

Loving and Living the Gospel

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[0 : 0 0] Well, do turn with me, if you would, to Galatians chapter 6. As you're doing that, I'll tell you, I've just spotted the writer of that hymn and the first one that we've sung, Christopher Eidel, down in the church on the left there.

So I'm very glad we've sung two of your hymns tonight, Christopher, and we enjoy singing them very much indeed. Thank you for them. Well, we're in Galatians chapter 6, the third of our studies in this chapter on practical walking in the Spirit.

And tonight it's summed up by this, loving and living the gospel. The whole message of Paul's letter in this book to the Galatians is absolutely clear.

The Christian faith is not just a theory. It's about real life. The gospel of justification by faith is not just a theological axiom, something to be argued over and left to the theologians to argue about.

No. The gospel is a transforming power. It is a power that has ushered in God's new creation. And therefore it is a theology with huge implications for our personal lives and, as we've seen, for our life together as a church.

[1 : 2 3] For me, says Paul, it is no longer I who lives, but Christ who lives in me. And for us together, Paul says we are no longer separate.

We are all one in Christ Jesus. We are bound together in him. And so our lives of personal holiness and our life of practical ecclesiology, the life of the church, is bound up together, inseparable.

The gospel makes us holy and the gospel unites us together in a holy family. That's the size. That's the scope of the salvation that is in Jesus Christ.

It's nothing short of a holy new creation. In the gospel, God is creating a new people, a whole new community for a new world. And that is, as chapter 5, verse 1 tells us, the true freedom that Christ has set us free for.

It's the freedom of the new and restored cosmos in Christ. But, of course, we've also seen, haven't we, in Galatians, that although in Christ we do indeed inherit a full salvation, as yet we don't have full possession of it.

[2 : 4 2] Chapter 5, verse 5 is very plain. It tells us that for all we do have already in our possession, for all that we do have through the Spirit by faith, nevertheless, the full consummation is not yet.

It's something that still lies in the future. It's certain, but it's still future. Paul says, chapter 5, verse 5, we eagerly await the hope of righteousness.

And if we're awaiting it, it means we don't have it yet. And that fact is absolutely essential to any right understanding of the Christian life.

We are on the way home. We have the joy and the fellowship of home by the Spirit and through faith. But we're not yet at home. We're living for home, but we're still in hostile foreign territory.

And that is why your Christian life and mine, as you know and as I know, is one of conflict. Because we're fish out of water.

[3 : 46] We're no longer people who belong in this present evil age. In this passing world, in these bodies of flesh which are passing. Paul puts it in chapter 6, verse 14.

The world has been crucified to me and I to the world. I don't belong anymore. The Christian believer is living on earth, but we're living for heaven.

It's the same message as we've been seeing in Matthew chapter 18 and Jesus teaching about his church. And that's what walking in the Spirit means. Living for the new creation, for its values, for its priorities, and for those alone, But in the midst of the lures and the attractions and the powers of this weak and worthless world.

Although it is weak and worthless, nevertheless, it seems to be, doesn't it, terribly strong and powerful to lure us back.

To make us slaves again as we once were. That's what Paul said was happening to the Galatians in chapter 4, verse 9. They were in danger of turning back to become slaves again. Yes, says Paul, to live in the Spirit is a fight of faith.

[5 : 04] It involves a decisive break with the world. We saw that in chapter 5, verse 24. Crucifixion of the flesh. And a decisive turning towards the new world.

Keeping in step with the Spirit. And a continual, daily, ongoing battle to keep in step with the Spirit. If we're led by the Spirit, he says, in chapter 5, verse 25.

Since we are new creation people, let us walk in the Spirit. Let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us live as new creation people. That's the only proper response that a Christian believer can make to the gospel.

And in chapter 6, we've seen that Paul is spelling out what this means in very practical terms. It's all about responsibilities to one another and responsibilities for ourselves.

So we're to watch out for one another. We're to serve one another in love by restoring one another, by bearing one another's burdens. And we're to watch out for ourselves. We're to have a sober view, he says, of our own reality.

[6 : 09] We're to live up to the calling that God has given each one of us. We've each of us to give an account. Everyone will bear his own load. And now in verses 6 to 10, Paul continues talking about these mutual responsibilities and the personal accountability that we all have.

