

Ephesians 6:18

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[0 : 0 0] Well, we've come to the end of Ephesians. Ephesians chapter 6, page 1178. I just want to read from verse 17 onwards, but we're going to be focusing on the closing verses of that section. Ephesians chapter 6 and verse 17. And we've looked at 17 before, and take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. And here's the section I'd like us to focus on in closing. Praying at all times in the Spirit with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly as I ought to speak, so that you also may know how I am and what I am doing. Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will tell you everything. I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are and that he may encourage your hearts. Peace be to the brothers and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love incorruptible.

As I said, we are now coming to the end of our series in Ephesians. I hope that it has been useful to you. I hope it's stimulated your mind to ask further questions. I hope that in some way that you have been able to grasp the flow of the letter and some of the great themes that the apostles have raised in the letter. I'm sure some of the sections have been more meaningful to you than others.

That's always the way things go, but we've been able to grasp, we've been able to grapple some of the more difficult themes in the book. That's always what happens as you force yourself to work your way through any one book, either in the Old or the New Testament. And it shouldn't surprise us to know that as Paul rounds off his letter. And it's always very important to leave your readers with something. What's he going to leave his readers with? Well, there's two things, two issues which he leaves in their minds with which he brings his letter to a conclusion. And that is the importance of prayer. And we're going to see that he says lots and lots of things about prayer in these closing verses and the importance of the church. Two things. Now, that's not surprising because that's exactly the way that he opened the letter. You remember way back at chapter one, he opens with a prayer, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus. So he opens in prayer. And there's one of the longest prayers recorded in the Bible in these opening words. But then he opens also with the, in fact, this is something that runs all the way through the letter, the importance of the church in the world and as the body of Christ, the witness, the place of worship, the place of learning, and the place of fellowship.

And once again, he wants to round the whole thing off and he wants to leave them with the importance of these two things. Neither is it surprising that he should combine prayer with the armor of God.

We cannot possibly hope to take our stand, as he says, in that spiritual warfare, which he's been talking about without prayer, without being connected to God in prayer. And that's what prayer is, as a connection to the Lord, the Lord. But I want us to notice what, first of all, what he says about prayer, the many, many things he says about prayer. First of all, without wasting any time, in verse 18, he says that prayer is spiritual. Prayer is spiritual. What he says is this, praying at all times in the Spirit. That's the first thing he says, praying at all times in the Spirit.

[4 : 28] Now, that's a very, very important qualification to prayer because it creates a separation between what we might call saying our prayers and a person who is connected to the Lord Jesus. Remember, of course, how we saw in chapter 2 how Paul emphasizes the reality that the Christian is connected, he's united, he's joined to the Lord Jesus Christ. And being joined to Jesus, he's joined to God. And God, for his part, has sent the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, into us to dwell within us and to perform, to carry out a great work. And what that means is that there's a mysterious connection between a Christian and God. It's an inward connection. It's a profound one. It's one that we can't put words to. We can't put a finger on it. And yet it's a reality. We are led by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit dwells within us. He fills our hearts. He fills our minds. And he determines our thoughts. He determines our actions. He leads us and guides us. And he takes the Bible as God's word. And he brings it home to us. And he shows. It's a very dangerous thing to have the Holy Spirit dwelling within you, by the way. It's a very dangerous thing. It doesn't always lead to happiness.

Not when we're going wrong in our Christian lives. Not when we're allowing things to take place in our Christian lives that ought not to be there. Because the Holy Spirit makes us feel uncomfortable about these things. And he creates within us a sense of unease and discomfort. Don't be surprised that there are times in our Christian lives when we don't feel at ease and comfortable. And sometimes, I'm not saying this is all the time, but sometimes this is because the Holy Spirit is just pressing us and prodding us about things that should not be there. The Holy Spirit is there for good. He's there every day. He's present within us. And he makes the connection between God's people and himself. And it is within the Holy Spirit that we are to pray. Now, what is prayer? Prayer, says the catechism, is an offering up of our desires to God for things acceptable to his will. But I want to suggest to you tonight, I'm certainly not going to deny that definition, but I want to suggest to you tonight that prayer is much more than that. It is much more personal than simply offering up our desires to God.

