

W_27_Trusteeship.mp3

[00:00:02] I want to turn to second Timothy that we had read. We're not going to give an exposition of the epistle, but it will give us a few pointers with which to open this second part of our session. You will remember possibly that. Last year. I was able to quote from a Dutch correspondent, a believer who called us jubilant, congenial. He looked up his dictionary and he found two words and he sent it to us. And I thought it was a very fine way to describe our gathering. Jubilant continues, but I'm afraid it tickled me a bit because, you know, I've made 300 tape recordings now and I haven't heard any of them. I've been inflicting my voice upon all these other people, but I've never endured it myself. So when I was at Preston, I said, Oh, let me hear what I sound like on the tapes. I've given 300 of these tapes of older here, and they put the one on that recorded all my antics and all the things I said and ought not to have said this time last year, because I was started off with the idea that we were jubilant, congenial us. Well, I have a letter here from Mr. Oscar Baker, and most of you know his name. He stands for the truth very solidly that we stand for here. And as acted as our agent in America for several years with regard to the distribution of literature. And this is what he said.

[00:01:49] Now, I wouldn't like to say this about myself, but as he says so and others have said so, I'm not going to be so humble as never to say it myself, because otherwise that is just my passing what might be truth? He said, I was just thinking. Who else but you carried the torch after Dr. Bullinger went to sleep. Seems to me you had a great responsibility in those days. A voice of one. Only one crying in the wilderness. We are jubilant because the light did not go out. Well, I thought that's very lovely to be able to say that. And if there's an element of truth in it, loveliest still. So here we are. Another opportunity to make known to the folks who come not only. What we stand for, but to help one another strengthen one another's hand. In this witness. Why it should be so opposed by God's people is only known to themselves and to God. If we were robbing them of anything, if we were making demands upon them, we could understand it. But we are coming out with both hands full and telling them that Christ is all in it all. That upset some folks? Well, we're not here to judge them. We've got enough to look after ourselves. But this is our opportunity to help one another, isn't it? Now, this second, Timothy was written by the Apostle Paul in view of his approaching death.

[00:03:24] You remember in Philippians, he said these words. He said if I had the option. I would choose to depart and be with Christ. In second Timothy, he says, the time for my departure has come. In Philippians he said, Yea, if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice. He says in second Timothy, I am now about to be offered. That is the way in which the man spoke of his approaching death. He was going to be led out to execution, apparently, and that was his finish so far as this world was concerned. But it wasn't so far as Paul was concerned. Nero never finished it. The opposition that was against him that handed him over to the Roman power, never finished, called for. He wrote the triumphant words before her. They ever did their part. He said, I have finished my course. I have kept the faith. Henceforth. A crown. What can you do with a man like that? Well, that's the sort of people we ought to be. We have a consciousness that if God has entrusted us. With a message. Then. By his mercy. We may hope. To catch the tape at the end. And when that time comes, then it will be the next conscious moment will be glory. How long it will be in between, we even speculate. I have another message from America, which I'm reserving a little bit for the end. So that there will be two messages coming across the Atlantic that will have a little bearing upon our meeting this evening.

[00:05:14] And I think that's good because you see, this message we have to give has no racial boundaries. It doesn't matter what language you speak or even what color you are. It depends upon where you come in God's purpose. And it's almost intimidating to me to think. But the Bible expositions given in this little chapel are now being listened to by folks in almost every part of this world. I don't know how many thousand there are now who are listeners? I don't like to reckon it up, but when I know there are 300 of mine, apart from the friends who have added to this number and they have been multiplied over a number of times in this country and in America and in Australia. And when I think that it's not, one person sits solitary in his own room listening, he must have 2 or 3 friends with him. Well, by the time you multiply 300 by ten and then by three again. That's a marvelous thought to think. There are still those who wish to hear the Word of God. You remember the words that were said to Elijah, who felt a very, very discouraged. He said, I only am left. But I might have felt like that. And I did. Sometimes you see this. Friends reminded me. He said, you stood alone. And to a large extent that was so.

