

1 Corinthians 2

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 16 April 2023

[0 : 00] So you're going to take your Bibles, we're going to go to 1 Corinthians chapter 2. We're going to go to 1 Corinthians chapter 2 and we're going to read the entire second chapter together, 16 verses. Last week we took some time off from it. We started this several weeks ago.

We spent two weeks in the first chapter there and we now have made our way to the second chapter. If you remember, Corinth is a church that has the greatest amount of problems. It has more problems than any other church that we find in Scripture.

That's not why we're there. We're there to see how God answers those problems and how God still has a plan and a purpose for them. If you remember, Corinth has all these problems and worldliness has crept into the body and so many things are going on.

Yet they are encouraged by who they are in Christ. They are encouraged by the work that God has done among them. Paul chastises them, rebukes them. Sure, he corrects them. But there's also this encouragement to further use.

There are some very hard passages which we read in the book of 1 Corinthians. There are some also very pointed and focused passages. There are things that we will get to, I mean, if we're just going to be honest with one another, that we don't always like to study.

[1 : 00] Things like church discipline. Things like, you know, one of the things I've gathered from reading the writings of Paul, Paul was handing a lot of people over to Satan. I mean, it's not just in 1 Corinthians he does it.

He does it in other letters too, right? I'm handing him over to Satan. I'm handing him over to Satan. And you're like, man, Paul's doing a lot of stuff. We'll answer those questions as we make our way through it. But he's still establishing his grounds for what he's about to say.

Paul, being moved by the Spirit of God to write the Word of God, was so gracious in his efforts. He would always introduce himself. He would introduce himself as how God was using him, who he was in Christ, not who he was in the flesh.

He didn't come with credentials to be notarized or noticed by men. He came with the calling of God upon his life. He reminded them of how God used them in their life. And then he reminded who God was to them.

And then he would get right to the matter, right? He would approach it in such grace and such mercy, but with such truth and such power and words. But this morning, we're in 1 Corinthians chapter 2.

[1 : 59] We just really are just not even into the heart of the rebuke. We're just kind of in the foundation of it. So if you're physically able and desire to do so, I'm going to ask if you would join with me as we stand together. And we read the second chapter of 1 Corinthians.

I'm going to go ahead and warn you. It's a confusing passage when you read it. Okay, your mind's going to start spreading. Maybe you're so much more intelligent than I am. My mind smokes when I read it, but we'll try to make our way through it, okay?

And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. And my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power, so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.

Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature, a wisdom, however, not of this age, nor of the rulers of this age who are passing away. But we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom, which God predestined before the ages to our glory, the wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood.

[3 : 08] For if they had understood it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But just as it is written, things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard and which have not entered into the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love him.

For to us God revealed them through the spirit, for the spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him?

Even so, the thoughts of God no one knows except the spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.

But a natural man does not accept the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one.

For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he will instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for this day. We thank you for your word.

[4 : 22] Lord, we thank you for the opportunity we have gathered, we have to gather together to study it and to read it. And Lord, we pray that now, by the power and presence of the Holy Spirit, you would speak to our hearts and minds. May we hear what it is you have to say to us.

May it not be the thoughts or the opinions of man, but may it be the very word of God, which does a great work among us, and we ask it in Christ's name. Amen. You may be seated. We will not begin to get beyond the surface, let alone the depths of this rich passage, which we have before us.

But we will try to take the truth of it and apply it to our lives and see where we're at. As Paul has introduced himself to the church at Corinth, he has reminded them of their status.

Remember, he called them the saints by calling. God had redeemed them, saved them, and secured them in eternity, and had declared them as saints.

The lives which they were living were anything but saintly, but they were saints by calling. He said, by practice, you're worldly, but by calling, you're saints. And it is that calling which he has focused the reasoning for his arguments, that what God had called them to do, their lives should reflect.

[5 : 44] He reminded them of their position in eternity. He reminded them of the security that was awaiting them. And then to the end of the first chapter, he introduces his first correction, which he will bring further along in the third chapter, and that is the exaltation of man.

There had been divisions and schisms within the body of Corinth. Some were following Paul, some Apollos, some Cephas, which is Peter. Others were following Jesus, and there seemed to be this hierarchy within the body.

