

1 Thessalonians 2:1–12 - People Pleasing

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

Date: 11 May 2025

Preacher: Simon Lawrenson

[0 : 00] Really good to see you. Beautiful morning, right? Kind of feel like today is like we should have church outside.! Always say that but never do it.

! I know because like the day that we say we're going to have church outside, it will be like monsoons. Yes. So yeah, we did it once and people nearly had hypothermia.

So, you know, anyway. We're in First Thessalonians. So if you want to turn there, I'll just let you know, Bob is here, Bob and Jeannie are here.

They're doing a tour of the UK and I think Western Europe and Ireland. Because they're part of a group called Mission Assist. They used to be called, they used to be part of a group called Poyment Ministries in the States who are an organization that come alongside church leadership and offer all kinds of things.

But one of the main things they offer is helping transition. So when a pastor is transitioning out of a church and then they've got a new guy coming in, they'll help with that transition, which is really important. It's a really, really challenging time for a church when there's transitions.

[1 : 19] And so Bob has been doing that for years. Before that, he was senior pastor of Calvary Chapel in North Phoenix, Arizona. And he planted that church and he turned that church over, joined Poyment, was there for a few years.

Now he's part of Mission Assist, which basically does the same thing. And so he's coming over. Actually, I think he arrives next week. And so he's in the country for a long time. And he always likes to come down here to Southampton.

And clearly we know why. Yeah. Three people are like, yes. Everybody else is like, not sure. But so he's going to share on the Sunday.

And it would just be a great, a great. And I always, because I'm always just like, I'm grateful for guys like Bob, you know, who have been senior pastors of churches with thousands of thousands of people coming in, you know, four or five services on a Sunday.

And he gets to a stage in his life where he just says, you know what? God's calling me to something else. And I'm happy to go and preach to the ones in the twos or the twenties and thirties. And I just love that heart.

[2 : 30] So he's going to be here on the 22nd of June on Sunday morning. And so just look forward to that. So we're in 1 Thessalonians chapter 2.

And I want to ask you a question to start off with. And the question is this. Have you ever found yourself in a situation where you kind of wondered, is this worth it?

Like, oh, am I doing it in vain? Like, was all of that work that I've done, was it worth it? Like, so maybe you've invested into a relationship or a project or a calling only to have it fall apart.

Maybe you poured your heart into raising a child. Maybe you've built a business. Maybe you've served in a ministry and you felt like all your efforts have come crashing down.

If you've ever felt that way, you're in good company. Because Paul is going to write about that this morning. And you remember the story.

[3 : 37] He's been kind of run out of town in Thessalonica. He's been chased by riots, by mobs. And he's left with this nagging question, was it worth it? He went to Philippi, got beat up, smuggled out of town, went to Thessalonica.

And it seems like the same thing that happens to Paul in every town he goes to. He just gets beat up, run out of town, beat up, run out of town. And sometimes God says, no, go back into that town. Get beat up again. He goes back into that town. Gets beat up again. And I'm sure that in Paul's lowest moments, which I'm sure he had, I'm sure that at some point he went, is this worth it?

And he writes about this this morning. And he's writing to this young church with the clarity and conviction of someone who understands that the work for Christ is anything but in vain. Like, it is worth it. Paul knew that he wasn't building just for human, just for a human movement, if you like.

[4 : 50] It was the kingdom of God breaking into the darkness. And that kind of work, that kind of investment is never wasted. And so when Paul plants a church in a city, you know, the interesting thing is, Paul plants a church in a city.

And immediately there's struggle. Immediately there's challenge. Immediately there's violence of some kind. And, you know, we should remember that every time God does a work of ministry, that whenever God does a work of grace in any place, Satan is also doing an anti-ministry. And every time the Holy Spirit has a revival, Satan shows up with a riot. There's always that. And so these new Christians, they have all of these questions for Paul.

And Paul is wondering as he leaves Thessalonica and he ends up, eventually he goes to Berea. And on his journey, he's wondering, was it worth it?

What's happened to these guys? Because he was only there for maybe two weeks. And so he sends Timothy back. And he sends him, he sends Timothy back to check on them.