He's driving home everything that he's been talking about in chapter 5. And that is, listen, although he is absolutely clear that salvation is totally and utterly and completely by grace alone and through faith alone, not by works of any kind.

Absolutely clear about that. Nevertheless, he has made it equally clear that as human beings we have responsibility for our own destiny.

Because the gospel for Paul is not just a free offer of forgiveness for us. But it's a whole new life of holiness in us.

And that life, that new life, confers upon us great demands and great responsibilities. Just flick over a page, perhaps it's 2 in your Bibles, to Ephesians chapter 2.

[7 : 23] It's exceptionally clear here, just a very helpful cross-reference. Ephesians 2 and 8, Paul says this, For by grace you have been saved through faith.

And this is not your own doing, it's the gift of God, not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. You see, absolutely clear, it's all of grace. But look at verse 10.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

You see, we're not saved by good works, but we are saved for good works. All the privilege comes by God's grace, but that confers upon us great responsibilities.

You see, the gospel of justification by faith has implications. Turn back to Galatians. And that's the message that we've seen all the way through this book, isn't it?

[8 : 23] We're called, says Paul in chapter 5, verse 7, to obey the truth. We're not, as he says, the Galatians were beginning to do in chapter 1, verse 6, we're not to desert him who called us, to obey the truth, and turn to a different gospel.

No. We're not to do, as Peter seemed to be doing in chapter 2, verse 14, to walk out of step with the truth of the gospel. No. No. We're to walk in step with the truth of the gospel.

We're to walk in step with the Holy Spirit. And Paul's message in chapter 5, and here again in chapter 6, is that the way we walk, and the direction that we walk in, will determine the destination that we reach.

It's as simple as that. In chapter 5, he's told us that walking in the ways of the flesh leads to disaster. Verse 21 says, such will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Whereas walking in the Spirit will lead to the opposite way, the fruit of the Spirit being shown in abundance. And in chapter 6, verses 7 and 8, that we're looking at now, Paul is making exactly the same point.

[9 : 36] He's just turning to a different metaphor. Then it was walking, and now it's sowing. It's a metaphor from farming. And it's a simple law of spiritual harvest, isn't it?

Do you see verse 7? You reap what you sow. You don't sow wheat in a field and expect to harvest barley. You don't put sugar beet in a field and expect potatoes to come out of the harvest.

And just sow, says Paul, if you sow to the flesh, instead of crucifying the flesh, you can only possibly reap corruption, not eternal life.

And only, conversely, if you sow to the Spirit, now in this life, will you reap eternal life. You see, the gospel of Jesus Christ isn't an insurance policy.

It's not the sort of thing that you make one lump sum deposit, and then it'll certainly pay out what you want on death, no matter what's going on in between. It's not like a single premium life insurance policy.

[10 : 41] A lot of people think that. You hear people saying things like that. Well, I was saved at a mission rally in 1962, and I'm secure forever. You see, that's Christian assurance for you.

Well, Paul says, no, don't be deceived. God isn't mocked. Don't think that you can thumb your nose at God and act as though he was some sort of insurance company that was forced to pay up just because you've done your bit and said your thing and gone to the front at a rally.

No. You reap what you sow, says Paul. There's no true assurance in self-deception. That's what he's saying.

He's not saying anything here that's different from the Lord Jesus. Jesus again and again says, he who endures to the end will be saved. You see, to think in that insurance policy way is to totally fail to grasp the gospel at all.

Paul, the true gospel is a truth that must be obeyed. It's a truth that must be walked in. Otherwise, it isn't the gospel.

[11 : 49] It's another gospel. It's no gospel at all. The true Holy Spirit life is a life that must be sown and cultivated. It's a life that we are to be led in, says Paul.

It's a life that we are to walk in step with. Life. Otherwise, it's not life in the Spirit of God at all. One of the striking things all the way through Paul's letter to the Galatians is the seamless continuity that there is between beginning the Christian life and going on and reaching the end of our salvation.

It's one continuous moving story all the way through. You cannot separate ever in Galatians or anywhere else for that matter. You cannot separate the once for all death of Christ on the cross for our sins and the forever ongoing life of Christ by the Spirit in us.

The life of holiness. You can't separate these things. It's all part of one great movement from beginning to end. So Paul says in chapter 3, verse 3, we begun with the Spirit.

