

## 2 Corinthians 8:13-24

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[ 0 : 00 ] to 2 Corinthians chapter 8. 2 Corinthians chapter 8, as we just continue making our way through this book of 2 Corinthians, we are picking up in the 13th verse.

That is where we left off last week. So we will be in 2 Corinthians chapter 8, starting in verse 13, and going down to the end of that chapter, which will be verse 24.

So 2 Corinthians chapter 8, verses 13 through 24. If you remember, we introduced into this 8th chapter and it's kind of a sub-series or a mini-series within the series.

The letter to the church at Corinth that we have titled 2 Corinthians, which probably is about the third letter which Paul wrote to the church there. But the letter which we have is not a letter of correction or rebuke or even admonition as we have in the first letter of 1 Corinthians.

Rather, it is a letter that is challenging the church to live authentically. He is calling them. Since they have repented, we see that in the previous chapter, they've repented of those things, Paul has confidence in that found in the 7th chapter.

[ 1 : 02 ] He wants them to live out an authentic faith in the community in which they have been placed and put. And it is a very strategic community. It is a city of great prosperity. It is a city of great accessibility to numerous people, groups, and different beliefs and systems and great opportunity, but a great responsibility as well.

And he wants them to live out an authentic faith. And part of that authentic faith is what we introduced last week. And it is what I said then, and I will reaffirm now, something that I have never traditionally preached on, and that is the matter of giving.

It has never been my practice, and I know some pastors do it, and I'm not a pastor, they're right or they're wrong, to preach giving series. I've never once preached a giving series. It would always have been because I felt like if I could get the heart right, the wallet would follow.

I told you that. And we see this because now that Paul has understood that their hearts are right, now he's going to encourage them where their wallet should go. And he is going to move in this direction.

But yet, this is why we confine ourselves to preaching through scripture, so that when we get to such things, we can see them in their proper context. So last week, we looked at the first 12 verses, and we are looking at the giving of the saints.

[ 2 : 13 ] We looked at verses 1 through 12 in the 8th chapter, and we've seen how this is an opportunity of grace. It is a gracious opportunity to give. God blesses us with that because he pours out his mercy and grace upon us, and he gives us the opportunity to pour back into others.

And we will pick that up. I will go back and read verse 12, but we'll start in verse 13 as our text as we read to the end of the chapter. So if you are 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 word of God, found in 2 Corinthians chapter 8.

I'm going to start in verse 12, but our text really begins in verse 13. For if the readiness is present, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have. For this is not for the ease of others and for your affliction, but by way of equality.

At this present time, your abundance being a supply for their needs, so that their abundance also may become a supply for your need, that there may be equality. As it is written, he who gathered much did not have too much, and he who gathered little had no lack.

But thanks be to God, who puts the same earnestness on your behalf in the heart of Titus. For he not only accepted our appeal, but being himself very earnest, he has gone to you of his own accord.

[ 3 : 27 ] We have sent along with him the brother, whose fame in the things of the gospel has spread through all the churches. And not only this, but he has also been appointed by the churches to travel with us in this gracious work, which is being administered by us for the glory of the Lord himself, and to show our readiness, taking precaution so that no one will discredit us in our administration of this generous gift.

For we have regard for what is honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men. We have sent with them our brother, whom we have often tested and found diligent in many things, but now even more diligent because of his great confidence in you.

As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker among you. As for our brethren, they are messengers of the churches, a glory to Christ. Therefore, openly before the churches, show them the proof of your love and of your reason and of our reason for boasting about you.

Let's pray. God, we thank you so much for this opportunity. We thank you for this day, which you've given us, and we thank you for the glorious privilege it is of opening up the word of God with one another. We pray, oh Father, that you would speak to our hearts and minds, that you would let the truthfulness of scripture captivate us, that it would draw us closer to you.

Lord, that it would cause us to walk in faithfulness and obedience, not just through happenstance, but Lord, through intentionality. May we be conformed more and more to your image and to your glory. And we ask it all in Jesus' name.

[ 4 : 54 ] Amen. You may be seated. As we continue looking at the giving of the saints, I want you to see this morning that the giving of the saints is a measure of accountability. That is, it is a means and a measure of accountability which exists among the believers.

Again, we're not attempting to be legalistic in these matters. Hopefully you'll see in just a moment how we look at this. This is not a matter of legalism, rather it is a matter of worship. Every aspect of our service, when we come together, is the worship service, from our fellowship, to our singing, to our giving, to the preaching.