Sometimes you hear people explaining prayer by way of text messages. Sometimes you hear people talking to kids about, you know, prayer is like having a mobile phone where you can reach home at any time.

If you've got a mobile phone with you, you can reach home at any time. That's the great thing about mobile phones, isn't it? You can reach your children at any time until your children can phone you at any time, or you can phone your friends at any time. That's a great thing. It's a great blessing.

But, and people say, well, that's what prayer is. And they're trying to emphasize, of course, that that we can pray at any time to God. We can come to our heavenly father at any time. And that's true.

[7 : 37] I don't want to take away from that in any way. But I want to say that prayer is far, far more personal than a mobile phone. Because you see, when you're using your mobile, you're not actually face to face. Prayer is face to face with God. And I want you to remember that. Please don't let's get into the way of thinking that somehow prayer is just a message. It's an offering up. It's a sending.

It's not, and although we're sending, we're coming face to face with God. I think I mentioned before the way in which Moses knew God face to face. We are all Moseses. If you're a Christian, you're a Moses.

You know God face to face. Nothing less will satisfy God. And nothing less should satisfy you and me today. What a privilege. Do you know, do I know, are we day by day aware of the enormity of the privilege that we have as we pray to the Lord? We're coming face to face with the Lord. Now, let me just stop and illustrate this, because I hear so many people talking about difficulty. I feel it myself. I can identify with anyone. Please, if you tell me tonight that you find it difficult to pray, believe me, I understand. I've gone through it myself. I go through it regularly. We all do.

And that's part of the warfare which we've been just talking about, when the devil discourages us and tries to get us to pray less and less by persuading us that we're not getting through to the Lord. He says to you, he says to you, who do you think you are that God is going to listen to?

You've been lazy. You haven't paid for ages. You haven't read your Bible for ages. Look at the stuff that you've been doing, the things that you've been allowing into your minds and spoiling your Christian life and your relationship to God. Who do you think you are that God's going to accept you?

[9 : 29] He's got better things to think about. He's got better people to listen to than you. And in any way that Satan can discourage us, he will do it. And if he can get you to pray less and less, then he is winning. That's part of the spiritual warfare. And what we have to remember is that God's love for us does not change. God's love for us, of course, is one that reaches in, like I said before, and deals with our wrongdoing and our sinfulness. It does. And that's where it's sometimes very uncomfortable. When we really want to do God's will, it's sometimes quite uncomfortable to have to face ourselves the way we really are. But don't ever listen to that voice within you that tells you that God is not listening to you face to face with God. For example, let's take an example of you being in the house and there are people coming to see. Now, there are different kinds of visitors, aren't there, to houses? There's the official visitor and the doorbell goes and you have a wee look out the window and you see that it's someone you don't know and he's got a folder beside him and you know he's trying to sell you something or he's there for some official business. Now, unless you're a very, very gracious, patient, kind person, that person is not going to be very welcome in your house. And your first thought is, how am I going to get rid of this person as quickly as possible?

But on the other end of the scale, there's the person that you like, the person that you feel close to. And when he drops in or when she drops in, your heart lifts. A friend or a sister or a brother or somebody you've known all your life and they're coming here, they're coming to have a cup of tea or whatever. And you're never short of things to say to them, are you? When they come in, you make them tea, you sit down, you don't want them to go. Because you connect with them, that person.

And you're glad that that person has come. And you want that person to stay. Why is it so different with the Lord? Why do we not think that way when we set our hearts to pray?

That's exactly the situation that you're in. It's like a visitor has come. Someone who you love and someone who you want to be with and you want to talk to.

You have that friend who comes that you want to come and you don't want that friend to go away. You're never short of things to say. You're always, there's no awkward silences. There's always, well, maybe there are, but it doesn't matter. Because you want them to be there. And it's the same with the Lord. Why do we not think that way when it comes to praying? It would make such a difference, wouldn't it? If we viewed prayer in that way. And it's our lack of faith.

[12 : 25] Faith that spoils our prayer, isn't it? It's our lack of perception about what we are doing. Sometimes it's best to just take a few seconds and to remember what, it's like being in the car, for example. You ever given somebody to a lift from Inverness to Glasgow in the car and somebody in the front seat and you're driving down the A9 and you're talking to the person.