Chapter 6 here, we're looking at verses 8 and 9. We will reap eternal life from the Spirit. But in between, it's one unbreakable journey of being led by the Spirit, of walking in the Spirit, of keeping in step with the Spirit, of walking in the truth of the Gospel, of running well.

[13 : 14] You see, all the metaphors are moving. There's no suggestion anywhere in this letter of one sort of crisis point when we're saved and then afterwards, well, there are choices.

Well, am I also going to make Jesus my Lord now that I've made Him my Savior? Will I be baptized in the Spirit and have a new level of experience?

Will I advance to another stage and then go further on in my Christian life? No, there's none of that in Galatians. None at all. Well, it's one walk from the beginning. It's one journey right from the start, right from the beginning to the end.

One seamless movement. And his point is very clear, you see, in these verses. If you're not walking, it means you've never even begun.

And therefore, you can have no certain hope of the future. You reap what you sow now.

[14 : 21] And if you're sowing to the flesh, you see, Paul is saying, that means you cannot be on the sure path that leads to eternal life. Because verse 8 tells us sowing to the flesh yields only corruption.

John Stock puts it this way. It's not the reapers who decide what the harvest is going to be like, but the sowers. And that's us, isn't it?

We are the sowers. And we, says Paul, are responsible for our destiny because the gospel calls us to obey the truth. The gospel demands that we walk in the truth, that we walk in the Spirit.

It's not an option. And so, as always, the gospel always gives us both warning and encouragements, promises.

The warning is clear in verse 7, isn't it? Do not be deceived. You may fool yourself. You cannot fool God. There was verse 4 says, let everyone examine himself.

[15 : 28] Let everyone test himself. Let's get to the truth. Are you really fooling yourself? Be careful. How am I walking? How am I sowing? That's a very real question. Paul's asking the church.

But not only warning, of course, there is promise and that is equally clear and equally wonderful. There are no doubts or maybes about verse 8, are there? The one who sows to the Spirit will reap eternal life.

Verse 9, don't give up. You will reap in God's time. That is promise. So it is a big question, isn't it? What kind of a harvest are we looking forward to?

And how do we know if we will reap eternal life? That's the challenge that Paul is giving to the Galatian church here, this vigorous and lively church, but a church which is in danger. So how do they know?

Well, Paul in these verses 6 to 10 gives two commands. And our attitude to these two commands will be a clear indication of whether we are, in fact, keeping in step with the Spirit, whether we are sowing to the Spirit and will harvest life.

[16 : 41] It's very simple. He says, if we're going to be true inheritors of eternal life, true inheritors of the new creation, then certain things will be clear and obvious to us right now.

We'll be loving the truth of the gospel now and we'll be living the truth of the gospel now. First, verse 6 really is talking about loving the truth of the gospel.

Paul's telling us that we have a responsibility to value the truth of the gospel, the gospel that has rescued us from this present evil age for the new creation, the gospel that has become ours at infinite cost to the Son of God who loved us, who gave himself for us.

And in verse 6, you see, Paul is telling us that whether or not we truly value the gospel, whether we really love the gospel of God's grace is going to be visible.

It's going to be tangible in the value that we place on gospel ministry. Do you see? Walking in the Spirit, sowing to please the Spirit means true partnership in gospel ministry.

[17 : 56] It will be an absolute priority in every way open to us, in every way possible. We are to promote it, we are to protect it materially and spiritually. One who is taught in the Word, he says, must share all good things with one who teaches.

See, what he's saying is that a church that is Spirit-filled where the fruit of the Spirit is evident in lives of holiness, in fellowship of mutual service, that church will be a gospel-filled church.

Because walking in the Spirit means walking in the truth of the gospel. It means obedience to the truth. Chapter 6, verse 16 is equally clear.

Do you see that verse? He's talking about a church under the blessing and the peace and the mercy of God. It's a church that walks according to this rule. In other words, it is being ruled by the gospel of the new creation.

It's a gospel-filled church. In other words, a church filled with the knowledge of the gospel and its implications for every area of life and witness.

[19 : 07] Only that produces verses 1 and 2. Only that produces the selfless service that Paul's talking about. And that is only possible in a church that truly values gospel ministry, that values what Paul calls in chapter 6, verse 6, the teaching of the word.

God. Now, it seems that this verse implies that even in Galatia there were full-time teachers in the church.

