

## 2 Corinthians 6:11-18

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[ 0 : 00 ] So we're 2 Corinthians chapter 6. We're going to pick up in verse 11. Our text this morning will be verses 11 through 18. So we'll get to the end of the chapter. If it's okay with you, I'm going to go back and we're going to read the entire chapter because I want us to make sure that we have it in context so that we can see the flow of it because verses 11, 12, and 13 have a particular application to which preceded that in just a few verses ahead of it.

So we'll read it in its entirety. So if you're physically able and desire to do so, would you join with me as we stand together and we read the word of God with one another found in 2 Corinthians chapter 6.

Again, our text verses 11 through 18, but we'll go back and read the entire chapter just so we can ensure that we get it in context. It says, and working together with him, keep that in mind, okay?

And working together with him, we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For he says, At the acceptable time I listened to you and on the day of salvation I helped you.

Behold, now is the acceptable time. Behold, now is the day of salvation. Giving no cause for offense and anything so that the ministry will not be discredited, but in everything commending ourselves as servants of God in much endurance and afflictions and hardships and distresses and beatings and imprisonments and tumults and labors and sleeplessness and hunger and purity and knowledge and patience and kindness and the Holy Spirit and genuine love and the word of truth and the power of God.

[ 1 : 38 ] By the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and the left, by glory and dishonor, by evil report and good report, regarded as deceivers and yet true, as unknown yet well known, as dying yet behold we live, as punished yet not put to death, as sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich, as having nothing yet possessing all things.

Here's our text. Our mouth has spoken freely to you, O Corinthians. Our heart is open wide. You are not restrained by us, but you are restrained in your own affections.

Now in a like exchange, I speak as to children, open wide to us also. Do not be bound together with unbelievers. For what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness?

Or what fellowship has light and darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Bilal? Or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols?

For we are the temple of the living God, just as God said. I will dwell in them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Therefore come out from their midst and be separate, says the Lord, and do not touch what is unclean.

[ 2 : 55 ] And I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty. Let's pray. We thank you for this day.

We're so thankful for the opportunity we have had to come. Lord, we've been able to fellowship one with another. We've been able to worship you in song. We've been able to worship you in giving. Lord, we just thank you for the grand privilege it is of worshiping you through the reading and hearing of your word.

Lord, now we ask that you would speak to us, O Father, that you would give us eyes to see and ears to hear. You would open our hearts up to receive the message that it would move beyond the intellect and move into the heart and the very emotions of our well-being.

We pray, O God, that you would take your word and you would conform us to it for your glory and honor. And we ask it all in Christ's name. Amen. You may be seated. As we have made our way through 2 Corinthians and we are continuing to remind ourselves that Paul is encouraging the church to live out an authentic faith.

He is wanting them to live this faith out authentically in the community and the society among the people that God has placed and planted them. Paul has used himself and those who labor with him as examples and illustrations of what that looks like.

[ 4 : 10 ] Paul began to state his love for them in the second chapter and then got on a holy aside as it pertained to his labors for the kingdom. What it looked like to be a servant of Christ because he had been captive by the Savior, Jesus Christ.

He had been held captive. He had been taken captive from the bondage of sin and was being put on parade for the glory of the Savior. We have seen that this is so much more than just what applies to Paul and those who are with him, but rather its application transcends time.

And all those who come to Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior have been captivated from sin and have been put on display for the glory of the Savior. He has called us to walk before him in processional glory.

We are not the glorious one, but we are reflecting the glorious one. We are those who live in such a way and in such a manner that all glory and honor goes to him and him alone.

We are the rewards of his victory. And we are therefore put on display as spoils of that battle which has won. We put ourselves on display through entering into the ministry assignment that he has given us.

[ 5 : 19 ] That is the grand application we've seen over the last couple of chapters. That God has assigned each and every one of us a special ministry assignment. Some of it vocational, much of it not vocational, much of it just by natural reality of how we live.