[6 : 13] And when Timothy eventually arrives, Paul sits down from Corinth and writes this letter that we're now reading, answering all of these questions that the Thessalonica church has.

And one of the major themes of this book, and I think it's so relevant for us, it's about the last days or the end times. Because the people there are looking into the future.

And they're wondering, what does the future hold for us? Like, what's going to happen this time next year or in five years time or in ten years time?

What does that look like for us? And so Paul tells them. And he's going to tell them that one of the, in fact we saw last week, one of the occurrences of this theme is in verse 10 of chapter 1.

He says that to wait for his son from heaven. Like, that's one of the main themes, to wait for his son from heaven. Like, none of us probably like waiting so much.

[7 : 14] And Paul says, look, the harsh reality is, is that Jesus could flick the switch and this would be all over tomorrow. But there's a purpose and a reason that he's waiting.

He's waiting and we, we've got to wait. And that's what we're waiting for. We're waiting for his son from heaven.

Heaven. We, we all know, like we've, we've mentioned it already this morning.

We see it in the news. There are some God-sized problems out there, aren't there? And it doesn't matter how many wars we wage or how many elections we hold, how many pontiffs get elected or voted in, how many prescriptions we prescribe or how many conflicts we have, until Jesus comes back, there's always going to be a constant series of problems, pains and perils.

It's just going to happen. And we want to do all we can to prepare for the coming of Jesus. But ultimately, there are some things that won't change until he arrives.

[8 : 26] And so the Thessalonians are saying, well, how do we do that? How do we wait? How do we wait well? Right? And so how do we, how do we live today with the future in mind?

And so in this short letter, Paul holds up this radical new way of living. A life transformed by the gospel, grounded in faith, love and hope, and shaped by the return of Jesus.

He shows us what it looks like when people truly live with the future in view, not with some vague hope, not some wishful thinking, not with some of like, you know, get me out of here Christianity.

None of that. He's saying, how can we live with a certain living hope that Jesus is coming back?

And how does that shape what we're doing today? And so join with me in chapter 2, verse 1.

We pick up this letter where Paul says, for you yourselves know brothers that are coming to you was not in vain. Love it.

[9 : 28] So he just told them in the previous chapter that he was confident that God had chosen them and called them.

He was confident of that because he lays out the reasons why the gospel has been made known to them. It had troubled their hearts and minds. The Holy Spirit was transforming their lives.

And that he bears testimony of that change. He says that in verse 9. He says, you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.

He's able to say that his coming to them, however short and however violent field it was, wasn't in vain. He says, I didn't do it for nothing.

But then he says, verse 2, but though we had already suffered and been shamefully treated at Philippi, so the town before they arrived at Thessalonica, he says, as you know, and he keeps using this phrase, as you know.

[10:31] You know this. I don't need to tell you this. You know this already. But it's good to be reminded of it, right? So he says, look, that we'd already suffered and been shamefully treated at Philippi, as you know. We had boldness in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in the midst of much conflict.

And I think most of us, look, if we're honest, if we can be honest for a moment, most of us want our lives to count for something, don't we? Like we want to be able to say, like at the end of our lives, like it was worth it.

And Paul is simply stating here that he and his team faced severe suffering in Philippi. He suffered physically because, well, there was a riot and he got beat up.

But he also, look, remember, he also suffered legally, right? So the story was that there was a man in the church called Jason. And after Paul left and was kind of smothered out of town, the government caught up with Jason, right?

And they said, well, Jason, you've been supporting Paul. And so we're going to fine you for supporting Paul. And that's what happened. And Paul then had this problem with the government.

[11:46] The government were on his toes, if you like. They were chasing him down. And, you know, I don't know what it's like. None of us probably know what it's like to have the most powerful government on earth.

Besides God's government chasing you down. But that's what happened. The Roman government was on his heels. And eventually they did catch up with him, didn't they?

You know, they arrest him. And outside kind of the history of the Bible, we understand that they arrested him and eventually beheaded him. So he suffered physically and he suffered legally. He was on the run.