[00:06:48] But I didn't have a picture of herself. And even now I say to myself. What is the Lord title? Elijah, he said, Yet have I 7000 men who have not bowed the knee to the image of bail? Elijah didn't know that God did. Now, when I listen to my voice on the tape, doesn't it sound funny? And I'm perfectly certain people don't pay so many dollars to get one of those recordings because they say, oh, listen to his golden voice. And I don't think that my my way of speech is something so extraordinary that people are going to line up and queue up to listen. Do you know what I think it is? There is still a hunger in the hearts of nature for the opening up of the Word of God. That's all we do. We don't say firstly. Secondly, thirdly. And in conclusion, my brethren. Oh, we just let the book do the speaking. And then we get the credit for it. Isn't that wonderful? But that's the best ministry I think that we can be engaged in today to open the book and let it speak. And so you are forming a part of a witness fence by your presence and by your assistance, by your fellowship, by your prayers that is being used of God in these closing days. Now, this second, Timothy draws attention to 1 or 2 features with which we will start.

[00:08:20] And you couldn't help but realize how the Apostle has said it in this very chapter three times over. Be not ashamed. I am not ashamed. He was not ashamed. And in second, Timothy, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. And in second Timothy chapter two. If we deny him, he also will deny us. Which is the alternative to the word ashamed. She was cunning, he says in chapter 115. This thou knowest that all that which be in Asia be turned away from me. And in the fourth chapter he said, In the days in which we live, verse four, they shall turn away their ears from the truth. That is the order. Turn away from me, said Paul. Then turn away from the truth with which he was entrusted. You will find over and over again that when a person begins to object to your teaching, he attacks the apostle Paul and they accuse you of being a worshiper of Paul. And so it's good sometimes to quote his own language. Who then is Paul? He says I am but an earthen vessel. I can't turn round and argue with God as to why he chose me, he said. And neither can I, myself or you, but must be prepared to discover that there will be a very strong attack upon the Ministry of the Apostle Paul as this age comes to its end. Because as long as the Apostle Paul has a hearing so long, will Christ be given his dominant position and so long will God's purpose be seen to be triumphant in spite of even the failure temporarily on the part of his chosen people? Israel? Now in this.

[00:10:12] This thought this evening I had in mind. The word trustees. Now, of course, we must have legally appointed trustees because we are dealing with other people's money. I don't be dealing with it. You know, I'm only saying we are responsible. We've got the fabric of the chapel to consider. And I think next month the builders are starting on the roof and that's going to be about £800 bill just like that. If we must have accuracy and with regard to all the management of the affairs. But however faithful and loyal those poor trustees are that we have. And they are loyal and faithful. This work will depend upon you, and especially those of you who are younger. If this work is going to continue. If it's not going to be gradually broadened, if it's not going to allow other things in. So I want to emphasize that on this foundation day. We want to have a few more trustees. Not chosen by election. Not having their names down on a list, but those who voluntarily or willingly and lovingly say, Yes, this truth I stand for. And all those who stand for it are my compatriots, and I will help them by prayer. I will help them in every possible way.

[00:11:39] And if that is so, then we may look forward to the future as long as there is a future and feel that this work will continue. Last year. I was terribly encouraged when I heard our brother, Roland Priddle stand up in this pulpit and make a testimony urging utter loyalty to the truth. Well, he's a younger man than I am. You might not believe it if you looked at him because he's only just married and he's got all the evidence that he's taken upon himself. Great responsibilities. And I describe myself in the language of the old gardener as being an octo geranium. So I'm a bit joyful, is he? But I was moved to think he is a young man. He is by the grace of God. He is permitted to continue with us as made it evident that he is conscious that loyalty is a far more important thing than mere scholarship or mere ability to speak loyalty. Well, then we had this afternoon another younger man coming from Cheshire, and he made it evident that it's most important that we should see the foundations upon which we build and we should use them and stand for them and not trifle with them. Isn't that good? So that if we could only continue like that, we shall feel like the apostle. He is writing his last letter. He knows he's come to an end. But he's got a young man, Timothy. Who is going to step into his shoes.

[00:13:13] Of all the people that you would have thought Paul would not have chosen was a timid young man like Timothy. Because as you read the story about Timothy, he needed a lot of prodding. He said, No man, despise thy youth. Timothy. I take a little

wine for thy stomach's. Timothy. God has not given us a spirit of cowardice. Timothy. That's the sort of man that God chose. And yet. He stood. So you see, he was a man finishing his work and God was providing somebody else as he will let us pray and let us support every single one that may come along and manifests that this truth is dear to them and that they put loyalty, as I say, before all else. And. I'm thinking too. I was playing about with words. Sometimes I do. And I thought of when I was speaking to children. I was going to put s on the board and n on the board. And then put I in sin. That's where we are. And then put a and I in faith. Oh, yes. And h, R and D and I in Christ. Then not trust. If I got the children so far as to say that I say t r s t. What's wanting you? Yes, that's the point. Friends. Here you trust? Now we've got a trust reads the scripture speaks about something entrusted and you are in the middle of it.