Everything is a matter of worship. And we gather with one another to do these things in an intentional way. Paul is writing to the church, in particular, as it concerns a specific giving or offering.

If you remember your church history or your scripture history, you know that this giving is for the saints in the area of Judea, Jerusalem, around Jerusalem, the nation of Israel, the Jewish believers who are suffering because of a drought and financial loss being kind of discredited because they left Judaism and accepted Christianity.

So the churches from the Jewish region were really in great need. So Paul is encouraging the Gentile churches, those outside of the region of Israel, to give in order to help them along financially.

[ 6 : 13 ] There were a number of circumstances, some economic, some political, and some really environmental that had led to this great need. But here he is giving them the opportunity to give back to these churches to support.

As we see in other letters, it was also recorded for us in 1 Corinthians 16, as Paul mentions it. We see it recorded in other letters as well. That Paul is asking the church to give back who have given so much to them.

That is their faith, their belief in Jesus Christ because of the heritage of Christ and because this is really the springboard of the gospel where the gospel message came out. He's encouraging the churches around them to give and to support them in this moment of great need.

But more than that, we see the application as it pertains to us. This giving that God calls us to as believers is a measure of accountability in our own lives.

It is not something there to burden us. Rather, it is something there to mature us. It is a discipline in which we build in our lives and in ourselves. I told you, many people have asked me, Pastor, how much should I give?

[ 7 : 17 ] Or Pastor, what about the tithe? And these matters, this is something that I settled very early in my own Christian walk and God did it to me in a very easy way. That is, when I was wondering, should I give? All of a sudden, that very week when I was a very new believer, I was 20 years old, right before I turned 21, I was like, I don't know if I should write this check to the church.

It's a very, very tough financial time. Here I was, a young man. I was 20. My wife was 19. We had a little kid on there. We probably had another one on the way by that point.

And we're sitting here with house payments, car payments, and I don't know what we should do. Everything started breaking down that week and I put all that money that I was keeping back from the church into all of our vehicles. So I said, all right, Lord, I'd rather give it to you and maybe my vehicles will be okay.

Now, just let me give you a news bulletin. I still put a lot of money into our vehicles. But God used that to give an opportunity to show me the discipline that I had to make intentionally of my own life as to what we would give.

And the reason it was there is because these are measures of accountability. God uses them to mature me and to grow me into these matters. It is not a legalistic matter. It is not something that I am following a rules, a list of rules and do's and don'ts and putting my check mark there.

[ 8 : 28 ] Rather, it is a gracious opportunity to remain accountable, not only unto the Lord, but also to the church. We see it in three manners here. First, we see that giving is a discipline of dependence.

It is a discipline of dependence. This is something, if we want to be quite honest, that most of us men do not want to possess. That is this discipline of dependency.

We pride ourselves in our independency. I know, ladies, you can as well, but men by nature just do. I don't want to depend on anyone. I want to take care of it myself. I want to do these things my own way.

I can handle it. I don't need help. Most often that is when we need the most help. But it is this discipline that is built into us that shows us as believers, both men and women, that we are not the source of our own well-being, but rather we live in a grand state of dependency.

It says, For this is not for the ease of others and for your affliction. The first thing we need to understand about the giving of the saints. Giving is not intended to be burdensome.

[ 9 : 32 ] That is, it is not to overburden us to the point where we are just without, that we are not meeting our physical needs. Again, it is not a legalistic manner in which you give this level whether you can or can't.

Verse 12 says, According to their ability. This is a spiritual matter, and it is something that is worked out with the lordship of Christ in our own lives. But it is not a burden, but look at what it says.

It is not for the ease of others and your affliction, but by way of equality. So again, this is not some Marxist theology or communism where everything is in common. It is not that, but it says, At this present time, your abundance being a supply for their need, so that their abundance may also become a supply for your need.

So here's where we stop and we begin to really dive into the text. And if we're quite honest with ourselves, this is where in our modern society, and in our Western mentality, that this begins to conflict with what we think it should be.

Our abundance is not entrusted to us for our soul benefits. Our abundance is not just for our own good. He says, But rather so that your abundance would be the supply of someone else's need.

[ 10 : 48 ] So that later on, their abundance may become a supply for your need. And I know what you're thinking because I think the very same thing. Well, if I had taken my abundance and built bigger barns and stored my abundance, I would have never entered into a time of need.

