built on that truth, and proclaims that truth, must be led by those in whom it has taken root. And so, pray. Pray for the current leaders. Pray for the current leaders. Also, consider, in the future, two of our elders are coming up on term limits.

Both Mike and Jordan, the summer of 2021 will be rotating off by our constitution. They can serve up to six years straight before they have to take a reprieve, which is a help and a kindness to their families, especially.

[27:17] But that means that we will very likely be asking the congregation to appoint new elders, at least one or possibly more in the next in the coming year. Be prayerful about who are the kinds of people who are exhibiting, again not the loudest people, not the people who are necessarily you know large and in charge, but who are the people who are transformed by the gospel and are helping others do the same. That's the heart of an elder, of a pastor, of a presbyter in the life of a church. What else does this say about the church? What else do we learn about the doctrine of the church in this passage? If these are the leadership qualifications, it means that we must be with the people, right? We can't just look at a resume and know this. One of the things I saw online this week, someone was saying what my office looks like on

Zoom and had a nice tight window probably like you're seeing here with some books on the shelf in the back, everything looks put together. And then the next shot was what my office really looks like and he sort of shifted the camera and the whole office is a mess of piles and clothes on the floor and wires going everywhere. It's very easy, you know, from a distance not to know someone and to think that everything is put together. And we can hide quite a bit. The way you know a person, the way you know an elder, know if they're qualified for the work of the ministry, we can't do it separated from one of that because you learn someone, you learn to know someone by serving alongside

them, by watching them get interrupted, by watching all the things that not and so this means that the church must know the church, right? So life lived together. That's why we're all in community groups. That's why we encourage and I'm so grateful that our church, when we're meeting together, mills about and talks to each other a lot, right? People are there for an hour after church still fellowshiping together, still in community and communion with one another. That's not normal for most churches. I'm so glad that it is for our congregation. We must know each other and that's why we won't be opening an online campus. So, you know, for Shoreline after COVID is over because the that whole that dichotomy between what's behind you on the Zoom call and then what's in the rest of the office is in my office is a little disheveled beyond the frame that you can see as well. You need to be able to see someone's life and so online church. It's a it's a wonderful accommodation in this time and I'm so glad that we get to do it but it's not church long term and so I would encourage you wherever the Lord takes you in your life, don't get used to this being able to sit on your your couch and and watch Sunday service happen at you. Go and participate because that's where the life of the church is happening. What else do we learn about the nature of the church in this passage? We learn, he says verse 9, basically that the church is the guardian of truth, right? False teachers must be silenced, true elders must be trustworthy in teaching, in instructing in sound doctrine and contradicting those who contradict it. And again, this isn't a dry stuffy academia. This matters because God is real and he is alive and we must come to him and we must say of him what he has commanded. Anything else is a lie about God. How serious is that?

Right? Anything else misleads those who would come to him to find redemption. And so the church's witness of the the testimony of the gospel is so important. It's an act of love, right? And so guarding our doctrine is a ministry of love. Love to God, not to lie about him, and love to the world to show them where actually to find life and treasure and how they might get it, right? And it's not theoretical. I know some of you, and I won't share your stories now, but who come from who have come from church backgrounds where wrong teaching, whether that's on the nature of the gospel or on other issues in the Christian practice, has resulted in your heart in various ways. And again, I won't share your stories now, but some of them, you know, some of those stories come with tears. Good doctrine is so important. It's not, you know, this theoretical thing. It is practical and lived out in the life of the church. And so we know from the scriptures that the whole congregation bears that responsibility, right? They're the ones who are holding elders accountable to teach the sound instruction, right? And so certainly pastors, we see in the pastoral epistles have a particular responsibility to guard the good deposit. But also, we see that the rest of the scriptures, that it's the congregation as a whole that holds a responsibility, excuse me, for doctrinal purity. And so you bear responsibility for a selecting good, godly, doctrinally sound leaders. And you bear responsibility to watch their teaching, which is why Shoreline's membership affirmation. We say part of the membership set affirmation says, I am a steward of Shoreline's gospel witness. That's you. You are, if you're a member of Shoreline, you have that stewardship. If any leader begins to teach a false gospel, I will act. I will examine the scriptures.