[00:14:54] That means me and you and all the rest of us. T r u s t. So shall we look at two Timothy a little closer and watch the apostle's use of this idea of something entrusted? He speaks about the Savior and his work and the Gospel. Verse 11 Whereunto. I am appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher of the Gentiles. When he wrote those same words in First Timothy. He has to take an oath that they are true because he was opposed for the which cause. I also suffer these things. Nevertheless, I am not ashamed. And he gives a reason for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. Now, that's misleading. And there's a hymn which encourages it, which sings I Know Whom I Believed, and everybody who sings it imagines that the scripture says that we entrust our soul to the keeping of the Savior. Well, that's true enough, perhaps, but that's not what Paul said. If you take the words literally, you'll find it reads like this. And then persuaded that he is able to keep that which has been entrusted. Against that day. He doesn't say who entrusted it, but if you look a little bit further down, he repeats himself in verse 14, that good thing which was entrusted unto thee. Keep. And then if you look again in chapter two.

[00:16:40] Verse two and the things that thou hast heard of me. Among many witnesses, the same entrust thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also. So what the apostle was saying. Dude, although he couldn't keep it. The Lord could watch over that deposit of truth which He had entrusted to Him and which He was passing on to Timothy, and which Timothy was passing on to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also. Somebody might say to me, Do you believe in apostolic

succession? So I do, but not what the Church of England stands for. I remember. I forget which holiday it was. I was sitting in the lounge, you know, and people begin talking and they've only got to start me off. I don't chase people about on me holiday. I recognise their liberty, but if they won't start all there for it, you know? And then the lady turned round to me and she said, You're not an ordained man. Was it? Thank God. Now you're ordained, man. Goes right back to Peter, doesn't he? Yes, she said. Well said. Peter is no good to me. The Apostle Paul had rebuked Peter and tell him that he was dissembling and acting the hypocrite once now and again. I said, Here's my marching orders. The things that thou hast heard of me. Among many witnesses, Timothy, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also.

[00:18:06] A wonderful qualification. I'll admit a faithful person and with some ability to teach. Because I'm morally certain of this, that if God wants a person to be a speaker, other people will hear what he has to say. If God wants a person to be a teacher, he will have some sort of an ability to make what he will at some point he wants. Understood. I'm sure God would never expect me to fulfill what I read in the newspapers that the sign under which I was born. Do you ever read them? The sign under which I was born would make me an ideal bank manager. Well, if anybody knows anything about me, I'm really turned inside out and upside down. Every year when I have to do correspondence with our brother, Mr. Morton, who has stepped in for many years to rescue me from the slough of Despond and make out the income tax return. What I've done with it, what I've spent, what I've received. Oh, goodness me. I'll get them all pushed on one side and buried beneath heaps. Because the only thing that matters is I'm getting on with this and then all, aren't I? Sorry. Oh, what a business. I'm nearly turned sick with it. And I'm born under that sign. Something going wrong somewhere there. Well, here we have this good deposit entrusted to the Apostle passed on by him, and he warns us in this epistle that a day will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but they will be turned unto myths.

[00:19:45] Now the word myth. Is from the same word that gives us the word mystery. In the New Testament, the word musterion and the word must only be pronounced it with a Y. Mystery, Mystery and myth. I'm not going to say one was Mr. and one was Miss. But that isn't so. But the one is the half brother of the other. It's as though Abraham had two sons. One was Isaac the true one and one was Ishmael the false one. The one who should not have been. And he is the he is the thought that as the day comes to a close,

it's possible that if you have had presented to you the claims of this dispensation of the mystery, with all the wonder of it, with all the grace of it and the glory of it and the greatness of it, and you refuse it. Then you may be turned to the other side, the faults, and you'll be saying, Oh, nobody believes Genesis one, two and three. They're all myths and you'll be numbered among those whose Bible is largely a great deal of myths and folklore and legends. For the Apostle Paul was definitely set apart and called, as he calls himself in this epistle, the apostle of the Gentiles. There is no one else in the New Testament who bears that title. Of course, quite a number of people will stick you out.