Why don't we do the same thing when we're driving by ourselves? Why don't we remember that the Lord is right next to us? The unseen, what is it that saying said? The unseen guest?

The unseen presence? We say we believe it and yet we don't practice it, do we? The psalmist said, I have set the Lord at all times before me.

What did he mean by that? He meant that he practiced the presence of God. And it's when you practice the presence of God that you pray in the Spirit.

What you do is you make use of the presence of the Holy Spirit. You engage with the presence. See, it's one thing to say, I believe that the Holy Spirit dwells within me.

[13 : 36] And it means nothing to you. It makes no difference to the way you live. But when you engage with the Holy Spirit and you practice the presence, then you begin to pray in the Spirit.

In actual fact, you do everything in the Spirit. And that's the reality of the connection that there is between us and the Lord. It's a connection that God wants us to make use of more and more and more.

So if there's one challenge I want to set before all of us again this evening, is to practice the presence of God. In our daily, mundane, ordinary, routine, sometimes boring, sometimes ordinary tasks of mothering and fathering and cleaning and washing and accounting and policing and whatever our jobs are, it doesn't matter.

We're to do all to the glory of God. And the only way we can do that is by being in the Spirit. I want to ask you tonight, is there that connection in you tonight?

Do you know Jesus? Do you know God in that unique way, which can only be through Jesus Christ, coming to faith in Him? It's not something that you can earn by yourselves, it's not something that you can work your way into.

[14 : 59] It's not something you can have by doing your best. No matter what your best is, you can't achieve this. It's a relationship that God creates within you.

As we come and we ask Him to create within me, when we're talking about prayer tonight, that's the first real prayer that you'll ever pray. When you say to God, Lord, create within me a clean heart.

Have you ever prayed that prayer? Or putting it in another way, Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner. That's the story, of course, that Jesus used.

Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner. Have you come to God in that way? Or are you still just saying your prayers? Maybe you'll say to me tonight, well, I pray every night. I pray for safety.

I pray that God will keep me safe. I pray that God will make me a good person. I pray that God will keep me on the right track.

[16 : 02] Well, that's all very commendable. But I dare you tonight to pray a different prayer. That the Lord will save you and wash your sin away.

Do you know what? If you come to Him tonight and you ask Him for that, He will do it. And that's the moment He will create within you that bond that we've been talking about.

It's a bond that I can't describe to you. A relationship I can't describe to you in which a person comes to faith in Jesus Christ. And God promises that He dwells within us and brings us into a relationship which nothing can change, one which will go on past death, into eternity, into heaven itself.

So then we are to pray in the Spirit. That's the first thing He says then in verse 18. We are to pray at all times in the Spirit with all prayer and supplication.

At all times with all prayer and supplication. What does that mean? Well, He's talking about the various times and occasions when we can pray to God.

[17 : 19] There is no time when a Christian cannot pray to God. And there are all different circumstances in which we can come to God who is present everywhere and on all different occasions.

For example, there are the routine times. And I was thinking about this this morning or recently. You know, you very often hear people saying, well, you can come to God at any time.

And that's true. You can pray at any time. The problem is that once you begin to think just in that way, you lose a sense of discipline in your routine.

And I believe, personally, that we need a sense of discipline. As well as being able to come to the Lord at any time, we need to set aside, for our own benefit, set aside a defined time.

It doesn't matter when it is. It could be morning. It could be lunchtime. It could be at night time. It could be different times during the day. You need to set aside a time when, as the Lord says, you shut the door behind you so that it's just you and the Lord.

[18 : 29] No distractions. See, the problem with the idea that you can pray at any time is that you end up not praying at all because you're so distracted by the phone or by something you forgot to do or by something you see in the kitchen that needs to be put right or something you see in the desk.

You know, I have to get out of my study until I come. People think about the minister. Your idea about the minister in his study is that he's praying in his study.

The study is the last place that I would choose to pray in. Why? Because everything I look at is a reminder of what I haven't done.

My desk is full of letters I haven't responded to. If I look at the computer, there's emails on it I haven't responded to. So if I pray in the office, that's it.

It lasts about 10 seconds and I have to get out. And so do you. Because of our own sense, our own need of discipline. We need to get into a place where we're alone with the Lord.