But listen, he was also suffering spiritually. And he was suffering spiritually, not because he disobeyed God, but because he obeyed God. Like most of us would probably kind of think, well, you know, if I'm suffering because I've disobeyed God, that's on me, right?

That's like, that's on me. That's, you know, that's punishment. That's judgment. That's come my way. That's on me. But Paul was suffering not because he was disobedient.

[12:48] Paul was suffering because he was obedient. God has said, I want you to go to this town. And you remember, he went to that town and all of a sudden, now he's been beaten up. He's run out of town. The government's on his toes and he's suffering.

He's like, Lord, this was your plan, not mine. Like, I didn't even, like, if you remember, we had the conversation about this and I told you it wasn't going to go very well. So he's doing exactly what God had asked him to do.

And actually, it appeared on the face of it, it appeared on the surface that he had failed and lost. That's what it appeared like. And so here's the amazing thing.

Paul was about to say, he was able to say that we had boldness in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in the midst of much conflict.

Despite the hardships, it was worth it, Paul says. And actually, this is the tension that Paul maintains throughout this letter. He doesn't say, look at the world around you and avoid it.

[14:01] He's not going to say that. And like, we can. Right? Like, he doesn't say, go find a cave, live in it. Okay? However, some of us would find that really attractive.

Okay? Don't go and find, like, some place where you can just, some island somewhere where you can just be on your own. He doesn't say that. And he never says that.

And look, he also doesn't say, it's been a long time since Jesus said he was coming back and he hasn't come back, so why didn't he just give up? He doesn't say that either.

He says, yes, the world seems to be going downhill, but the Christian couldn't look up and see what's on the horizon. He says, don't deny the reality of what is around you.

But neither elevate the reality of what's around you. He's saying, look, acknowledge that there is a greater reality of our God who is over everyone and everything.

[15:09] And that's the secret. That's the secret to living in the tension. It's not to discount the world around you. It's not to give up on your spiritual journey. It's to see that Jesus is above all and in all.

Understanding that the Holy Spirit is here to remove any fear of the future and to give us boldness in the present. And this is what Paul is saying there in verse 2.

Though we had already suffered and been shamefully mistreated, our Philippi, as you know. Look, he said we could have been full of fear, but instead, because Jesus is coming back and because he's given us the Holy Spirit, we had boldness in our God.

That was our focus. We've elevated God above all of these problems to declare to you the gospel of God in the midst of much conflict. And he says, verse 3, for our God, or sorry, for our appeal, that word appeal is encouragement.

We are encouraging you, or we're going to encourage you, or we want to encourage you because. So, our appeal does not spring from error or impurity or any attempt to deceive, which is a stark contrast to the false teachers of their day and of our day who have all of these hidden agendas, right?

[16:35] Paul is saying that the results we see in you are encouraging us. And those results are not because of error. So, that word error means fraud.

Like, these are all kind of connected, these words. Fraud, impurity, and the attempt to deceive. Or we haven't tricked you. That word deceive is to cast a line, as in to fish, to catch you with a hook, right?

So, we haven't done that. Your conversion and the weight of the Spirit is dealing with you is genuine. But, verse 4, just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts.

That word approved there, just as we have been approved by God, is associated with approving someone who's fit for public service. If you want to run for public office, you have to go through, and I believe you still have to go through a series of tests to see if you are fit to serve.

Maybe we think that some of those tests should be a little bit more rigorous. I don't know. But, Paul is saying that he had those tests from God. And notice that he says that this wasn't to please man, but to please God.

[18:05] Now, pause there. Because, like, this is an epidemic of our time, I think. The issue of wanting to please people, be people pleasers.

Nobody likes to be criticized. But, like, I have never met anyone who likes that, enjoys that. So, the effects of that on all of us, to one degree or another, if we're brutally honest, is that none of us like to be rejected.

We quite like to be affirmed and admired and accepted. And so, in one way, we're all kind of vulnerable in that area. But there's this issue of pleasing people, being people pleasers.

And if you are more of a rule keeper than a rule breaker, like, I'm a rule breaker.

I'll just tell you that now. If there's a rule there to be broken, I'm going to find a way to break it.