It is a living out of our faith in the society that God has placed us. Paul here returns to his reaffirmation of his love. But as he continues to restate his love for them, he'll bring it to greater fruition in the seventh chapter.

But here he also gives us one of these final points of what it looks like to be a laborer in ministry. I want you to see this morning, the set-apart workman.

The set-apart workman. In scripture, we would call that sanctification. It has been set apart for others. It has been set apart for another service. It is sanctified.

It is set aside. It is designated for a holy purpose. It is the set-apart workman that God has set his people apart for his glory and his alone.

[ 6 : 27 ] They are no longer what they used to be. They can no longer be what they once were. They have been completely, totally set apart. Now, how they live out that sanctification is based upon the decisions which they make.

They have been sanctified. They are the city set on the hill. They are a candle that has been lit for the light of the glory of God. How they live that out in daily application flows from the decisions and choices that we make.

But I want you to see this set-apart workman. I've read throughout the time that God has called me into the ministry, one of the greatest encouragements that I was ever given was a call to preach, was a call to prepare.

And I had to discipline myself to learn to read and to learn to study and to learn to do all these things. And I've read a number of books, a number of great biographies, a number of not-so-good biographies. I've read a lot of church history.

I've read a lot of things that are outside of church history. I try to read broad. I try to read a lot of different things. But one thing that I find is that those that God uses are those who have set themselves apart for his use.

[ 7 : 31 ] That is, they have been intentional and they have been practical. It doesn't mean they've always been vocational, but it just means they have lived intentionally and practically for the glory of another.

It is no longer about themselves. God's workers are set apart from our text that we have this morning in three distinct ways. And I want you to see them.

I'll always tell you how many points I have, but it's three this morning, okay? I want you to see there are three distinct ways in which the workers or the laborers in the kingdom of heaven are set apart.

Number one, we are set apart in our fellowship. Paul states in verse 11, Our mouth has spoken freely to you, O Corinthians. Our heart is opened wide.

In light of all of the sufferings and in light of all of the trials and in light of all of the tribulations, in light of all of the false accusations which he has just stated prior to this, Paul reaffirms to the believers that in spite of all of these things, he has not pulled himself back from them.

[ 8 : 31 ] He has not restrained himself. He has not confined what he has declared to them. He has spoken freely and honestly and openly to them as it pertained to the salvation of their souls. Paul is reaffirming his love because of his dedication to the church.

He says, I have loved you through what I have said and I have loved you through how I have lived. In the midst of all of these trials, if we go back and we read over the listing, if you notice, it's three groupings of nine.

There's nine negative things. There's nine positive things. Then there's nine misinterpreted things. There's all these things that you have going on and all these ups and downs in life. Paul says, through all of these trials, through all of these struggles, through the bad times and the good times, through the misunderstood times, in all of these applications, I have not failed to love you honestly and sincerely.

He says, I have walked with you and labored with you. I've spoken to you and I've declared to you what you needed to hear. Friend, listen to me. The greatest way that we display an authentic love for those around us is to speak truthfully.

It is to speak truthfully and honestly, but lovingly. We see this reality here that Paul says that his heart is opened wide and so too is his mouth.

[ 9 : 41 ] Unfortunately, we are quick to open our mouths, but we don't always open our hearts. That is, we say what we want to say, but we're not necessarily saying it from the heart. Or on the contradiction to that, we open our heart and we just accept things that we should never accept, but we will never say the things that ought to be said.

Paul says that I have not failed to speak to you what I should, and I have not failed to do it through a loving heart and an honest heart. He said, my heart is open wide. But look at what it says. He says, you are not restrained by us.

What a glory this is. Now, I know I'm kind of on the side here. Stay with me because Paul went on it. Paul says, As far as your Christian life goes, O Corinthians, you are not hindered by anything that you are failing to receive from me.

You are not hindered because I have allowed you to live as you should not live, or I have failed to give you the truths which you should know. What a glorious position this is.

What if we could say of all of those of which God has given us the opportunity to have at least some spiritual impact upon, that their life of faith was unhindered or unrestrained by us.