You know, God has something to say about that because there's a man who did that in Scripture and Jesus says that the Lord says to him, You fool. Now this is not saying that we should not store up because the book of Proverbs says it is a wise man who lives in inheritance to his children's children.

Right? That we ought to provide for the stability. It is a man's responsibility. We have to balance these matters. It is a man's responsibility to provide for the needs of his home and also to meet the needs of his children.

And to meet the needs of, Scripture says the wise man does it for his children's children and stores up. But the reality also is that's a provision of needs, not necessarily a provision of wants.

What Paul is referring to here is an abundance. He says your abundance is not just for your benefit. At this moment, I'll just be honest, most people will just cut that off and say, well, I don't want to listen to anything from here on out.

[ 11 : 54 ] But stay with me. So that later on, your need will be met by someone else's abundance because see, the principle here is this early church mentality where they gathered together and they had all things in common.

Now we're not talking about that. We're not asking you to sell everything and let's put it all in one big pool and let's go live on some commune or anything of that nature. We're not, we can take it to the extreme. That's not what we're talking about.

But what we see is the reality of the early church lived in a desperate dependence upon not only the Lord God, but also upon one another. Let me ask you a question just so you can understand your dependence.

What would do you the greatest harm right now, economically, socially, financially, physically, and you don't have to answer this out loud, if you lost your job or if the church doors closed?

Now all of a sudden, you're beginning to realize where your greater amount of dependence remains. And it's searching, isn't it? Because see, what is going on, not necessarily even in scripture here, but what is going on in a grand scale around the world is that they are losing their job so that they can maintain the gathering together of the saints, which is referred to as the church.

[ 13 : 06 ] And it is worth the sacrifice of the job so that they can enable themselves to remain in the church. But in our mentality, we say, well, I'll just find another church. And we begin to shop that around and we begin to make the church something of a smaller, insignificant level because that is not the one thing that we are greatly dependent upon.

But it is this discipline of dependency that God is building into our lives with one another. And we'll get to that in just a little bit later because I fully believe the church is absolutely essential.

And the reason I believe the church is absolutely essential is not because I'm a pastor. I've told you this. This is something that the Lord settled in my heart way before I became a pastor. I never sought to be a pastor, but maybe this is why he led me to be a pastor.

I don't know. It's because when I read scripture, I find out that it is the church that is the bride of Christ. And there is a wedding supper of the Lamb prepared for the bride. That is the church.

There's all this beautiful imagery. When we speak of marriage and the relationship of marriage, Paul says this is a mystery, but it's the relationship of Jesus to his church more than the relationship of a man to a woman, Ephesians 5.

[ 14 : 14 ] There's all these great principles. And I tell people all the time, people say, well, I love the Lord. I just don't really like the church. I say, well, don't ever come up to me and say, you know, Billy Joe, I really like you. I just don't like Carrie. Because the moment you don't like Carrie, there's the moment that you and I quit liking one another because the two have become one.

And you cannot separate me from my wife. That's my bride. You cannot separate Christ from his bride. That's the church, right? And we understand this. Now, I know, admittedly, that much harm has been done to the bride because of people who stood behind wooden pulpits.

I understand that. But we realize, too, that the grand dependency of the believers should be disciplined, a disciplined action that is shown and is demonstrated through their giving of one another.

And he says there will be a moment where you can give and this one can't. And then all of a sudden, you're going to be in need. And you say, well, if I'd have just stored that up, I wouldn't have been in need. But then he quotes a passage, a passage from the Old Testament, a passage when it really pertains to the gathering of manna.

And this is where we bounce it out. So stay with me. He says, As it is written, he who gathered much did not have too much, and he who gathered little had no lack. Now, you know that this is a passage which really has direct application to every morning they got up and they gathered manna when they were in the wilderness wanderings and God was feeding them with the manna from heaven every morning except for the Sabbath, right?

[ 15 : 33 ] Except for Saturdays. They would not get up. They would gather twice as much on Friday so that they would have manna on Saturday. They could not gather that way because it wasn't there. So there's a couple of things that I want you to understand here.

Number one that I want you to understand about this is everybody that could gather, gathered. That's a good way of saying it. Scripture says that if a man doesn't work, a man doesn't eat. Right?

He who gathered, gathered. And the second principle that you understand is that people weren't so concerned. There were some, probably, physically, who were not able to gather, but there were others who could gather more than they needed.

An omer per person, per household. Do you remember that? So they would bring that back. Surely, in a congregation that size, of the multitude that came out of Egypt, there were those who could not physically go out and gather, but still they were provided for.