[00:21:09] But Peter was the apostle. Have you ever done what I have done? Once or twice. Arrived home and discovered the keys inside instead of in my pocket? Have you? Well, now, is it any good? Trying all sorts of keys. There's one key, isn't there? That matters. Well, Peter was given the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And Paul was given the keys that opened the church of the one body. And they are not the same. And Peter's keys have never opened the door of the church, not to those who are members of the Body of Christ. And so our needful it is for us to see that here we have in Paul's prison ministry a message that fits the present pattern typical dispensation. A period like in between brackets where Israel failed and Israel are going to be picked up again. And God revealed that he hadn't failed. The very element of a mystery. When it speaks about the mystery of his will refers in its rather wider usage to what would be a very wise thing on the part of a king or a general of an army. He wouldn't blazoned abroad all his secrets, would he? He wouldn't give away to the enemy all that he was going to do in every possible emergency. He may have a plan, but he'd keep that to himself so that when the enemy let himself in the trap, he'd be caught.

[00:22:40] Well, that's what God did. He didn't tell everything in the Old Testament. He didn't tell it all in the New Testament. And when Satan had put a spoke in the wheel of God and stopped Israel, he could stand back and say, Well, that's done that until Israel are brought back, I'm safe here. Then, to his consternation, the man who was put in prison received the dispensation of the mystery, never before revealed, not found in the Old Testament scriptures, never made known by Christ when upon earth, but only as he spoke from heaven. And that's where we come in. So we are really manifesting, if not to the outside world, who won't bother about us, but we are manifesting to the principalities and powers now who are learning through this church the manifold wisdom of God. So don't be downhearted if you only have a few at a congregation of congregation at a

meeting for which you may be responsible, you may have an unseen number that would rather stagger you if you knew how many principalities and powers were learning through you and your ministry and your witness and way, and walk the manifold wisdom of God. Well, now there are 1 or 2 things with regard to this trusteeship, which all of us are called upon to share and without which no work can be preserved, which I think would be wise for us to turn to. First of all, I turn to Second Corinthians chapter two.

[00:24:17] Second Corinthians chapter two, verse 17. And this is what the apostle says, for we are not as many. Which corrupt the Word of God. But have sincerity. But as of God in the sight of God speak, we in Christ. Now that word corrupt. Occurs in the Old Testament. In the Prophet Isaiah chapter 122, where he says, Your wine is watered. I forget exactly how it's translated. Don't bother to turn to it because I'll only just verify the translation. Isaiah one verse 22. The silver has become dross. Thy wine mixed with water. They are the very words that the Apostle has lifted out here. We are not among those who hacks her eyes watered down the word of truth. Now, this is very, very up to date, friends, because if I were to go over my past experience at the beginning of this work, that was one of the biggest temptations I had to withstand for somebody to come along to me and say, look, you've you've hiding your light under a bushel. You ought to be up there in London. You ought to be able to fill this particular chapel. And here you are down here. But there were conditions attached to it. A lot of the conditions was soft pedal this. Don't say so much about that. Don't say a word about that. And they'd all accept you. How easy it is to have a conscience that's planted.

[00:26:06] Especially when you don't know where the next penny is coming from. So are very thankful that this friend from America did say without putting me on a pedestal. We thank you for the mercy of God which stood so, my friends. What an awful time I should have had. If I had a manse. And a great congregation. And a bad conscience. So I would say to anyone who is thinking about this truth and this witness. Do. Face it. Don't put your hand to the plow and then turn back. But you remember the conditions that are mentioned in this episode of the Corinthians. It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful. So here we have this stress about a watering down and he comes back to much the same thing in Chapter four. If you had the structure of this epistle, you would find these verses were in correspondence. Chapter four Verse two We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's

conscience in the sight of God. Well, that is the way the Apostle would have us witness to his word so that there should be nothing underhanded, no false apology, no soft peddling. Of course, we haven't got to be brusque. We haven't got to be rude. We've got to just stand firm. And of course, that depends a little bit on temperament.

[00:27:49] You know, there are some people who've got the what is the way they say. They say, I am strong willed. You are obstinate and he is pigheaded. Well, it's all the same thing. You see, if you're not careful, it depends on the one you're speaking. Well, now I turn to another passage, one Thessalonians chapter two. And no one need be uneasy about the time, friends, because I know that there is a limit to our endurance and buses and trains and that won't wait. One Thessalonians two. Verses 3 to 6. For an exhortation was not a deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor of guile. But as we were allowed of God, look at that little bit. Here's a man talking. The way that God gave him a trust, gave him work to do, and it brought with it tremendous sufferings so that you can hardly believe your eyes when you read the list that's already prepared in Corinthians. And he says, We were allowed of God to be put in trust with the Gospel. Now a man who takes it from that point of view is very, very conscious that it's a very sacred thing to be allowed of God, to be a mouthpiece for him in any shape or form. Even so, we speak not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts. And he says for neither at any time use me. Flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness.