Maybe not break it, but find my way around it. I always have been. Asked my parents. It plagued them.

[19:14] And probably still does. Even at this age. I am just, I am a rule breaker. And so, but, I also accept that it's a struggle for everyone.

But if you're a rule keeper, if you're someone who likes to keep rules rather than break rules, this is probably more a struggle for you than others. As a people pleaser, you're likely, listen, you're likely kind, you're likely compassionate and caring.

If you're a rule breaker, you're probably none of those things. But you like to put people at ease.

You often go along to get along. You likely avoid conflict at all costs.

You assume the best of others, even when they've shown you their worst. You prefer email rather than face to face. You're like, some of you are like, oh, you're a nice person.

Don't get me wrong. It's great having you around. We need people like you. In the words of the musical Hamilton, you talk less, smile more, don't let them know what you're against or what you're for.

[20:37] Paul says the same kind of thing elsewhere in Galatians chapter 1. He says, for now, for am I now seeking the approval of man or God?

And it's kind of a rhetorical question that Paul is asking. Or am I trying to please man? If I was still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ. Why? Because you can't serve two masters. He tells the slaves in Ephesians chapter 6, obey your earthly masters.

He says, bond servants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ. Not by way of eye service as people please, but as bond servants of Christ. The people said of Jesus in Mark chapter 12, they came to him and said, teacher, we know that you are true and you don't care about anyone's opinion. You're not swayed by appearances, but truly teach the way of God.

So clearly Paul and Jesus put a high premium on not being controlled by what other people think. because there's a danger, look, there's a danger that if you live to please other people, you'll not live for the sake of the truth.

[21 : 55] And it's a burden that no one can carry trying to please people. And what that looks like often is that other people and their opinion of you will become your God.

And you will not be able to be authentic. You will not be able to be obedient to what God wants. There'll always be that hesitancy. There'll always be that what if.

What will they think? You'll not be able to fulfill God's purpose for you. And so God is saying that the way he was able to fulfill God's purposes for him was to discard people's opinion of him.

And the way that he did that was not to make people smaller. We do this to our peril. When we're talking about discarding people's opinions we're not saying that those opinions don't matter at all. The way that Paul discarded those opinions or didn't allow those opinions to rule him was not to make those opinions or those people smaller but simply to make God bigger.

[23 : 15] The danger of making people smaller is that we can miss out on some of the really really valuable ways that God actually speaks to us. We tend to view everything anyone says as unimportant.

Well it doesn't matter what they think. It doesn't matter what they say. That's not what we're saying. It really does matter what we think. It really does matter what you think and what you say. You are important.

Your views are not unimportant. And the tendency is that when we make people smaller well we just view anyone else as unimportant when actually we know that God places us in church community so that we can be conduits of God's grace to each other.

So it's not by making people smaller. That just leads to arrogance. And that stinks doesn't it? Arrogant people smell. Right? It's just full of pride.

It's not by making people smaller it's by making God bigger. Listen to what Ed Welch says in his book when people are big and God is small.

[24 : 26] Highly recommend the book if you are a rule keeper and people pleaser if that's your struggle. He says this. He says we fear people because they can expose and humiliate us.

We fear people because they can reject, ridicule, or despise us. We fear people because they can attack, oppress, and threaten us. And this is actually the root cause of the problem, isn't it?

Right? I want to please people. Why? Because they're holding something over me. Perceived, held over me. These three reasons have one thing in common. They see people as bigger, that is, more powerful and significant than God.

And out of the fear that it creates in us, we give other people the power and right to tell us what to feel, think, and do. That's super powerful, isn't it?

He says this, he says, we are more concerned about looking stupid, a fear of people, than we are about acting sinfully, a fear of God.

[25 : 33] My favorite quote from the whole book is this, our goal is to love people more than need them. We are overflowing pitchers, not leaky cups.

Paul wrote to the church of Philippi, the church that he had just left on that journey through Thessalonica and into Berea, and he said, even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice offering you a faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.

It is better to be an overflowing jug than a leaky cup. to be overflowing with God's love. That God loves, God's love fills us so completely, and we are so rooted in our identity in Christ, that we then love others selflessly.