It's perhaps the earliest indication of that in the New Testament. But at the very least, there were teachers who needed to spend so much time on that that they needed other material support and help. And Paul's simply being realistic.

He's saying that to have strong gospel churches you must have strong word ministry. And to have that you must release teachers from other things so that they can do that.

It just can't be done otherwise. It must be done like that otherwise it will be done properly. Paul's absolutely insistent about that if you read through the New Testament letters. 2 Timothy 2 chapter verse 15 he says to Timothy you must labor to rightly handle the word of truth.

[20 : 24] 1 Timothy 5 he says that the teachers must be paid properly because they labor and the laborer deserves his wages. What he's saying is that you cannot instruct in the word.

You cannot bring out the full riches of the gospel without a whole Bible ministry and you cannot do that without hard hard labor. any teacher of the word knows that.

Churchill said blood and toil tears and sweat he had no idea what it's like laboring in the word. But you cannot build gospel filled churches spirit filled churches with a simple gospel attitude with soundbite preaching with spiritual sweeties to go off and suck and give you a sugar rush before Sunday lunch.

You might be very popular with that. You may become a very popular preacher or teacher doing those sorts of things but it will never ever make an impact that changes the church or changes the world.

Just look over again to Colossians chapter 1 sorry for these cross references but I do think this is helpful Colossians chapter 1 verse 28 and just see what gospel ministry really is to Paul.

[21 : 50] Colossians 1 28 Him we proclaim that is Christ warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom that we may present everyone mature in Christ.

You see that's the aim that's the purpose of God mature Christians a mature church but it's costly look at verse 29 for this I toil struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works in me.

You see it's God's work but it's the teacher's toils he struggles and that is the cost of your Christian maturity that's the cost of our maturity in a Christian fellowship and you will be eager to share in that cost if you're a true Christian that's what Paul's saying.

if you're sowing to the Spirit if you truly love the truth of the gospel you will be eager to share and do your part in every way to make that possible.

You see believers who are walking in the Spirit who are filled with the Spirit will cherish will value gospel ministry and it will be experienced in real ways.

[23 : 07] He says they will share that's the word koinonia it's the word we get our communion from. It means fellowship it means partnership. He's talking here about a fellowship where we are serving together serving the Word of God whatever our role might be whether it's teacher or those instructed or whatever.

And that means in the church letting teachers be teachers it means releasing them with adequate resources material resources and spiritually. it certainly means releasing them from the wearing and the stress of financial want.

How on earth can somebody give themselves the ministry or mission if they don't know where the next bill payment is going to come from? Of course they can't. Now I can speak openly about this with a clear conscience because the congregation here has no say whatsoever in what I would be paid.

That's a decision for the central committees of the Church of Scotland. So I'm not griping here about asking for more pay. I'm very well looked after. But some churches do have a disgraceful attitude to the way that they pay their workers, their pastors, their evangelists.

Some mission organizations have a shocking record on this. It's all very well to call yourself a faith mission. Have your missionaries virtually in penury. It doesn't seem to work that way always for the home office staff who usually have a very regular salary.

[24 : 36] You see, all of these things, all of these attitudes are very telling about how we value gospel ministry, whatever its form. And therefore it tells whether we truly love the gospel itself.

And Paul says, you must be careful, you will reap what you sow. And if we pay our teachers, our gospel work as a pittance, well that just shows what value we place on the gospel.

Of course, it's not just about pay, that's just one thing, it certainly does include that. But it's about all resources. If we value gospel ministry, we'll ensure that those who are called to be teachers and evangelists and outreach workers and so on, that they can give themselves to that ministry.

We won't heap so much other stuff on them that they can't do that. We'll ensure that we enable gospel ministry to happen in our churches. we'll give adequate resources of all kinds that are needed.

We'll give opportunities to teach. We'll give places to teach. A church that loves the gospel will be in fellowship, in partnership together to ensure that above all else, gospel ministries are being served and being resourced and being developed and being released.

[26 : 01] We have a responsibility to value, to prioritize teaching in the word because that alone, alone, alone, alone is what brings maturity in Christ.

And we reap what we sow. It's loving the gospel that leads to life. That's what Paul's telling us. And you see, we can't fool God about our real love, either as individuals or as a fellowship.

relationship. And you notice in this passage there is both the individual focus and the corporate focus. You see in verse 6 and 7 and 8 he's talking about the one. In verse 9 it's about us, it's about we.