[00:29:27] God is witness. And you will find that he refers many times to the false accusations that were made against him of being deceitful, of being dishonest, of coveting this and that and that and the other. So none of us will be quite exempt, I suppose, from these things. And then with this word allowed to be put in trust. Look at two, Timothy. Chapter 215. Because the word allowed is this word that we have so often quoted study to show thyself approved of God. The word allowed is the word that comes from the same word that means to test and try and prove. And so we've got the apostle realizing that there is some sort of qualification that is sought for and by the mercy of God, he was found. And then in the. Now, just for a moment. I think I'll go back. One Timothy. Yes, one Timothy. Chapter one, verse 11. According to the glorious Gospel of the Blessed God, which was committed to my trust. Here again is the sense of committal, something entrusted to him. And I thank Christ Jesus, our Lord, who hath enabled me for that. He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry. He is no man saying, I think I'll go in for the ministry. It's a terrible thing to hear somebody say. It used

to be said in the days when people had a great more distinctions in society than they have perhaps today that in certain.

[00:31:15] Portions of society. The sun went into the Navy. The army. The law. And if he was not quite that they going to the church and it was. To go in for the ministry as a sort of a job. That is what the apostle sort. He was laid hold of on the road to Damascus, blinded for three days, turned inside out and upside down, and a persecuting Pharisee arose and confounded the very ones that were employing him, proving that this is the very Christ. And he was he was told that any commencement I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. And when he wrote to Timothy, poor Timothy, who was a shrinking man, he said, Do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry, endure afflictions with it. So it wasn't just an easy post that the Apostle was seeking. It was something that had discipline and hard living attached to it. They will regard to this question of. Watering down the Word of God. You remember in the parable of the unjust steward that our savior gave. That's exactly what that man did when he found that he was going to be put out of his job in order to placate others, he said to his Lord's debtor, he said, How much are we still? Write down 50. That's what they're telling you. Write down 50. Well, this this word is not your word or my word.

[00:32:53] It's the Lord's word. He has entrusted to us and we are not allowed. We cannot, in all honesty, write down 50. We cannot abate it in order to add one member to our congregation or to get one more person to subscribe to the Bryan Expositor. It's either the truth that God has given or not at all. Don't you feel that is so? But otherwise, all we can become perhaps a popular work. But what's what's a popular work? If the whole thing is going on the down grade and the witness is going to be laid aside. So I'll come back again and I say, Will you all become trustees? Not in the official sense, but in the sense that you pray, you work, you witness, you help in any direction. The Lord may give you grace to find so that the work which has been going on these 50 years shall go on. I don't say as good as it's going on, they'll go on better because there's much more, much more witness, much more word, much more truth awaiting for us. If we're only stand for it and let God be the one that guides. Well, now, when you come to the to the Epistle, to the Ephesians, that belongs to us, and as I've said before, so many times. When I had my children who were now grown up. And I must be very careful what I say. When they were younger and express themselves, they said, Dad never takes a meeting.

[00:34:31] But what he says now we'll turn to the epistle, to the Ephesians. Well, I suppose that was so. But here we have in the epistle to the Ephesians chapter four. Something with regard to that which is entrusted to us to do. You do remember, don't you, that the epistle to the Ephesians is so constructed that it falls into two big sections? Chapters one, two and three. Give us seven great items of doctrine and chapters 4 or 5 and six. Give us seven great items of corresponding practice. Let me give you two obvious parallels so that you can pinpoint these Ephesians two. Verse 20 and 21 and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth e2 an holy temple in the Lord. Now the words fitly framed together come again exactly the same words in chapter four, verse 16. And they come exactly in the right spot balancing. Here it is, verse 16. From whom the whole body fitly joined together. Now it's a common teaching in the scripture that the temple is the body. And he initiated the doctrine. It's a temple. It is a practice, it's a body. And in both cases, fitly framed or fitly joined together. And the other parallel, which is obvious, is chapter two. Verse 12 that at that time ye were without Christ being aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, you were aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel.