I am consult that leader in the spirit of reconciliation found in Matthew chapter 18. And a further intervention is necessary. I will bring it to the elders of friends. This is your stewardship and your responsibility. I want to close today by looking at one more thing. And I want to ask, I think it's going to be a softball question.

One, with whom does Paul feel a greater connection? Titus or the false teachers, the circumcision party as he calls them?

[34:08] Who is it that he has a greater affection for, a greater connection? Obviously it's Titus. But that would have been anything but obvious in the first century.

Paul, in his own words in Philippians chapter 3, said that he was circumcised on the eighth day of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews, as to the law, a Pharisee, as to zeal, a persecutor of the church, as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

How would that person view the circumcision party, those who were eager to maintain and uphold the traditions and practices of the Mosaic Covenant and the Jewish people of the Second Temple period?

It's not just that he would approve of them. It's not that he would just applaud them or even join in with them. He would find in them, his people, these are my people. And how would that person view Titus?

Well, Titus is a Greek name, so he's an outsider, a Gentile. But not only that, Titus is a blasphemous name. It's connected with the Titans, the parents of the gods of the Greek pantheon. [35:18] How would Paul have viewed Titus? As a dog. But what has happened? He called those who would take him back to his roots, detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.

And this Hebrew of Hebrews calls a Gentile dog, verse four, my true child in a common faith. Now, there's a wrong way to read this. Paul did not hate the Jews.

Quite, quite to the contrary. If you look to Romans chapter nine, he says, I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart over the plight of the Jewish people. For I could wish that I myself, he says, were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen, according to the flesh.

That is, Paul so longs for the Jewish people to be saved that he would sacrifice his own soul for them. He says, they are Israelites and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship and the promises to them belong the patriarchs and from their race, according to the flesh is the Christ who is God over all blessed forever. Amen.

And so Paul longs and loves long for and loves his people of his ethnic family. So there's no room at all in the Christian faith for anti-Semitism.

[36:43] But what he wants for them is Christ to take hold of all that is offered to them and embrace their long waited Messiah and find salvation. And to teach a different sacrifice for sins and especially to teach it in the church right to him is he's pleasing.

And so Paul finds strife and conflict with those who by earthly reckoning, he has everything in common. And he finds in a Gentile dog whom the who the world and the system and the culture in which he is set.

So someone that he should have nothing in common. He finds in a Gentile dog, a beloved child. What do we learn here about the nature of the church? Paul finds in the people that his cultural intuitions say are his people that he doesn't actually have the most important thing in common with them.

But he finds in the person who his cultural assumptions dictate that he disdain a pure family love.

[38:01] Friends, the church, what it is. Because we are all hidden in Christ, the church is our truest family, our highest affiliation.

It is our home. Friends, I hope that you find in Christ your salvation and in his church, his people. I hope that you find there your home. And so in this moment where we are separated from our church family, I'm so grateful for the technology that allowed us to continue doing what we're doing right now.

That allows us to continue meeting as community groups and friends. If you're not a part of a community group, please, please, for your own sake. For the health of your soul so that you might find your truest family or chief affiliation, your home among the people of God.

That you might be accepted and loved and built up by the people of God. Will you please get connected as much as you're able to the people of God. So, friends, let's pray and thank the Lord for the good gift of the church.

[39:12] Lord, I'm so grateful that you have not left us alone in this world, but first that you are with us.

And that you've also knit us to each other. Lord, it is such a great privilege to belong to your church. A family that transcends every human affiliation.

And goes deeper. Because we're grounded and rooted in you. Father, I pray for the elders at Shoreline who are currently serving.

Will you please keep us faithful pastors? Will you keep us chasing after holiness like Paul has instructed us? Will you keep us teaching sound doctrine?

Will you keep us praying for the Lord as a ministry of love? So that we aren't lying to you. We aren't misleading those who would hear the gospel and come to Christ.

[40:16] And Father, for anyone who's listening in. I can't see faces today. I have to stare at my own face. For anyone who does not know you.

Who has not trusted in Christ. I pray, Lord, that this would be the day. even now, that they would reach out and get questions answered. And Father, that you would bring someone to a saving

knowledge of Jesus Christ, so that all these blessings might be true of them as well.
We pray this all in the name of Jesus Christ, our King. Amen.