You see you can't separate these two things. In our own life, in our congregational life, even in our denominational life, we reap what we sow.

Cherishing the word of life and its ministry leads to life, says Paul. Well, do we? Paul says you only need to look at your attitude to gospel ministry and those who do it.

[27 : 08] That's your answer. In our church, in the denomination, in your own life. See, it is a real warning. Paul is clear it is possible to be deceived.

The Galatians were being deceived. They were a real evangelical church. They had a rich evangelical heritage. Goodness, Paul has been their church planter, their teacher.

They thought they were a gospel church. They thought they loved the word, but Paul says they were wrong. Surely that must mean that others could be deceived too.

And Paul says, yes, and you'll see it in the attitude to gospel ministry because you reap what you sow. It's a real warning for all of us, brothers and sisters.

We need to take that seriously. All sorts of ways we can think about it. It's true in our families. Very good test of whether we really love the gospel.

[28 : 11] If we really do, then our great priority for our children will be teaching the word of God, teaching the gospel to our children, won't it? Because we love the gospel and we trust the gospel to bring them to maturity in Christ.

But on the other hand, if that's not really what we want for our kids, if what we really want is entertainment, if we want things that, oh, I won't put them off church, so we want to keep them away from the teaching, well, it means we don't really love the gospel.

And Paul says you reap what you sow. People walking in the spirit, churches sowing to the spirit love the gospel. And you know they love it because together they are in partnership in gospel ministries.

They share every good thing for that sake. The second thing that's true of all of those who are on the way to eternal life, Paul says, is that they will be living the gospel now.

We have a responsibility to live the truth of the gospel now and right to the very end. Remember chapter 5, verse 22, the fruit of the spirit? Genuine fruit of the spirit is faithfulness, goodness.

[29 : 30] And that's visible. You don't expect to sow one seed and reap another, do you? What we sow now is what we reap then. What we are now and what we are becoming now day by day and what we shall be is what we shall be ultimately forever.

It's being forged now by what we're sowing today. Either we're living for the here and now, for this evil age, and we're building a future here on this earth and staking our future on it, or we're living for the new creation, for the real future.

But the truth is, says Paul, you can't have dual citizenship. You can't have a home here and a second home there as a backup. Either you're building for this age or for the next.

If you're building for this age, through your career or family or money or whatever it is, fame, even philanthropy, you're sowing to the flesh.

And Paul says the only harvest is corruption. The only thing that this age can promise us is death at the end of it and corruption. There's no other end to that road.

[30 : 47] There's no hope beyond it. But those who really love the gospel won't just be devoted to real partnership in gospel ministry, putting all the good things that God has given them to that priority.

They'll be devoted to a gospel lifestyle. And that, says Paul, is what yields a rich harvest in eternal life. Don't be fooled, he says. God can't be mocked.

You can't sow to the flesh all your life. You can't live your life all the way through centered on yourself and on this world and suddenly expect to reap differently at the end.

No. You reap what you sow. I always remember my father used to quote the old proverb, you sow a thought, you reap an action.

You sow an action, you reap a habit. You sow a habit, you reap a character. You sow a character and you reap a destiny. Friends, that is the immutable law of spiritual harvest.

[31 : 50] That's what Paul's saying. It's a very sober warning, isn't it? Can't help thinking about poor George Best. We've been reading about him in the papers. Tragic story, isn't it?

I was just saying to somebody before the service, I remember in the early 80s going to watch him play when he played for Hibernian in Edinburgh. Even then, he was a genius. But isn't that a tragic story?

But you reap what you sow. But Paul's point, Paul's point, and don't miss it, is that many professing believers also deceive themselves.

Yes, I'm a Christian, but well, my private sexual morality has nothing to do with anybody else. It's nothing to do with you or the church or the Bible. That's mine.

Well, my pride and ambition and my ego, well, that's my real pacemaker in life, not the Spirit of God. It's achievement, it's success, it's getting on, it's getting that next paper, it's getting that grant, it's making that extra million.

[32 : 52] Paul says, be very careful. You reap what you sow. And don't forget that the context here is all about personal relationships, isn't it, in the church?

And that's true so often as well, isn't it? We've seen that. So often there's sowing to please the flesh, there's biting and devouring, there's envying and provoking, there's jealousy, there's fits of anger.