[00:36:25] Well, you had no responsibility for that because you can't help being born in a particular land belonging to a particular people. And so whether you were sinful or whether you were righteous, it wouldn't matter at that time. You would have been an alien. Just the same as I am an alien. If I go to a foreign country. And as I was very amused to see a whole group of Americans standing ready to come off with their brilliant bags and that and they were told to wait while the British went off the ship and they had to come the other way round. Oh, for the moment, they were aliens. But it's rather fun, isn't it? To think it turns back sometimes. Well, here they were. Aliens, but in the practice. In chapter four, it says about the Gentiles in verse 18, having the understanding darkened, being alienated not from the Commonwealth of Israel, alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their heart. Or they are. And you can get the whole set. What have we come to? Chapter two, Chapter four of Ephesians, where it's turns from doctrine. That is to say what God has told you to practice what you are going to do because you believe it, doctrine and practice.

[00:37:46] And it says, I, therefore the prisoner of the Lord. Now we stop for a moment and I speak from memory. I think the word Lord comes 15 times in chapters four, five and six. But the word lord by itself comes once only in chapters one, two and three. When he was speaking about being a prisoner in chapter three, he said, For this cause I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ or the revised version I, Paul the prisoner of Christ Jesus. But when he speaks of himself again as a prisoner, he says the prisoner of the Lord, because the emphasis upon the Lord is master and obedience to one who has the right to tell you what to do, practice. And the next thing is this, Apostle says, I beseech you. What? He could have come with a rod, he said. This man had the power of striking a person with death. This man could hand somebody over to Satan. I don't know how he did it, though, to expect we are going to do those things here. He was an apostle and yet that apostle, instead of taking the high ground that he might have done, said, I beseech you, why? Why? Because he was going to tell them it's not sufficient for you to be loyal to a body of truth. You might spoil it by the spirit in which you put it over or in which you live, or what I've seen that remains standing for something which is true and ruining it because you don't manifest the spirit of Christ.

[00:39:17] So he said, I beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called with all lowliness. You see, he was going to say that to them. It's not that. Not so much what you're standing for first, but what sort of spiritual manifest where you stand for it with all lowliness. And beatniks. With long suffering forbearing one another. Well, that looks as though there'll be a good many opportunities if we live long enough and meet many of God's people to exercise long suffering and forbearance. Of course, both ways. I mean. I mean, it won't be merely you or me, but the both sides. But all. What a necessity that is for us to remember that. And then the word worthy. Is a word that means to compare to balance. Not worthy to be compared is the translation in Romans. It means putting into the scale, the weight and the correspondence decide. Well, now you may say that's an ideal we'll never reach. We can never hope to bring the balance of the scale that our walk down here in this life will be worthy of all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. Oh, no, it may not, but it's good to know that we should try. At least it should. We should make it manifest. We wish it should be so. And then he tells you what the first claim upon a believer in this calling is.

[00:40:47] Now, here you may have to put up with the same criticism that I have had. One of the criticisms levelled against me many, many times was that I didn't conduct

evangelistic campaigns. And one other criticism they said, and when you do preach the gospel, you don't preach it, you teach it. I see. That's good because I believe I'm a teacher and I'm living up to the name all the time. Don't you see? Don't you see? Well, we've got a marvelous gospel to preach. If anybody has, we have. But God has given some apostles and some prophets and some evangelists and some pastors and teachers. And he doesn't want the evangelists to turn around and say, oh, I wish I've been a teacher or the teacher to say, but they're all criticizing me, Lord, because I don't run gospel campaigns. He says, Never mind. As long as you do what I send you. That's all right. If you would have come to this chapel when we have a Sunday school, you may say, Oh, how could the children singing in that chorus. I will make you fishers of men. I will try to sing it right through. You know it, don't you? But don't you say, Hey, wait a minute. They're singing a second one. I didn't know there was a second one when I wrote the second one. And the second one is I will make you menders of nets menders of as you see.