Some say, well, you follow Paul, that's okay. Well, I follow Apollos. Apollos was a little bit more eloquent in speech. He was a little bit wise according to the word. Well, I follow Cephas, or Peter, because he's one of the original 12.

You know, Paul, he's just an apostle born out of due season. Well, I'm better than all of you. I follow Jesus. And Paul reminds them, was Paul crucified for you? Or was Apollos crucified? No one was but Christ.

He said, it's not anything of the man which God uses. Now, this is something that seemed to be very rampant, even in the city of Corinth, because people would attach themselves to teachers and rabbis, and they were identified by the person they sat under.

[6 : 52] And they would say, well, I am a disciple of so-and-so, and it was their responsibility and even their ambition to defend the one that they sat at their feet. And their position in society was always determined by who it was that taught them.

Now, if we lived in a society such as that, I would feel very, very unfortunate for you guys, because I know who I am. But position was determined by the one they sat under the feet of, and they listened to, not necessarily physically under the feet, but under the feet in teaching parts.

Even today, by the way, we must be very careful with that. We don't have to go very far until we find church members who identify themselves more with the pastor that they listened to than the Savior who redeemed them.

Some who attempt to find status because of the pulpit that they sit in front of, rather than the word they hold in their hands. My friend, no pastor, no pulpit, no pew has saved anyone.

Jesus Christ and Jesus alone. And this is the argument that Paul will start. But before he really gets into it in the third chapter, he calls the church back to focus.

[8 : 10] So this morning, I want you to see the focus of the church. That is, the church needs to be focused in what it must be about. I've thought a lot about this over the last several months.

You know, we're very blessed as a church body. I always have to take the word of God and apply it to the people of God in the context and history in which he has put me. We have a lot of activities going on.

And Brother Caleb is right. You can go back there into Fellowship Hall and stand in front of that bulletin board and sign up for who knows what. But every one of them are going for a purpose. You turn your back to that bulletin board and you're looking at the other bulletin board, which is the missions board.

Right now, it shows missions opportunities. I'm so excited because in a matter of weeks, it's not going to show missions opportunities. It's going to show missions ongoing. Wednesday night, I shared with the church how excited I am.

This year and this year alone, we have the opportunity to serve in our community. We have the opportunity for those serving nationally, being serving in other states, spending the greater part of their summer in other states.

[9 : 17] We have members serving overseas. We have the opportunity to partner very soon with church plants. These are very good things. These are very great works, but it means nothing if the church isn't focused.

That is, it must be going about and doing it the right way. Corinth was a busy city. I am certain that it was a busy church.

Busyness does not always mean godliness. Because if you're busy for the sake of being busy, and you're not focused in what you're doing and why you're doing it, then it's not taking you or anyone else anywhere.

There are a lot of great humanitarian and even parachurch organizations that you can give your time to. But the calling of the church and the calling of the believer is to be a focused event.

Paul would often write, I am intent on one purpose. I'm focused. And that focus is what guarded him and kept him. Here he calls the church back to focus.

[10 : 23] And it was not just the church at Corinth. It's the church universal. It's the church with a capital C. It has application to you and I of getting back to focus.

The first thing we see about a focused church is it has entrusted servants. There are entrusted servants. Paul declares, And when I came to you, brethren.

Now that seems to be a little out of the place. Because Paul has just spoken of the fact that it doesn't matter who comes to you. Or if it was a Paulist that you listened to, or Peter that you listened to, or Paul that you listened to, that the individual doesn't matter.

But after reminding the church that the individual is not the main thing, he reminds the church that the individual is at least something. God has a great work in God's great plans.

God has designed and desired to use us in it. I say us because when I open up Scripture and I go to 1 Peter, 1 Peter doesn't tell me there's a church with priests.

[11 : 27] 1 Peter tells me there's a church of priests. I refer to it as the priesthood of the believers, right? And that the priesthood of the believers has a high priest who is Jesus Christ. As the book of Hebrews says, there's only one high priest.

And then it reminds us when Paul is speaking of the church in the book of Ephesians, Ephesians chapter 4, 12, that the pastors are just for the equipping of the church to do the work of the ministry. That God has desired and designed to use people in his work.

Though people aren't the main thing, people are something. And Paul reminds them, and when I came to you, God sent me to you, he says.