How? Because some gathered more than they needed, so when they got back to the camp, they would share it with those who had because they were dependent upon them. But the greater dependency was this.

[ 16 : 37 ] Those who gathered much could give to them because they knew that tomorrow the Lord would rain the manna down again. See, dependency is not so much on one another. It is a discipline of dependency upon the Lord to provide today what I need today.

And if he provides more than I need today, then I can share it with those around me so that I can depend on him more tomorrow that he will provide for me tomorrow.

What is that prayer? Give us this day our daily bread. Right? See, giving disciplines us to depend not just on one another, but upon the Lord to continue the provisions.

I remember one pastor, as he was preaching through this, and you've probably read this book. I'm not going to quote him, but I remember he was a part of a church at that time.

He began to be convicted over these matters, so he sat down with the elders of the church, and he said, I'm really convicted in this matter as far as storing up. I'm storing up. And this is just the Lord dealing with this pastor and these elders that we're talking about.

[ 17 : 49 ] So they sat around the room, and he looked at the elders, and he said, okay, I'm going to begin to give everything away but what I need, but if I die, will you guys take care of my widow?

And the elders said, yes. They said, okay, so if you die, I'll take care of your widow too. So they made a covenant agreement with one another, a multitude of elders, that they would be their retirement plan.

Right? That they would be their insurance and all this other matters so that they could each give more knowing that if one of them died, they would take care of the other. That pastor has since left that church.

He went and did another ministry, but as far as I know, he's still connected to those men because they entered into that dependency upon one another. Later on, he just continues to give away.

He reduced the size of the house he lives in. He gives so much away, and someone came to him one time and said, man, you're giving too much away. You're going to starve your family to death. He said, yes, but what a way to go. If I starve to death, I'm going to stand before the Lord and say, Lord, I'm sorry I gave all my food away.

[ 18 : 45 ] It looks like I starved to death. He said, you think the Lord's going to chastise me for giving too much away and feeding too many people? See, he said, I began to build this discipline.

This is how I began to live, and he began to take it, and some people say, well, that's radical. That's just a crazy faith. It is. It really is, and this is why it's not legalism. He wasn't telling anyone, this is how you ought to do it. He said, this is the journey, and I was hearing him preach about it, how the Lord led me to do it, and it's none of that matter.

This is not to be condemning or contradictory. It is really just this self-searching reality of where is my dependency? Where's my dependency?

Because I can promise you, you can put your dependency in a lot more fragile places than you can the church because the gates of hell can't prevail against the church, but the gates of hell sure have a lot of access to other things.

But where's our dependency? Number two, it is a demonstration to others. Giving, the giving of the saints, is a measure of accountability because it is a demonstration to others.

[ 19 : 51 ] That is how we give, and by others, I don't mean others gathered in a room with you. You're already demonstrating that to one another by your dependency upon one another. But Paul, let's go over a few verses here, and let's get down to verse 20.

And we'll come back and catch verses 16, just a minute, 16 to follow. In verse 20, Paul says, they are taking precautions so that no one will discredit us in our administration of this generous gift.

So what Paul was saying is we're being very proactive to do things right so that we will not be discredited. They're taking precautions in every way. They want to show themselves to be rightfully handling this money.

That's a good challenge to pastors and to churches. More harm has been done to the church by the handling of financial resources than any other matter throughout history. I mean, it's just a reality that you can't avoid.

I try to, I don't know what we give. I try to keep hands off, and I don't want any hands on. So I'm very quick to say, yes, we'll help other people when I don't always know what we have in. I have to call Miss Lynn and say, Miss Lynn, I hope I said that's okay.

[ 20 : 57 ] And she said, yes, we're okay. So I want it that way, right? We want to be very transparent here. And Paul is saying this. He says, I'm taking every precaution so that I won't be discredited.

Well, who's going to discredit him? Not necessarily those in church, because let's keep going what it says there. It says in verse 21, for we have regard for this, for what is honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

So here we see that just as they said of Christ, that he was growing in wisdom and favor with God and with man. Paul says, it not only matters that the Lord knows we're doing it right, it matters that men know we're doing it right.

And so we can't say this issue, well, that's between me and the Lord. Well, what Paul is saying here is this matter of giving and how we handle this offering is as a matter between us and the Lord and men. We want not only the Lord to regard us as doing it well, but we want men to know we're doing it well.