[19 : 36] That's exactly what the Lord meant. Jesus knew the kind of problems that we would face. And he says, when you pray, he says, go into your closet, go into your room and shut the door so nobody else sees you.

So you can't see anything else or anyone else. And pray to your fathers in secret and your fathers in secret will reward you openly. We need that sense of discipline in which you're exclusively speaking to God.

And then he says, on all occasions, with all kinds of prayers. You know, there's all kinds of different prayers, aren't there? There's an emergency prayer that all of a sudden you find yourself in a real crisis.

What's the first thing you do when you find yourself in a crisis? Is it not true that very often we have to confess that when a crisis comes, the last thing we do is prayer? First thing we do is panic.

Second thing we do is think, what am I going to do? And after a long process of reasoning and trying and attempting and trying to respond to this, the last thing that we do is prayer. That's a shame, isn't it?

[20 : 46] That's a downright shame on ourselves. We should be ashamed of ourselves. I should. When as the first response, almost the instinctive response, when a crisis comes to run to the Lord, let's remind ourselves of that as well.

And then there's collective prayer as well. There's what we call a prayer meeting, and that can take all kinds of different forms. It could be an informal gathering of Christians where they're praying together about one particular subject, like the church was when Peter was in prison, when the people had gathered to pray for him.

They had gathered with one, it appears, specific purpose. That can happen. Or it could be the regular time of prayer when collectively we pray together. Now there's a place in the Bible for a collective meeting of God's people to pray, and that's why we try to do that regularly on a Wednesday or a Thursday in Gaelic, again on a Saturday, monthly meeting tomorrow.

That's not for everybody to go to at all times. We have all kinds of different routines and duties in our lives. Some of us have more time to be able to go to these than others.

But surely, surely, we can afford time for one of them. Am I not right? Why? Because I want to keep up some tradition?

[22 : 13] No. It's nothing to do with tradition. It's about the fact that collective prayer is important. The Bible tells us it's important when God's people gather to pray.

There are people in the world who depend upon us praying for them. I try on a Wednesday to very often to at least give a flavor of some of the requests that come from all different parts of the world.

People who are persecuted. Christians who are in prison. Who are facing all kinds of horrendous things for the gospel. The church where it's in its infancy. Here, I got this this afternoon just as I was preparing this.

I was putting final touches to this this afternoon looking over this and I looked at my email and here we have an email from Boon Chu. You know who Boon Chu is. I've tried to share his work with you on several occasions.

He's a church planter in Thailand. He works in north of Chiang Mai in Thailand. He works in the Karen villages and he's seen amazing responses to the gospel amongst people who were animists and spiritists and who worshipped in all kinds of different ways and many of these people have come to faith in the gospel.

[23 : 38] But that's when it looks like the troubles only begin. When churches form and they're in their infancy and then they start facing the difficulties and the questions and the challenges which churches have to face.

Here he says, I have been visiting, he says, for more than 13 churches. He looks after 13 churches. We think it's a huge burden to have one.

Well, it is. But imagine having 13 churches to look after. And he says, because there are too many things needed to be discussed with me. Some churches discuss with me about church plantings.

You see, it's not good enough for these infant churches to just be themselves. They want to plant more churches because they're so full of the joy of the Lord.

They want other people to, is that what we're like? Anyway, some churches discuss with me about how to fix problems among them. Obviously, they're discovering that it's not easy to maintain relationships within the church.

[24 : 47] It never is, is it, in any culture. And then he says, some want to discuss with me the problem between the pastor and the members. Some of them have problems between the believers and some missionaries and many church leaders get involved too much with politics so Christian people do not like it.

So many churches ask me to set about getting this together. If any of you have a suggestion, please let me know about this. Here's a man in Thailand, in the back of beyond in Thailand, looking after hundreds of Christian people and he's asking us in the West to pray for them and to give them suggestions and to give them some kind of counsel.

It's an impossible task. Now, how is this going to take place? If we do not collectively, determinedly focus upon praying for these individuals, who's going to pray for them?

And if we say, well, I'm too busy to go to the prayer meeting, who else is going to go? If we were all too busy, then who's going to go? Who's going to pray for these people? And if you say, oh, I'll pray for you, brother, you better mean it because it's a lie.