And I came to you with a message. He says, and when I came to you, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. Friend, this ought to be encouraging to you.

Because when we finish the book of Matthew, the very last thing we read in the book of Matthew is the great commission, which too often has become the great omission. The thing in which we are commanded to do.

[12 : 29] Missions is not a suggestion. Missions is a command, right? We are commanded to make disciples. Discipleship is missions work because we're not commanded just to go say something.

We're commanded to raise up believers in Jesus Christ and followers. And we are commanded to do that individually and corporately. It is the work of the believers, however God has designed you, however he has wired you, however he has fit you, and however he has gifted you.

Not every one of us are called to be pastors. Not every one of us are called to be missionaries. But every one of us are called to be disciple makers. Maybe the greatest discipleship that you ever have is the discipleship around your table in your home.

Maybe the greatest discipleship you ever have is the discipleship you have on the phone encouraging a brother or sister in Christ. Maybe the greatest discipleship you ever have is in a workplace. You know, the greatest opportunities I've ever had for sharing the gospel is working on a line in an assembly plant because nobody could leave, or working on a telephone pole when I was climbing it with another individual because nobody could leave.

Right? You are given a great opportunity and a great responsibility. That doesn't mean you have to be pushy, but the greatest pushback to that is, but I don't know enough. Well, be encouraged here. Paul says, when I came to you, I did not come with superiority of wisdom.

[13 : 39] It wasn't in what I knew. I did not come to you with eloquent speech. Well, I stutter all the time. We'll join the crowd. There's a whole list of people throughout Scripture that were not good speakers.

Right? There were some that were good speakers and they didn't get very far. There were some that were not good speakers at all. Moses said, well, I stutter a lot and I have this problem speaking and I have all these issues. And God says, so what? I made it. Go use it.

Right? I've got a very shocking revelation. Some of you know that. I'm not a really good public speaker. Not. Last night was the pastor's pageant. Some people say, well, why weren't you in the pastor's pageant?

Well, it was Hunter's birthday. I'm not here to tell him that. I don't know if he's watching. One of the kids are sick. But I used that. I'll go ahead and tell you. I used it as an excuse. Okay?

That we may do something for Hunter on his birthday. We did it Friday night. But I'll be open with you. I used that as an excuse. Why? Because that's not my thing. I'm like a fish out of water when you put me on a platform in front of a bunch of people and I'm not preaching a message.

[14 : 39] It's not my thing. I don't like public speaking. The very first speech I ever gave in a speech class in college was how to change oil in a 1967 Mustang.

Why? Because that's all I knew. But God says it doesn't matter. I'm encouraged by these words because what Paul says is I was entrusted with the message so I came to you and I came to you not in what I knew but I came to you with what I did know.

He says, I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Here it is. The servants that are entrusted that is the people of God with a message that the world needs to hear it may not always want to hear it but the message that the world needs to hear has this one great aim.

Friend, listen to me. Determine this. I love the word determine. That means I made an intentional mental assertion that I was going to do just this one thing. Determined means it was really an intentional act.

Paul says, when I came to you I intentionally chose to come to you with one thing and one thing only Jesus Christ and Him crucified. If you know Jesus Christ and Him crucified then you have a message the world needs to hear.

[15 : 49] And you have a message you've been entrusted with. And these are entrusted servants. And what we see here Paul refers to himself as the bond slave.

And I know we're in America and it seems in the Western world it's so hard to say it because I know when I read it in the NASB sometimes I get this look on people's face to shock because some of you you wear your emotions on your face as well.

You just don't know it. And some of us we understand when it says slave and we're like, well slave that's just a bad connotation. Right? Well the word *doulos* means Paul says I am a slave of Christ. It doesn't mean slavery as we envision it in Western part part of the world.

It just means slavery and that Christ bought us off the auction block of sin. He paid the price for us. Therefore He is now our Lord and Master and He has entrusted us with a message that we know and we are His servants to do His bidding and His alone.

A focused church is a church that realizes we are entrusted servants. We have a message the world needs to hear and whether or not they want to admit it at all they want to hear it.

[16 : 53] You say, well they don't want to hear the gospel. No, but they want to hear the answer to all their anxiety. Have you ever looked across bookshelves and seen how many books are entitled with the word hope? Have you ever done a search and see, you know, how to calm your fears, how to get all this other things, all this self-help stuff, right?