Sowing to the ego, it's so easy in church life for the horizon to be bound by this world, not the new creation. Paul says, you reap what you sow.

Let the flesh rule, let the human ego rule, and you will reap corruption. Destroy God's church and he will destroy you.

He says it clearly in verse 21 of chapter 5, those who do these things will not inherit the kingdom of God. That is a real warning, friends. I have to give it to you and to myself.

[34 : 00] But of course it is also at the same time a great encouragement, isn't it? Those who sow to the spirit, says Paul in verse 9, will reap eternal life.

So, verse 9, let us not give up, let us not grow weary of doing good. Because in due season, in God's perfect time, we shall reap. You see, Paul is a realist.

He will not give false assurances. Rather, he gives real warnings. Don't be deceived. He won't give false encouragements. Oh, things will look better tomorrow.

Don't worry. No. He says it's tough fighting for holiness in your personal life. It's tough fighting for holiness in your church life.

Restoring one another. Bearing the burdens of other people's sins and mess ups. Forgiving those who drive you batty. It's tough.

[34 : 59] Because we're not yet free of our sinful bodies. We're not yet free of this sinful world. And there is no quick fix. There's no going off to the place where you get the latest blessing and fall on your back and get up and you're sinless and everything's hunky-dory.

No, no, no. Not with Paul. No, Paul says, fighting for faith, walking in the Spirit means selfless service. And that is tough.

Means, verse 10, doing good unstintingly to all. And especially to those in the household of faith. And friends, isn't it sometimes harder doing good to some of those in the Christian family than those outside?

Isn't it? Because we find selfish self-indulgence so much more natural, so much more easy than that selfless servant heart of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.

But Paul says, don't give up. Don't lose heart. That is living the gospel. And the gospel promises eternal life.

[36 : 11] Live like this and you will, he says, you will experience growth now. And you will experience at last that release, that perfection. All that you want to be but know yet you cannot be.

There will be rewards, a plenty for faithful gospel living. Though we may have to wait a long time for it. Like the psalmist of Psalm 126, there may be in our lives, and don't we know it, much sowing in tears.

But there will be in God's good time, reaping with joy. And that's true in life, and we know it, but it's certainly true ultimately.

Verse 9, in due time. That word there is the same as Paul uses in chapter 4, verse 4 about the Son of God who in the fullness of the time was born of woman. And he's saying it's certainly true that in the fullness of the time when the Lord Jesus Christ appears again to usher in forever that new creation which is now begun in us by the Spirit.

That is a certain hope of righteousness. That's what we wait for eagerly. And therefore, verse 10, as we wait eagerly for that day, let us live now in the light of that day, this day.

[37 : 29] It's the same word in verse 9 that he uses for due season. And in verse 10, as we have opportunity. He's saying, therefore, as we have assurance of that time, let us constantly live in the light of that in this time, this time of opportunity that God's given us.

That's what this time is for. It's for living for that day. Because we shall reap in that day what we have sown in this day.

We shall reap in God's good time then what we have sown in his good time of opportunity now. So do you see, in closing, friends, just how practical it all is?

The sign that we are living for that day, the sign that God is truly at work in us by his spirit, is that we are living for the new creation today. The sign that God is at work in us is that we are at work for him now.

We love the gospel. And therefore, we truly share all the good things that God has given us in partnership, in gospel ministry, in every way we can.

[38 : 41] And we live the gospel. Wherever there's opportunity, we are working the good. We're serving one another in love.

We're serving especially the family of faith, our brothers and sisters in the church. Don't be deceived. Whatever we sow, that will we also reap.

Loving the gospel and living the gospel is the only path to eternal life. So, brothers and sisters, let us then not grow weary of doing good.

For in due time we will reap if we do not give up. So then, wherever we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

Let us love the gospel and let us live it together. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, day by day, week by week, we are so conscious that we are in a fight.

[39 : 52] And it's so easy to be downcast. To think that somehow your spirit has left us or we have failed or grieved you away utterly. But we thank you for the great encouragement that we know that the fact that we are fighting means that we are walking in the way of your spirit.

We praise you that you are the God who does not give up on us. Help us, therefore, we pray, not to give up ever on the glorious promise of your grace.

Let us show our trust and our faith in living for you and loving your gospel day by day in every way we can for the glory of our Savior.

Amen.