Why? Let's keep reading. That's what it says. He said that we're doing this because there's one reason. This one great reason is found in verse 19. He says, and he has appointed these people and he says, which is administered to us, talking about this offering by the glory, administered by us for the glory of the Lord himself.

[ 22 : 06 ] Now, I know I'm kind of jumping around, but stay with me. So he says, I'm taking every precaution so that no one would cast doubt upon our handling of this offering. And I'm doing this because it doesn't only matter what the Lord thinks about our handling, but it matters what men think about our handling of it because this offering is for the glory of the Lord.

Understand this. The giving of the saints is for the glory of the Lord, not the recognition of the givers. Right? He says, it is being given for the glory of the Lord.

So now let's put ourselves in context of what's going on. The Gentile churches are helping the Jewish believers who are being kind of ostracized in a time of famine economically so that they are in great need.

Jews and Gentiles have no real relationship with one another. As a matter of fact, the Jews want nothing to do with Gentiles in Judaism. They want the Gentiles to become Judaizers so that maybe they can fellowship with one another.

But apart from that transition, they want nothing to do with them. So now we have these people who are not law keepers or not people of the law, that is the Gentiles who have come to Christ by faith, who are giving financially to support the Jewish believers who are over here.

[ 23 : 22 ] And the common bond between them is Christ. So the glory of the Lord depends upon how the outsiders perceive the church taking care of one another. They are observing how people who should not get along all of a sudden are supporting one another.

And people are taking notice. As Paul says, we want everyone to know we're handling this well so that there will be no hindrance, so that people will understand. This is a demonstration to others.

The giving here, that really is the giving all of the New Testament. This is what really challenges us as a church. This is not what we would call evangelistic giving or outreach giving.

The giving is not giving to feed the poor and clothe the naked of those outside the church. It is given to feed the poor and clothe the naked of those inside the church.

Now stay with me, right? It is not giving to share the gospel. It is giving to those who already know the gospel. And the understanding is is that the world would be so moved how the church cares for one another they would be drawn to the gospel.

[ 24 : 30 ] Now stay with me. Because if giving becomes an evangelistic thing, what we begin to do is enable people to stay in a situation they're in apart from the salvific knowledge of Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

If they receive the same amount of benefit by not being in the church as they would by being a part of the church then we're not giving them a reason to be concerned about the church.

That's a good way of saying it ought to be a difference maker when you're a part of the church of Jesus Christ. The way we support one another, the way we care for one another, the way we love one another should be different.

It ought to be strikingly different that the world takes note because what happens too often and I've experienced it as a pastor, I know every pastor has, people want the benefits of membership without being a member.

People call us, I have a great need and the moment I tell them no, we can't meet that need, it is inevitable, this is what you hear, don't you care about people?

[ 25 : 39 ] And if I say yes, let me tell you about Jesus Christ, they'll hang up. Care does not mean enabling. The greatest need that any person has is the need for salvation found in Jesus Christ.

Once that need is met, now they're in this great dependency upon the church which is exactly what the Lord and Savior established so that what goes on inside the church ought to look strikingly different than what the world can offer.

This world has tried to and it has done a fantastic job of hijacking the responsibilities of the church and unfortunately what we find happening is that people even inside of our churches turn to the world to find needs to be met when they ought to be turning into the church because unfortunately so many times in the church we've told them to go to the world.

Right? We don't want to live this out but rather than living out a demonstration of these matters so that the people of the world could notice and they could say well that doesn't make sense I don't see how in the world they're doing that for one another and then we could have this whole testimony of the nation of Israel where their animals would not fail to give birth and rain would not fail to fall and the crops would not fail to produce and the world could say what's going on over there then the nation of Israel could say well we're serving the Lord our God with all of our heart with all of our soul with all of our minds so things are a little bit different over here right?



The church can't always say things are a little bit different over here because we're not living any differently than anyone else around us we're depending upon the same things everyone else is depending upon and we're turning to the same things everyone else is turning to in case you haven't noticed that God has a legitimate means and way that needs are to be met with his people and too often we try to go in every other direction but that one this giving here is from believer to believer but the ones who take notice are the non-believers Jesus says that your love for one another will be a testimony to those outside of the church and part of the demonstration of that love is how we are accountable in our giving and we make a demonstration to others which leads us to the last one and I will be finished this is a discipline of dependency it is a demonstration to others and it is a devotion to one another you say well pastor you keep beating this same drum well that's because when we read the passage that's all we hear right it is a dependence upon one another