I wrote a book years ago. I've never published it. I've still got it. Some of you have read it and I think a couple of you have read it and I wrote this book called Promises of Hope and it's upon the last sayings of Christ. I don't say this because I want you to read it. I'm saying this because the reason I never published it is by the time I got done with it every book on the shelf had the word hope in it.

I said, I'm not going to put another book out there with hope. But I didn't know what else to title it because I'd preached the series of messages, Promises of Hope. I've preached them a couple of times, not the same series but I've preached the same passages and I always have to give it the same title because it's the only things.

It's the nine great truths that Christ gives us on the night of his crucifixion, the things he tells his disciples in John 14, 15, 16, right before High Priestly Prayer. I think there are nine great truths there.

There are promises of hope but the world is dulled to hope. The world needs to know how to help with their anxiety. The world needs to know what gives hope. The world needs to know what gives meaning. And here's the great thing if you read the morning reading and some of you are following the same passage, not only did you read in Leviticus but this evening or this morning, you also read in the book of Ecclesiastes and there's this great thing in Ecclesiastes chapter 3.

[18 : 08] Ecclesiastes chapter 3 tells us that God has said eternity in the heart of all men. So everybody you're talking to has a desire for eternity in their hearts. And here's the thing that you've been entrusted with. You know the answer to that.

Right? We are entrusted servants. We know the answer to man's greatest longing. They may not think they want to hear it but to the very depth of their being they do want to hear it.

And we've been entrusted with that. So Paul says, so I came to you. I came to the church at Colossae with this message and the message was just Jesus Christ. So as the focus church has entrusted servants it realizes we've been given this great opportunity.

I have the great privilege every week to stand up two to three times a week to preach in front of every one of you guys whoever's in the back back there whoever's watching whatever few people are watching on the live stream and I count it a great privilege.

But the greater privilege still is that each and every one of you make a greater impact than I do. Because my sphere of influence is very limited until you.

[19 : 22] One of the great promises that Christ gives the church is that you would do greater works than I did. Like if I go you would do greater works. And you say, well how can we do greater works than Christ? Christ died on the cross for us. Not greater in scope but greater in span.

Right? He says, I've limited myself to this small little geographical area of the nation of Israel and I stepped out of it a little bit when I went over to the Decapolis region and over to that part but literally something about the size of the state of New Jersey.

That's where he limited his but he entrusted it with his disciples who would gather together in the upper room and spread it to the ends of the earth. We do a greater work in scope because there's no greater work in measure than what he does but we can go further than Christ ever did because we've been entrusted with his message.

Same way for every pastor. The focus church realizes that each and every one of us are entrusted servants. Number two, we see the exalted trinity. Something we don't speak about a lot in Southern Baptist churches or even Baptist churches is the trinity.

Some of us get a little uncomfortable with that feeling. It gets a little queasiness in our stomach because pastors start speaking about the Holy Spirit and next thing you know somebody's going to be hanging from the chandeliers. Well they might but it's okay. We won't judge them for that if they determine they need to but we see here the exaltation or the exalted trinity.

[20 : 36] Notice what Paul says. Paul says, I determine to know nothing among you saved Jesus Christ and him crucified. Do you know what you need to know about the son? He said, well he lived a perfect life. He was born a virgin birth.

Right, he did. But he was also crucified for the sin of man. Crucified, dead and buried and on the third day raised again. When we get to 1 Corinthians 15 we'll see the gospel in a nutshell and we'll see that he speaks of this.

He said, I delivered unto you that which was first importance that Christ was born of a virgin according to the scriptures that he lived a perfect life according to the scriptures that he died a substitutionary death according to the scripture that he was raised on the third day and witnessed by men according to the scripture.

And this is more than likely a catechism of the early church and Paul is just repeating something that they, the refrain that the church spoke of. The one thing that you need to know is Christ crucified. You don't need to know the answer to everything, to every miraculous work Jesus ever did.

Anytime someone comes to you and says, well I just don't believe in miracles and I don't understand about this and I mean could Jesus really walk on water? The answer to that is yes. Did Jesus really feed the 5,000? More like 10,000 and the answer to that is yes.