If you say something, if you promise something and you don't end up doing it. I could, listen, I could show you dozens of letters like this, emails, communications, magazines, people who are pleading with Christians to pray for them.

[26 : 19] And we can't respond to all of them. The question is, do we respond to some? God doesn't expect of us what we can't do. He does expect of us what we can do.

And I'm reminding us of the importance of collective prayer, focused prayer, asking the Lord to give assistance to men and women like Boontu, who are desperately working for the Lord in conditions that you and I, by the way, would not be prepared to go through.

We can't even pray for these people because of some hang-ups we have. This is not an option.

God is commanding us today to fulfill our responsibility and to pray for one another. We are all one in Christ Jesus. And so because someone is 6,000 miles away, and because we've never met them before, never seen them before, doesn't mean that there's no connection between us and them.

So there's all kinds of occasions. There's the emergency occasions. There's the routine occasions. There's the times when we cannot, when we have to grasp any opportunity where your day is full of busyness to the extent where if you're going to just grab a few minutes with the Lord, then that's all you can.

[28 : 00] Well, there are times like that. But try to make sure that when the thing settles, when things settle, that you retake those precious times when you can give that quality time to the Lord.

On all occasions, he says, with all kinds of prayer and supplication. Supplication simply means asking, asking, asking, asking. That's what God wants of us.

He wants us to ask. And we are to be praying at all times in the Spirit with all supplication.

So that's that then. He's talking about the importance of prayer. I just leave these with you. To that end, he says, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.

Making supplication for all the saints. Keep alert. Now, again, this is an additional exhortation, we could call it, where Paul is describing our condition, our sense of discipline, alertness, awokeness, if you like, in our Christian lives.

[29 : 15] And this is a really important thing, particularly in the light of, for someone who perhaps has been a Christian for some time, as the years go past, the very routine of living the Christian life can mean sometimes that we lose sight of what we're doing and how we're living as a Christian.

And that's why Paul is saying, stay alert, stay awake, make sure that you stay awake. Now, there are times in our lives, in the normal course of events, where you have to stay awake.

Even for your own safety, you have to stay awake. When you're driving, for example, excuse me once again, using the example of driving down the A9, but sometimes you do it so often, or someone who's driving on a motorway so often, that he loses sense of where he is.

And the real danger is that tiredness sets in, and the same things are passing all the time, the same bridges, there's a flow of traffic on the other side of the road, and you get kind of hypnotized after a while.

And the great danger is that you're going to fall asleep at the wheel, and of course then you run the risk of crashing your car and dying. You would never do that if you just passed your test, would you?

[30 : 36] I remember when I passed my driving test, some of the younger ones, I know, are at that stage where they're either sitting their test or passing their test. I remember when I was 17, within minutes I was applying for my provisional driving license and I was demanding that my dad take me out.

Of course, in those days insurance wasn't as horrendous as it is now, so your dad took you out and started you driving on the road and went through all the pain of your mistakes and the times you mounted the curb and nearly ruined his good car and all the rest of it.

But it was a time of massive excitement for me. I so wanted to pass my test. I know that some of you are the same. So wanted to pass your test.

And I still remember, it was one of the red letter days of my life when the examiner said to me, you've passed. I still remember his face. And when I was able to take my dad's car out by myself without a co-driver, I still remember the way it felt, the sheer thrill.

I didn't want to drive at 70 miles an hour, it's just it was the sheer responsibility of being able to take a car out by myself, the excitement of this stage in my life.

[31 : 57] It was hugely thrilling. there was no way I was going to fall asleep. Not a chance. That's the last thing that would have happened.

The thrill was too much. And you know the best way not to fall asleep as a Christian is to make sure you keep up the thrill.

Have you lost the thrill? Have you lost the sense of excitement of what it is to be a Christian, be a child of God and to be involved in his kingdom?

Let me tell you how not to lose the thrill. I'll tell you this. And this takes us right into how the apostle ends the letter.

The work of the gospel. If you are involved in the work of the gospel, then you will not lose your sense of thrill. When you take your eyes off the work of sharing the gospel, then what else is there?

[33 : 07] What happens is you start focusing on yourself and your own feelings and your own hang-ups and your own misgivings and your own complaints.

saints and you become an introverted Christian. You become a moaner and you fall asleep. Stay alert, says Paul.