[ 10 : 52 ] Too often, believers are the very hindrance of others in their faith. Too often, it is the actions and the life. Remember what Paul says, giving no offense in anything or in any way.

Too often, it is the offense caused by the believer which restrains the faithfulness of others. But Paul says it's not that way. I have loved you in such a manner that you are unrestrained by us.

And then Paul could openly and honestly say, the reason you are restrained is because of you. If you're reading a King James, it says your bowels. He says, in your emotions and in your heart, he said, you are restrained in your own affections.

What a glory it is to be able to look at believers and say, the reason that you are not maturing in the faith is not because you're lacking any discipleship. It's because you love the things you love and your own affections or your own desires are what's holding you back.

And you could speak honestly here. And Paul is saying this to him. He says, now, all I ask of you is that you would love me in the same way. Now, all of this has a reason for being here. Okay, so stay with me. He says, I've loved you in such a way that I've been honest with you.

[ 11 : 57 ] And all I'm asking is that you love me in the same way. Because he uses this as a transition to get to this key area of fellowship. We will fellowship with that which we love.

Paul is encouraging them. He goes on now in verse 14. Do not be bound together with unbelievers. What is he saying?

He says, well, maybe it appears to you that there is something that you're missing out because of your relationship with me. Maybe it appears because maybe you need something more. So you're going seeking and trying to find it.

In the case of the Corinthians, they were going to false teachers. They wanted to enter into the deeper life. And they wanted to know grander things. Paul says, there's nothing that you're missing because of your fellowship with me. And you're seeking to fill these needs that really aren't there.

It's your own desires. It's your own affections. But do not be bound with unbelievers. Now, let's be frank here. Quite often we've used this as a church to speak of the relationship of marriage.

[ 12 : 56 ] Now, while it has application of the marriage between a believer and a non-believer, this is not the first truth or application that it's ever stated. Because in context, we find its application actually speaks to the church member.

So in primary context, just like when we go to the 1 Corinthians 13, many of you, some of you were there last Sunday evening. I had the honor of officiating a wedding ceremony of Hunter and Sarah Schmid.

That's hard to say now, right? So of Hunter and Sarah Schmid. That's how I presented them, Mr. and Mrs. Schmid. So there, I was able to do it. Even in that wedding ceremony, I read 1 Corinthians 13, the chapter of the love chapter.

Oh, yeah, it has great truth for marriage. Well, it does. It has great application for marriage, but in context, 1 Corinthians 13 was first delivered to the church, how the church responded to one another. And it has application, direct application to our relationship with brothers and sisters in Christ has further application in the marriage relationship.

Here, we see that there is relationship in marriage, but its grand application is how we live out as believers and brothers and sisters in Christ and how we live out our daily activity.

[ 14 : 02 ] Because we could say, well, I have not been bound together with unbelievers, but what Paul is saying is what about in your daily life? He says, do not be bound together.

Here we get into this fellowship principle. With unbelievers, for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness? Or what fellowship have light with darkness? Now, let's kind of flesh it out a little bit here.

The word bound there means to be yoked up with. Now, this is why when I began reading this, I said, pay attention to this. Because Paul introduces this chapter and he says, for we are fellow workers with God.

Now, admittedly, the words with God are not in the original Greek, but they are implied with the word workers. It says we are fellow workers and it implies that we are working with what has just been stated.

So you have to go back to the end of the fifth chapter. You all understand that, right? So you go back to the end of the fifth chapter and Paul there is referencing how God is working. And where God is working, Paul says, and we are fellow workers.

[ 14 : 59 ] So Paul is not just talking about working with other believers. Paul says we are working with God and we are urging you. We are his ambassadors. We are working with God.

If you were here last week, we saw how the implication of that is to come to Christ is not to cease from working. It is to change who we're partnering with in our work. Because Jesus says, come to me, all you who are weary and heavy laden, right?

And take my yoke upon you for my burden is light. It is not that we will quit working. It's but that we would partner with someone who is already working and is a greater worker than us.