[21 : 37] Did he raise the dead? Did Lazarus come out too? Yes. Did he heal the blind? Yes. Did he cleanse the leper? Yes. And you say, well how did he do all those things? Those things aren't really the central matter because he did those things to validate the main thing and the main thing is that Jesus Christ was crucified for the sin of man dead and buried on the third day and raised again.

Because when you realize that the tomb is empty you have an answer for every other miraculous deed which he did. We spend a lot of time trying to validate and substantiate the miraculous work which Christ did the whole time avoiding the greatest miracle that's ever been completed.

The fact that he was dead people saw him that his side was pierced blood and water testified to the reality of the end of his life that he was laid in a tomb and on the third day you went back that tomb is empty and it's still not empty because if he can come out of a tomb if he can be dead and be raised to walk in the newness of life I have no problem with trying to figure out how he walked on water fed the multitudes how he cleansed the leper how he touched the blind how he raised the dead because if he can walk out of a tomb he can do anything.

So the greatest work you ever need to know that the son did I came saving to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified. So that's great. But here's the good news because it's the exalted trinity right?

The son's price that he paid is united with the purpose and the plans of the father because he speaks of God's eternal purposes right? He speaks of what God had predestined before the ages.

[22 : 59] He says we speak with wisdom but not the wisdom of this world or not the wisdom of nature but we speak with a wisdom that speaks of God's wisdom in a mystery. Verse 7 but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery the hidden wisdom which God now here's this word that scares a lot of us predestined don't let predestined scare you because it's in scripture right?

It ought to bring you comfort and it ought to bring you security and I'll show you why but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to our glory. What is it saying? God had a purpose and a plan for the redemption of man before he created the foundations of the earth.

Before man chose to sin God already knew how he was going to redeem man from sin that is predestined it. He knew it before it happened. God does not respond to man's sin.

God had already taken the initiative before he even created man and he has done that for our glory. So here's the good news. If you know that Jesus Christ was crucified for the sin of man you also know that God had predestined and purposed that that death would redeem those whom he knew and it is the greatest motivating factor that you can ever find.

A true understanding of the purposes and plans of God does not stifle missions it motivates missions because here it is God knows that he's going to redeem people because of the price that the son paid on the cross and since he knows it and he had already determined it and he's already predestined it to our glory then why would we not share?

[24 : 26] Right? Because look at what the word says it's just as it is written things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard and which have not entered into the heart of man all that God has prepared for those who love him.

It's a wonderful gift right? God has things prepared for you and I that we don't even know about yet things that have never even entered our hearts and he's done it from the foundations of the earth.

So let's move further along when we know that the son paid the ultimate price and we know that the father had the grand plan the price the son paid unites with the purpose that God had predestined God has so determined before time began that when Jesus died on the cross he would redeem men from their sin that's the only way God had determined that that death would be sufficient before man sinned he had already provided a way for the redemption of man and the restoration of man for our glory that we may return back to our glorious standing be holy as I am holy but that's only two parts of the trinity look at what he says when he came Christ crucified he comes and he says this in demonstration of the spirit we'll get back to that in a moment and power the spirit now all of a sudden we're introduced into the holy spirit that spirit should be capitalized

I have a couple of Jewish well they're messianic Jewish bibles so they're in English they're not in Hebrew or Greek that brother in Christ has given me and I love because there are some words that they don't translate and it kind of makes them pop out holy spirit is one of them it's still in it's Hebrew wording the hagodesh right hagodesh because it's not just a spirit it's the spirit right of power and he goes on he moves on down look at verse 10 for to us God revealed them through the spirit oh now we're getting into it the exalted trinity the price that the son paid is united with the purpose God had predetermined and now all of a sudden the agent of illumination has been introduced to the world which means you don't have to convince anyone of the matter because the spirit is present to illuminate it you just have to share it it is not your job to convince it is not your job to persuade it is your job to proclaim and it is my job to proclaim it is the spirit's job to reveal and illuminate what did