[00:42:07] The Lord walked along and he saw two men fishing. He said, Follow me. I'll make you fishers of men. Then he saw two more men. He said, Follow me. They were mending their nets. Oh, but, Lord, we want to be fishers too. Do you? Well, if the whole lot of you fishers you'll catch nothing for your nets will be broken. Don't you see how foolish it is? If there are no teachers, no persons to open up the book, no one to stand for pure doctrine, the preachers won't have much to say after another generation, will they? So we're not going to worry about that. Lord, what would you have me to do? He says, If you're a member of the Body of Christ, put this first. Nobody else will suffer. Nobody will miss the way of salvation because you obey me. And this is what he says you must put first. Endeavoring making it your supreme business as this word means to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. And that reference to the bond of peace and the one body and the one spirit goes back to chapter two, where we are told the middle wall of partition has gone. And he is made of about one new man. So making peace, there's the bond of peace. They have access in one spirit unto the Father, and they're reconciled in one body.

[00:43:24] You got some of the very members of the body, of the unity of the spirit already there in chapter two. It's not something that we have got to do. It's something that Christ has done that we are maintaining. And then further on in this chapter, the Ascended Christ gave apostles and prophets and evangelists and pastors and teachers.

Verse 11, What? For all shut the book till I to go into all the world and preach the gospel. Not these. These are still carrying on a particular work. So we'll read what it says. For the perfecting of the saints. Now, perhaps you wouldn't be surprised to know that that word perfecting is the word mending their nets. The very word mending their nets is a part of our business according to this passage. Now, what does it mean? Perfecting of saints or mending them? It means there's been a break. And what break took place at x 28. The whole purpose of God seemed to be broken. Now he's given you your calling. Well, maintain that for all your worth, for it's a manifestation that in spite of everything that appeared to go wrong, God's purpose is going on. Leave him to do the evangelism evangelizing and leave him to raise up the men who will go out and preach the gospel. He'll do it. But he doesn't want you to sacrifice the truth he's given to you, need it to satisfy somebody else's opinion.

[00:44:46] You see, for the perfecting of the saints. For the work of the ministry. For the building up of the Body of Christ. So you're not wasting time. You're employing God given time to do the work that he wants done in this dispensation. Or in. The goal before us is verse 13 till we all come or all attain unto. The unity of the faith, not merely in the unity of the faith. Your margin will put you right there unto it. Something we've got in front of us and the knowledge or possibly the acknowledging of the Son of God. Strictly speaking, there is no difference between knowledge and knowledge except in degree. Knowledge might be that you've got an attic in your house. Stocked up with encyclopedias, owl boxes and every everything else that's knowledge. But when you bring one down and look at it, that's acknowledge. Now, you may have the Bible at your fingertips. But that doesn't mean that, you know, in the sense that God intends. There was somebody used to come to this chapel many years ago. I think he's passed now. I think he's died. So you forgive me if I mention it. He used to badger everybody in this chapel by telling them how many times he'd read. Well, I think the gospel of Luke 117 times as something. So I say to him one day, I said, Look, brother, if you walk right clean through Smithfield market and come out the other end, you'll be just as hungry as ever.

[00:46:32] What's it matter how many times you read it? It's what you do with it, isn't it? So here we have the building up of the Body of Christ. Till we all attain unto the unity of the faith and the acknowledgment of the Son of God. It's a part of God's scheme that his son shall be acknowledged. It's the purpose of the ages that at long last, all delegated

authority should put aside. The 12 thrones occupied by the 12 Apostles will have done their work and failed. The heavenly Jerusalem will have been dominating the earth, and it will fail because the moment Satan is let loose, he finds a number like the sand of the sea to respond, and he puts down all rule and authority, not merely some all rule, good or bad. And only the Son of God at last is supreme without a delegate, without anyone to represent him in heaven or earth. And he brings a perfect end universe and lays it at the feet of the father. And then he, the son, voluntarily submits that God may be all in all. So it's a part of our testimony if we do nothing else in this life but to point always and only to the exalted Son of God. And for aught you know, there may be many more saved by grace by that sheer fact than running any amount of evangelistic campaigns without God's command.

[00:47:54] So to do. And so we might go on until we better finish this verse. I think that we'll draw to an end unto a perfect man. Now, that word man occurs in chapter five several times and is always translated Husband. There are two words. Main words that are translated Man in the New Testament. Anthropos. Which means men, women and children. And there's another word, NEA, which means a male, an adult male, a husband. What if this means what it says? This church to which we belong cannot possibly be the bride of the lamb. For each a perfect husband. You know, what's been done is they've been so gluing their attention upon the church of the bride. They forget the bride must have a husband. And the lamb, of course, is the bridegroom. But the lamb is the head of the body of the church. The lamb also is the king of Israel. He's all. So here we have the church, which is his body, being prepared now, like Adam was first. And then afterwards the bride, which comes at the end. And paradise has got both of them, you know, according to some teaching, paradise will be there and the bride will be there. But they forgotten, forgotten to get anyone to represent the husband. Not so. Here is just now God hasn't forgotten all his purpose and plan. And all these things are working together. And then finally, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ.