Paul says the same thing. We are workers with God. Now, when he comes to this fellowship principle, he says it matters who you're yoked up with, right? You cannot work with God and with unbelievers at the same time.

You just can't do it. He says, do not be bound or yoked together with other unbelievers. You cannot do this. This does not mean association or you cannot have friends.

[ 16 : 02 ] It doesn't say you can't have friends. It does not imply isolation. So we're not talking about living a monastic lifestyle where let's all go out into the wilderness and live in, you know, communes and all this other stuff.

There's extremes to that that we don't need to. This is talking about laboring for the purpose of the kingdom. Friend, listen to me. The world has no place in kingdom work.

That's just the reality. Too often the world tries to do a kingdom work because the church has failed to do it. There are those who come and say, well, hey, pastor, would you do this with me?

Or pastor, would you do that with me? Or pastor, would you do this? If it's the goal and the calling of the church, I don't want to do it with the world. Because the reality is we are not called to yoke up with unbelievers.

We are called to work together with God for the sake of the kingdom. The principle of the Old Testament, just let's just go principle on this. In case you think the Old Testament has no application in the New Testament, what Paul is referencing here is the principle that is first stated in the book of Leviticus and later in the book of Deuteronomy.

[ 17 : 09 ] And that you should not put an ox and a donkey laboring together. You don't yoke two animals that are not the same kind. And the reason you don't is because one was clean and one was unclean.

The donkey is unclean, the ox is clean. But also because they are just two totally different animals. They work in different ways. And God says you shouldn't do that. He said, wow, God was hard on the Jewish people.

No, God was instilling a principle upon his people, his set apart people, so that when we got to the New Testament, we would understand that when God sets us apart, everything is different. Who we labor with, who we work with, the way we do these things, it's different.

So the first implication is that we do not yoke up with, we do not work alongside unbelievers. Why? Because there's a grand difference there. And he begins to speak of this reality.

He says, for what partnership has righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness, or what harmony has Christ with Belal? Belal is just the name of Satan. What he is saying, the word harmony is the same word we get from symphony in the English language.

[ 18 : 09 ] And it just implies a bunch of different instruments coming together and making one glorious sound. And what he is saying is that Jesus Christ, Lord and Savior, and Satan, the adversary of our souls, cannot come together in concert and make a good sound.

They just don't belong together. So, too, is the difference between the believer and the unbeliever. See, the reality is we need to understand this. We are set apart.

And we're set apart in this. So, if our life doesn't reflect that, I'm not saying that we cannot have friends that are nonbelievers. We ought to. We ought to be light and salt and all these things in the world that we live in.

I'm not saying that we cannot have association with unbelievers. That's not at all what I'm implying. But what I am saying is the greatest fellowship we should ever have should be with people that are like us. If we have grander fellowship outside of the church than we do inside of the church, we have a problem.

That's just the reality. When it comes together for doing kingdom work, we look within the body of believers to do it, not outside of the body of believers. This is why your pastor, I'll just be open and frank with you right now, is not always a big fan of what they call parachurch ministries.

[ 19 : 21 ] Parachurch ministries are those who come beside the church. Many of them are good and many of them are legitimate. Many of them are needed. But the reason many of them are needed is because the church felt like they just didn't want to do it, so they allowed somebody else to do it.

And we began to sub out our labor and sub out our work. We have to remind ourselves that the calling for kingdom business is to the church.

It is to us. We look among ourselves and say these are the people that God has given us to yoke up together with, to work alongside of. And we ought to labor. It says that we are set apart in our fellowship.

It tells us there as we go down or what agreement has the believer in common with the unbeliever. We have nothing in common. Now if you do, do we need to examine ourselves to see whether we are in the faith?

So we see that we are set apart in our fellowship. That's just the first part of it. Number two, the reason we are set apart in fellowship is because we are completely set apart in our function.

[ 20 : 25 ] That is, we are something totally different. Look at what it says. Verse 16 says, Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? Paul, to reiterate the reality that believers and non-believers are different, that goes back to something that was very offensive to the Jewish people.