Jesus say that when he comes he will convict the world of sin and righteousness right the spirit brings conviction friend I could say things to you that may convict you and may upset you and may offend you but the spirit can get to the heart of the matter and make you uncomfortable the spirit makes us grip the back of the pews and makes the knuckles turn white the spirit brings the conviction that will not leave us when we go eat a good lunch the spirit unsettles us to the very core of our being the spirit takes the word of God which united with the purpose of God which declares God paid on the cross of Calvary and the spirit takes it and penetrates to the heart of man that is why when I came to Christ there was no man present there were only two other people in the house and both of them were asleep my wife was asleep and my oldest son was asleep but the spirit was doing a work and he would not let me sleep he was beating me up one side and down the other and he was taking the word of God which was illuminating for me the son of God and was showing me the God the father was calling me and when the father was calling me he was showing the father the father was showing me the price the son paid for me and then the spirit was convicting me and all

[28 : 13] I could do was fall down and say yes it was the work of the trinity not the work of man now had man declared a truth to me yes you know what man did for me man said go read the book of Romans and see what it says about salvation that's the only thing that was said Billy Joe do me a favor you say well I know people that want nothing to do with God right Billy Joe do me a favor just read the book of Romans and see what it says about salvation that's all he said and through reading the word of God about the son of God the spirit of God began to bring conviction to this wicked man and he broke me and he called me to himself friend may we stop trying to persuade people and just proclaim to them so the spirit can do his work because look at what it says because the spirit brings and searches all things for the spirit searches all things even the depths of God you know one of the greatest I know I've said it to you before and I'll continue saying it again

Martin Lord Jones and other preachers used to say it but start speaking of the spiritual exercise of preaching the spiritual exercise of preaching is when the man of God proclaims the word of God and the spirit of God takes it the heart of the people of God this is why when I can preach a message there can be 50 people walk out that door to hear 50 different things it's because the spirit takes the things of God he knows exactly what God is doing and he takes the things of God and penetrates the heart of man with it you ever come tell me thank you just thank me for reading the word of God praise the spirit blessed trinity for the work that he's doing see that and just in case we think we come by this I love verse 12 you can underline it you can circle it you can highlight it now we have received don't skip over the word received the new American standard says it like this now we have received not the spirit of the world but the spirit who not something we earn right it's not our works when we exalt the trinity we understand that salvation is totally and completely the work of

God the son of God paid the price for the redemption of man according to the purpose of God he had predetermined before the foundation of the earth was laid so that the spirit of God could come in and illuminate that work to the hearts given number three and finally we see the expected outcome why should I do it why should I do it if I have been given this message that the world needs to hear and really this message is just to proclaim Jesus Christ and him crucified if this is such a grand message and the trinity is involved in that such a spiritual exercise that the whole trinity the whole God head the fullness of the God head is involved in that right then why should I do that shouldn't I expect something I don't know about you but I'm a guy who does better when I know what's going to happen or I have an expectation right I'm always aiming at something it doesn't always look like I am sometimes it looks like I'm meandering and meandering is not always a!

Paul says we'll go back up verse 4 in my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom okay great but in the demonstration of the spirit and power man has the ability to persuade man has the ability of persuasion only the spirit has the ability of demonstration see we may persuade and convince men of this great truth the church that is scattered and thinks that it is their responsibility to go out and win the masses it's not our responsibility it's our responsibility to go out and declare to the masses right it's not our responsibility to be the savior of the men it's our responsibility to tell men about the savior they may persuade people and convince them for a season we may be able to convince them that it is a good idea to try out but when we come and we allow the spirit to use it and we allow the fullness of the god then there's a demonstration of power men are broken women are broken people are repentant people are responding and we expect

I expect every time that the word of god is read that there would be a demonstration of power that hearts would be changed minds would be conformed that lives would be redirected and reshaped to his glory that homes would be restored that lives would be mended that broken hearts would be filled up with the joy of Christ there's this expectation of a demonstration now I don't always see it that's fine I don't always see it manifested in front of but I expect that when I get up to declare the word of God God is going to demonstrate his power in your life even if I don't get to see there's this expectation because Paul says when I kept the main thing the main thing he demonstrated his power and what he did among you that's what he tells the church he redeems you he called you he saved you and he appointed you that's his power Paul says I can't do that you can't do that I can't do that none of us can do that look at what he says is he goes on there he says he unites we combine spiritual thoughts with spiritual words but a natural man does not accept the things of the spirit of