Stay awake. Pray in the Spirit with all kinds of prayers and supplications and pray for all saints. Make sure that your prayer goes wide all over the world.

People you know, situations you know, the boon-chus of this world, the people you know who are desperate to know that you are praying for them. But I'll tell you this, you're not going to pray for them without knowing where they are and what they're doing.

So keep up. And that's why the apostle goes into the last section. He says, you have to know what I am doing so that you can pray for me.

[34 : 13] And it's so important that you know what I am doing and what other churches are doing and the work of the gospel worldwide that I am sending a particular ambassador to you in order that he will tell you what is happening in the rest of the church to keep you awake.

That's how important it was. And this man is called Tychicus. I was asking myself, well, what's so special about Tychicus? What can we call him? What title, what job description are we going to give him?

What does he say about him? He says, so that you may know how I am and what I am doing. Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will tell you everything.

You know what he is? He's a communications director. That's what he is. His job, his ministry, is to go from one place to another to tell the people of God what's happening in another place.

Why? So that they will pray for them. So that they will rejoice with them. So that they will thank God for the spread and the expansion of the gospel. Because that's what thrills us more than anything.

[35 : 25] And so that they can take part in the work of the gospel. That is our ministry as well. We don't need, perhaps we do need, I don't know, we're discussing it in Edinburgh at the moment, a communications director.

But we do have a magazine. We have an internet, we have a website. We have all kinds of information coming to us. There is no shortage of information coming to us about various places in the world where the gospel is spreading and where Christians are trying to share the good news of the Lord Jesus Christ.

What a responsibility. If you want to stay awake tonight, you want to keep alert, then be involved in that work. you can't be involved in everything, you can be involved in some things.

Make sure that we are involved for the sake of the gospel and to make sure that we are praying for the success of God's kingdom, for the building up of his kingdom, for the saving of souls.

So praying that as the gospel is preached in the jungles and in the streets and in the villages of various places all over the world and as people listen to the gospel, that they will hear in faith and that they will come and God will change them and transform them and change communities and streets and villages and towns and empires and countries and so that the whole world will hear of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[36 : 52] Stay awake. That's what's happening in the world today. God is building up his kingdom. He was doing it then.

He's doing it now. We are part of it. We have to fulfill our responsibility to remember God's people everywhere and to be involved where we are as well.

There's no shortage of work for us to do, is there? The gospel is the most wonderful place to be involved in.

Because when you're involved in the gospel, you're involved in the changing of people's souls, changing of people's lives. Let me ask some of the younger ones, perhaps even not so young. Are you praying that the Lord will show you what to do with your life?

Coming to the end of university, coming to the end of college, coming to the end of apprenticeship, whatever you're doing, are you asking the Lord, Lord, show me where you want me to go in. Is there any place you're not willing to go?

[38 : 02] You're willing to go anywhere for the Lord? I hope you are. Because there is nothing as thrilling as obeying God's voice and going where he leads and being part of his kingdom, which is worldwide.

Please don't have a narrow vision of the gospel. Don't ever think the gospel belongs only here. It doesn't. Believe me, it doesn't. Gospel is everywhere in the world.

And God needs people. He uses people. He chooses people. He selects them and brings them and leads them and guides them into all kinds of different work. But if that's not your work tonight, then you still need to be involved in his kingdom in whatever way, supportive, financial, prayerful, active involvement in knowing what's going on and in giving yourself completely to that work.

May God give us the energy and the determination to do his will for his kingdom. Let's pray. Amen. Father in heaven, we pray now for the gospel.

We thank you, Lord, that whatever realities there are in this world and whatever there is to distract us in this world, then the greatest reality of all, the one which is going to endure for all eternity, is the kingdom of God.

[39 : 39] Oh, Lord, give us to see that. Give us to see, Lord, that the, the, your family, your church, is composed of people whose lives have changed as they've listened to your word.

And we pray more than anything tonight that those who are involved like Boon Chu in Thailand will know the continued strengthening that your Holy Spirit gives to be able to spread your word.

And so that as your word is spread, more and more people will listen to it. We pray that as your kingdom is built up, that the various problems and issues and challenges, that you will give grace and wisdom and guidance to your people to be able to resolve these issues for the good of your people, for the unity of your people.

Forgive our sin, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.