It is, Antichonus Epiphanes did it actually in the intertestament time there. It is called the desecration of the temple. The Maccabean revolt actually happened during this time because Judas Maccabees and all of them came in and cleansed the temple.

You can read it in your history books. Well, not really your history books, but you can read it in the Jewish history. Right? So you see these realities that happen. It is bringing in a pagan idol into the holy temple of God and therefore defiling that temple.

And Paul is saying the same thing. If the temple of God was so holy, so set apart, that it had no agreement with an idol, that we should not desecrate the temple, that we'd have to cleanse it, and all these realities, he says, then that dictates or displays to us what we are.

Because he says, for we are the temple of the living God. Paul has said this before, but he says it here. Now notice what it says. I love how scripture says this. We are. It doesn't say we can be or we should be or we may be or we will be.

[ 21 : 35 ] It is we are. Peter reminds us that we are a spiritual house being built up one to another, stone connected to stone. All over and over and over in scripture, we are reminded of the present reality that the believer is presently the temple of the living God.

And that is the very thing that sets us apart because we once were inhabited by Satan. We were the children and offspring of Satan. If you want to, Jesus says you're either the son of the devil or you're the son of God.

That's the two options you have there. And so we once were inhabited by our own desires, our own ambitions, our own wishes, our own wants, and all these things. He says, but now in Christ, we've been completely transformed.

We are the temple of the living God. And since we are the temple, we are set apart in function. We have a different role in society. Go back to the Old Testament.

When the nation of Israel comes out of Exodus, in the Exodus event, in the book of Exodus, they come out of Egypt. They hang out for about two years at Mount Sinai. What God is giving them is instructions on the construction of the tabernacle.

[ 22 : 41 ] And the tabernacle was this tent that was the predecessor to the temple. If you remember, it was in the center of the camp. In the center of the camp, the Shekinah glory of God fell, and it was a representation to the nation of Israel that God was in their midst.

And everywhere they went, God went with them. We had the Ark of the Covenant inside the Holy of Holies, and it was moved around. And this tabernacle was a picture that God was with them.

He was in their midst. And then when they go into the Promised Land, the first place is shallow. Later, it becomes in Jerusalem. They construct the temple. And there, the temple, the Shekinah glory of God fell after Solomon's temple was constructed.

And the Shekinah glory of God is in the temple, and it is a representation that God is in the midst of the land. And the world was to see this nation that had God present among them, and that God's presence would set them apart and make them look different and behave differently.

Give me just a second. And we see this reality flowing all the way through. It is when they began to diminish that or dismiss that, that the glory of God departed.

[ 23 : 46 ] And now there was nothing. The building was still there, but there was no glory. The reality was that the Shekinah glory had departed. Ichabod had been written across the temple. And it was the presence of God that set the people of God apart.

Now, we come into the New Testament. We have this reality. We are the temple. I knew it was going to happen. Give me just a minute.

I'm so thankful, by the way, I didn't have to sing this morning, so thank you. I had a complete side note. I had to do that. I knew when I got hot. That's why I was trying to be still.

I was really trying to be still. And I knew as soon as I got hot, it was going to happen. Don't worry, Miss Sarah. I have a cough drop. I'm getting it right now, okay? It's the glory of this church. Everybody's paying attention to me.

Okay, here we go. Not one of yours, by the way. Don't ever ask for a cough drop from Miss Sarah. She'll give you these great ones that just take your breath out of your mouth and you can't even breathe. And I told her, Miss Sarah, if I use that, I won't be able to breathe to preach.

[ 24 : 49 ] Some of you say, put that one in. No, let's go. You'll get that later. Good breather for your pastor. We are the temple of God.

That is, our present function is to be a representation of God's presence in the world in which we live. Over and over again, we are told in the New Testament that the fullness of God chooses to dwell within us.

And now we have a different function. Before Christ, our whole desire, our whole ambition was to live for self. After Christ, we have been completely transformed in our function.