[00:49:34] So we have. The three measures in this passage with which I'll finish. Verse seven unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. You won't be held responsible for ten talents if you've only been given two. And then 13 the measure, the stature of the fullness of the Christ. Oh, what a goal. And then verse 16, this is where you and I come in down here, functioning here and now, from whom?

The whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies according to the effectual, working in the measure of every part to retranslate it, each one part doing its share. Where necessary, that is, and how necessary it is for us to remember that the hand cannot say of the eye or the eye cannot say of the hand. I have no need of thee. I don't know what sort of fish they are making of it here up in this pulpit. But I'm positive. If I were to provide you with the tea, you wish I was up here again in the pulpit. You see, Now, somebody had to do all that and be here this morning, cutting up sandwiches and getting it ready. And when it was all over, doing that terrible thing, washing up again. But don't you see? Each one part doing their share. So I can say to them, Oh, you're doing your share.

[00:50:59] You see, it's good. And I do mine and you do yours. And if only we do that, we'll be like a body that's healthy, each part functioning. Instead of putting it upon some other member. Whenever. Say, I had another message from America, didn't I? And I want to remember that. Well, I will say this. And of course, the lady is going to hear me say this only there's about 5000 miles between us. So I think I'm safe. When I was over in America and went to California, I went into the hall where all the people were sitting, like it might be here and went up to the front and a lady came forward and put out a hand and then she withdrew it like that. She says, Oh, I can't be satisfied with that. And she embraced me. And as I said, when I came up, I thought I'd been involved in an eiderdown quilt when I came up. I just waved to the congregation. I said, It's all right. I'll write home at once about it and I'll promise to do it all over again when I get home. That wouldn't be right. Well, now that self-same lady was copying out some of my articles to make little booklets over there. And it suddenly dawned upon her right. A birthday. That was in April. So she turned to and she sent me an embroidered text.

[00:52:20] And I want to open this packet until the time. Well, now, all unbeknown to her, I made up my mind that I would start dealing with the Book of Exodus on the Sunday morning. She didn't know that. I didn't know it at the time she was starting. And the very morning that I had the text in Exodus, the 10th chapter, where Moses told Pharaoh, you know, Pharaoh said, Well, how many of you are going? We'll only let the men go. Why should you go three days journey? Why not do it in the land? Why not leave your flocks and herds behind? You know, he went on, Moses says, not a hoof. What do you say? What an extraordinary text for anybody to send you for your birthday. So I'll show you. Here's the text I had sent for my birthday. Can you see it? A piece of

embroidery, not a hoof. What did you say? What an extraordinary text. What's the idea? Not a hoof. Well, I know because she equated this with the apostle's statement in Galatians, to whom we yielded subjection. Not for our. So I know. Or it's a testimony that I value to think that they should think that of me, that they should say a good birthday text for you is not a hoof to Pharaoh, not an hour to order somebody and someone who would in any measure deflect and turn aside from the truth entrusted. What a marvelous person I must be.

[00:53:48] Must know this is true now. What a marvelous savior. I've got to stoop from glory and use an earthen vessel as I am. Oh, I hope it'll be an encouragement to some of you other folks who are also very earthen vessels like I am, that if the Lord can stoop and use me. It's possible he can stoop and use you. So will you involve yourself voluntarily into this little band of trustees for this truth while time shall last? And remember once again that it is required in stewards, not that you should have an extraordinary education. Get the best you can. Not that you should be able to go back to 1066 William the Conqueror. It doesn't matter who you came from, you go back to Adam at last. But first and foremost, to remember that this truth, both in Ephesians and in Colossians, is addressed to those who are faithful. Now, other epistles have that, too. The church wishes at Ephesus faithful. Faithful works. So may the Lord grant unto us once again as this witness comes to a close. Another foundation day that we may be encouraged. Our brother Kenny and Foster and Stuart Allan and the younger men who are standing here and elsewhere up and down the country may be encouraged to hold fast the faithful word, to be steadfast, to be unmovable. Unmovable. Not stick in the mud first because one is always abounding in the work of the Lord. But as much as you know that your labor is not in vain. Interlude.