[ 28 : 11 ] I don't know if you notice how many times the word church is repeated in this refrain as we begin to look in verse 16 and Paul begins to speak of those who are coming to administer this gift those who are coming to receive this gift over and over and over and over again all we hear about is the church the church the church the church the church Titus is devoting himself to them to such an extent that Titus takes it upon himself he is so excited about this opportunity he says that he is himself he is very earnest and he is gone of his own accord that is Titus paid his own way he wanted to give of his time and of his resources to go collect from these people in Corinth and then we talk about this one who's going along with him whose fame is in the things of the gospel let's just stop right here if you're going to be famous for anything be famous in the things of the gospel right I mean if you're going to be famous if you want to be famous we don't know who this is many bible scholars and preachers will try to guess some think it's probably Luke and it possibly could have been we don't know it really doesn't matter but the believers they're new because they're oh that's who that is that's that one that we keep hearing all this gospel stuff about right so whose fame is in the fame of the gospel that's amazing you want to be that person you want to be the one whose fame is in the things of the gospel and it has spread throughout all the what churches right he's not just famous to the world he's famous in the churches as it applies to the gospel and then we begin to talk about the reality that not only this but he has also been appointed by the churches so there's the churches who appoint him it is the churches who know about him it is the churches who have put their faith in him everything here revolves around the church in case you miss it in scripture the church is a very important place right the church is of great importance in the economy of Jesus Christ and it is a reality here that we see sure the local church is putting this commission in these people is sending these people is encouraging these people the endorsement of these people the city of Corinth is a very prosperous city and they're about to hand over a sum of money to a group of believers that they may or may not know they know Titus he's come but the last time

Titus was there Titus wanted to know are you living a repentant life right you received this letter from Paul he said you know you ought to hand this one over to Satan this man needs to give his father's wife back essentially because it's implied there that the dad is still alive these people need to return you have people here they're taking the Lord's supper in the wrong way and they're dying you guys need to eat at home and drink at home then come together and so Titus came to make sure that they were repentant of all those things now Titus is coming back and he's wanting to receive an offering from them with others and the only thing they know about them is that the church has commissioned them and that the church has put their still of approval upon them because the desire and the word of the church matters why?

because it is a demonstration of devotion to one another these are not just some people who wanted to go take up this collection these are people who have committed to one another devoted to one another in this thing we call the church they are fellow workers they are co-laborers they are people who have accepted the gospel and they accepted the gospel to the point that they put their faith in it because in that time to commit to the church was to stand out to be different and it really was the living out of one another as we find in scripture giving is a measure of our accountability it is it's not always comfortable it's not there to make us uncomfortable it's not there to be a burden to us but when we have the opportunity it does discipline us in matters of dependency it does proclaim a demonstration to others though they may not know you it is for the glory of the Lord and it does really display our devotion to one another and it does it like nothing else can like nothing else you will know the rest of the story why I really became committed to the church it was because shortly after becoming that new believer everything in our world kind of fell apart economically and the one thing that was really there was the church our needs began to be met by the church it was a very humbling thing for a young man who thought he had it all together until one night he gave it to

Christ and said Lord I can't do it you take it all and when he took it all of a sudden he humbled me and made me to the point where every need we had was being met by one small group of people called the church in ways like I had never ever thought would happen and I began to see the power of what it is for a group of believers to live in community with one another how encouraging it was that these people who hardly knew me all of a sudden loved me enough to care and to walk beside me because they were committed to me they were committed to my wife my children and they walked with us I have people who call me every now and and they say pastor I don't want to burden you with this I'm sorry for burdening you with this and what you don't understand is that's what we're called to do we're called to be burdened with those things right we're called to be committed to one another may all of our giving may not be financial giving sometimes our giving may be the giving of oneself like

Titus but it always flows through the church because the day that the church doesn't have the answer for the needs of man is a sad day when the Lord needs to call his church home let's pray Jesus we're so thankful for this day so thankful for the glorious opportunity we have of gathering together with one another and I truly genuinely thank you for each one that's here where we rejoice in who you are we know that the moment we surrender our lives to you as our Lord and Savior things may not always be easy but they are far different because you connect us to the church so Lord we pray that you would move in our hearts and minds we pray that you would show each and every one of us what it is you're calling us to do in response to your word and as Paul says may it all be for the glory of the

[ 34 : 50 ] Lord and not the recognition of man and we ask it all in Christ's name amen so Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 38 : 02 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.