Now we are the temple of the living God. God is manifesting his presence just like he did in the tabernacle and later in the temple to a watching world based on what they see going on in that temple.

That is us. We are the temple of the living God. And that ought to set us apart because we have a different function in the world.

[ 25 : 53 ] We've said this before. If the goal of salvation was to get you to heaven, God was very unfair in leaving you on earth. Because once you come to Christ, it doesn't always get easier.

Read the Bible. Open up the Bible and you see that people are suffering for the faith. Read your church history and you see that men and women are being persecuted for the faith.

Accepting Christ does not always make life in this world easier. If the goal of salvation was simply to occupy a place in heaven, then God is unfair.

But the goal of salvation is to set us apart to display the glory of the Savior and the wonder of the Father in the world in which we live. And the reward of that is heaven.

That's the reward. That is not the purpose. And when we see that and we reconcile it with the Old Testament, the reason God chose Abram out of the land of the Ur of Chaldeans wasn't because Abram was a better guy.

[ 26 : 56 ] He was living in idolatrous people and he himself was an idolater. It wasn't because Abram had done anything wondrous. All we know is that God called him. God called Abram, set him apart, took him to a different land and put him on display so that the world would know what a holy God looks like.

The reason God called you and I was to make us a temple of the living God to set us apart, to put us on display so that men and women around us, boys and girls and all those who come into contact with us, would do just like they did when they walked past Jerusalem.

They said, look at that temple. There's got to be something. Look, when they're walking in faith, the rain kept coming. The crops kept growing. The animals kept giving birth. Say something is happening with those people.



They're not living like something's happening and they could testify it is the presence of God among us that changes us. See, it set them apart because they had a different function. Abraham had a new function.

He could live over here and worship the false gods, but then he was called to be put on display for the true God. That was the nation of Israel that was living in Egypt. They were growing and prospering in numbers and doing all this. And God called them out in order to bring them in.

[ 28 : 03 ] And he brought them in so that he could put them on display so that all the world may know this is what God looks like. They failed in doing that. We come through history. We see Jesus Christ comes.

God knew all these things. None of these things took him by surprise. He redeems us and he saves us, not so that he can construct brick and mortar stone temples, but so that we could be the temple of the living God.

So that the function of man would no longer be about self gratification, but it would be about glory display of a holy God. He put us on display and friend, you are not on display when you are blending in.

You are not on display when you look like every other building with the same old function. You are only set apart when we realize we have a different function. When we realize we have a different calling.

When we realize we have a different purpose and the purpose isn't about us. You have spent long enough looking and living for you. Now you have been set apart so that people would know how glorious God is.

[ 29 : 03 ] We are the temple of the living God, he says. And he says, I will dwell in them and walk among them and I will be their God and they shall be my people.

Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate, says the Lord. God says, if you've got a different function, then you need to live set apart. Because we are supposed to do something different.

Number three. Not only do we have a set apart fellowship, we have a set apart function. Here's the grandest and greatest one of them all. We have a set apart favor.

We have something glorious that we possess. Look at what it says. Now, you need to understand when Paul gets into verse 16, he begins quoting numerous passages throughout the Old Testament.

He begins quoting passages in Isaiah and Jeremiah. But then when we get down to verse 18, if you do deep Bible study, you'll know that he is not quoting any particular Old Testament passage.

[ 30 : 06 ] But we should not be surprised and say, well, Paul is misinterpreting and misquoting scripture. No, Paul is writing scripture. He is the man of God, moved by the spirit of God to pen the word of God.

And as one commentator said, he has just as much authority to declare an authoritative prophetic word as anybody else. Right. And so here we see that he is taking the very meaning and the force of scripture and showing us the favor we possess.

He says, do not touch what is unclean and I will welcome you. Here it is. And I will be a father to you and you shall be sons and daughters to me.

Here's the favor that we have. He says, if we are set apart, therefore come out from among their midst and be separate, says the Lord. And do not touch what is unclean and I will welcome you.