[33 : 58] God for their foolishness to him so we don't expect people to become more natural we expect them to become spiritual and he cannot understand them because they are spiritually appraised but he who is spiritually appraised he who spiritually appraises all things who knows the mind of the Lord that we will instruct him none of us we can't tell God how to act here's this wonderful thing but we have the mind of Christ we have the mind of Christ the church has the ability when focused to move forward with the mind of Christ into the world that God has appointed us and with the mind of Christ we have the ability to declare Jesus Christ and him crucified and we unite with the purposes of God and we unite with the powerful influence of the spirit of God and the spirit begins to use it for his glory I know this seems to be a little bit more of a prodding and poking message you say well I don't know pastor if this is quite as edifying yes it is it ought to be desperate leaning and relying upon the power and presence of the spirit and the fullness of the

God head to do what he's asked us to do we've been given jobs each and every one of some of us are retired from jobs some of us currently have jobs some of us are looking for better jobs so that's fine whatever we're gifted with whatever we've been entrusted with is a because our worldly occupations are the heavenly callings to be used for his glory where we're at the things he's given us to do in this life there's no separation one of the great things in history that really brought a downfall to the church is when the church began to separate the natural from the spiritual there began to be the separation of life well we go to church and we do this rather than we are the church that's why we do this we don't go to church to do things we come to a building as the church so that when we go out as the church we have the encouragement to continue doing things remember

I told you this story right the old van that Carrie and I used to have that's a good story it's good illustration it bears repeating SM Lockridge once said if a message is good enough to preach once it's good enough to preach twice that illustration is a good enough illustration I can share it again we had this old Honda Odyssey I know some of you have them great vans we drove them until the wheels fell off both of them the first one we ever had was a blue Honda Odyssey I can't remember the year I remember I got into it one day and I was driving it was Carrie's vehicle we carried everything I love those things I got in there one day and I went to shut the door and there was something in the cup holder or not the cup holder the door handle and I said hey dear what is this it's this little piece of metal and she said I don't know what that is but it fell off the brake pedal I said oh okay it fell off the brake pedal it was a part of the pedal I did what every good husband does I touched the brake pedal the brake pedal was still attached the vehicle still stopped so I put it back in the door handle

I never did anything about it because that was just a part that was a part it was a part that fell off must not have been too significant of a part somebody must have thought it was an important part some engineer down the road you know Honda probably thought it was an important part I never really looked any further to see what part that part played in the operation of that vehicle because it continued to do the same thing I wanted to do it always stopped you go a little bit further her ignition stops she can't turn her key we put her key in there it has a smart keys right you put the key in there and you can't turn the key so I did what every good husband did I disassembled the steering column on that and I figured it out because those tumblers are expensive right those are the lean years in the Calvert household I don't mind telling you so I did what every good husband did I took the steering column apart and I found out there's this little plastic thing with two wires that are in the back of the tumbler that you can run out as long as you have the key in and use the screwdriver and start it a part messed up but it wasn't an essential part and we drove it that way left a key in it nobody could start it if you didn't know to turn that thing that hung out of the steering column we left a key in it it was a wonderful thing people get in there and carry it they would look at it let me get my Stanley screwdriver out and start it some of you are thinking you're a terrible and she said honey

I just pulled into tractor supply I said okay that's good she said no you don't understand I wasn't going to tractor supply but it sounded like a bunch of gravel fell in the bottom of the transmission so I rolled into tractor supply now we got a problem because that was the driving force of the vehicle so I got rid of it I was honest with the individual he took it it's fine see the moral story is as long as Christ is a part of your life he can fall off go by the wayside you can make amendments to it you can do everything you want to and you can make life work as long as it's just a part but when Christ becomes the driving force of your life if that stops everything changes the church that is not focused is the church that allows Christ to be a part of it sometimes things fall off but we just keep going but a focused church has one message one goal one purpose one plan and it is the work of Christ among man he's the driving force if anything affects that relationship we stop and we take notice and we amend that relationship because we need it to work right because if it won't work right the church goes nowhere but that's the same with your life as Jesus is a part of your life you can deal with it if things aren't always perfect but when he is your life he's the driving force of your life you make sure that it's good because if it's not you roll to a stop the question is how focused are we as a church but also how focused are we as individuals it's not what we convince ourselves of it's what demonstrates its power in our lives and shows us we're made of let's pray so

[41 : 24] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.