The first favor we have is we are welcome into the presence of almighty, holy God. He says, I will welcome you. If you are set apart, you can come into my presence.

[ 31 : 11 ] But then he takes it a little bit further. It's not just that we were welcomed into his presence. Oh, there are people or there are people that we say, oh, if I could just get an invitation from that person.

Oh, if I ever had an opportunity to meet that person or if I ever had the great opportunity, I'd do anything in the world to meet that person. Be careful. Be careful. See, we'll make adjustments in our life to meet somebody that is just flesh and blood and bone and sinew and marrow just like ourselves.

We put them on a pedestal so, oh, if I could just meet that person. I heard one rather famous Christian artist say recently, you're only famous among the people that don't know you.

Because everybody else, you're just a human being. There's a lot of truth in that, right? The only famous people are the people you don't know. And you say, oh, I'd do anything in the world to meet them.

But God says, but I'm giving you an opportunity to meet me. I'm giving you an opportunity to come into my presence. And people, oh, well, I don't know. That's a lot to do. I mean, this is almighty God. Well, I don't know if I want to give all that up.

[ 32 : 15 ] Think of what we'd give up to meet some people. Look at what he says. And I will be a father to you. And you will be sons and daughters to me. Look at this unbelievable favor.

Those who are set apart, he says, I'll love you like a father. Paul says, I'm talking to you, Corinthians, as a father. And I'm asking you to love me as my children. But he said, but there's a greater one.

There's a greater one that says, if you are set apart. God says, I will be a father to you. And you will be sons and daughters to me. I love how Warren Wiersbe says it. The moment we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, positionally, we are sons and daughters of the King.

You are adopted into the family of God. Through the spirit of adoption, we cry out, Abba, Father, positionally. But it's only when we begin to separate ourselves that we practically live in the reality of being sons and daughters.

Positionally, we are already through salvation. But when we make the decision that we take the action to set ourselves apart, then practically, we begin to love the reality that he is our father, that we are his sons, that we are his daughters.

[ 33 : 24 ] Practically, we begin to live differently because we are feeling his love. It is no longer about a position. Now it's about practicalities. It's about living out the reality of who we are. It is being set apart.

It says, says the Lord Almighty. Pay attention to the names of God in scripture. Pay attention. This name is used here and it's used in the book of Revelation.

It's used here in Paul's reference to the favor we have of being his children. It's used in the book of Revelation when it declares him as being the almighty, sovereign judge of all of heaven and earth.

It is a name that reflects his splendor. It is a name that declares his worthiness. It is a name that declares his praise. Here is the one who says he will be a father to you.

Here is the one who says you will be his son or his daughter. Here is the one who says that practically you can know it if you'll set yourselves apart for his use and usefulness. Here is the one who says that if you'll just live differently, I will show you the love of a father.

[ 34 : 24 ] He is the Lord God sovereign. The omnipotent one who reigns and rules over all of heaven and earth. He is the only one. He is the sovereign one.

He is the holy one and he is the almighty one. He is Elohim. That is God the creator. He is Yahweh. That is God in covenant. He is Jehovah Jireh. That is the Lord who provides.

He is banner over you is love. That is Jehovah Nisi. He is Jehovah Shalom. The Lord is our peace. He is all of those omnipotent, omniscient, all-powerful, all-knowing, sovereign, holy God who says if you'll set yourselves apart, I'll be a father to you and you'll be sons and daughters to me.

And friend, if that ain't a favor, if that ain't something that nobody else can offer you, I don't know what you set yourself apart for. But when someone like that says this is what I'll offer you, then we are of all men most to be pitied if we will not take them up on it.

God says set yourself apart and this is who you'll be. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for this day. We thank you for your position, your power, and your presence.

[ 35 : 32 ] God, I pray that you help us to respond as we ought to. Lord, I pray that we would live set apart as laborers in the kingdom for the glory of the king.

We ask it all in Christ's name. Amen. Amen.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 38 : 15 ] Thank you.