John wrote about it in 1 John 4 19, he says that we love, why? Because he first loved us. That's not just a matter of chronology. That's pragmatism.

How do we love others without being leaky? Well, we are rooted in the love that God has for us.

And when we're rooted in that kind of love, we don't care so much about what people's opinions are of us if they go against what God has for us.

[27 : 05] Paul had this firm identity in God's love for him. And so he was able to shed any burdens of people pleasing and love others and serve others as an overflow.

He says, for we never came with words of flattery, verse 5. As you know, nor with a pretext for greed, God is witness, nor did we seek glory from people, whether from you or from others, though we could have made demands as apostles of Christ.

And so, look, he's just saying that the one who sent them is the one that they serve. Although he's there serving, ministering to the people there in Thessalonica, he said, look, ultimately, you are not my master.

I have one master that he is the Lord. I will serve you until I die, but I have one master and you're not it. And so he says, look, I'm serving that one person.

He says that they didn't use flattery to get money, they didn't seek accolades from people, and whilst we could, he says, have come and showed you our badge as an apostle of Christ, they didn't do that either.

[28 : 29] he says, but, verse 7, we were gentle among you. Now, remove any preconceived ideas that you have of the apostle Paul.

He says, we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. That's not the Paul that I kind of, my mind conjures up.

and he's actually going to liken his own character to a mother. And then in verse 10, as a father.

And so he says, being affectionately desirous of you, verse 8, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God, but also our very selves, which is what mothers do continually.

Because you had become very dear to us. For you remember, brothers, our labor and our toil, we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, while we proclaim to you the gospel of God.

This is a different picture from what we get or often view of Paul. There is a tendency, I think, certainly in my own mind, is that to view him as like a hard-spoken hell-fire broomstone evangelist who goes from one town to another, just lighting fires and then running away.

[29 : 52] he seems to get a negative reaction, which is very violent everywhere he goes. And I kind of think of what, Paul, just tone it down a bit, make some friends.

And so we think like, you know, violence for violence. Maybe Paul kind of, you know, shot off his mouth every now and again and he probably shouldn't have done and that's probably what wound people up.

He must have rubbed people up the wrong way. But actually Paul says, I was gentle. You know what, I just, I got up early, I went to work, I had a job, manual labor, making tents.

When I got through, then I started my second job, just ministering, serving, I didn't want to be a burden to this young church. And you know that, that's what my heart was.

He says, you're my witnesses, verse 10. And God also, how holy and righteous and blameless was our conduct towards you believers. And so he appeals to their experience of him and he appeals to God's knowledge of him.

[31 : 00] that his conduct was three things, holy, righteous, and blameless. Now, be careful when you're reading this because he is not saying that he was holy, righteous, and blameless.

Do you get that? He's talking about how, like, technically, holy, righteous, and blameless are modifying the phrase conduct towards you believers.

It's simply spoken. It's the behavior that he's talking about, not him that he's talking about. So he's saying that it's his conduct that was holy, his conduct was righteous, and his conduct was blameless.

And there's three important words that he uses, holy. There's a Greek word that means devout. It's the only time it's used there in the New Testament. It's right here. And actually, it's hard to understand why the translators chose the word holy to describe it.

If you're reading in the New King James version, or if you're reading in the NIV, or excuse me, in the NLT, and many other translations, it's just described as devout or committed.

[32 : 17] The ESV and the NIV translate it as holy. And it's just a little bit misleading because Paul is talking again about his conduct. He's not talking about his character.

He's talking about his conduct in contrast to the false teachers that have come in after he has left. He says, our conduct, we were committed to you.

I had a job that I was working hours and hours and hours, and then I ministered to you. I'm committed to you. That's that word holy.

So you can see why it's a little bit confusing, why they would translate that word holy as holy. Because it just means devout, it means committed. He says, I wasn't like the false teachers who just breezed in, took your money and left.

He says, we weren't after your money, we weren't trying to trick you, we weren't out to try and please people, we were devoted to you. And then he says, second word, our conduct was righteous.

[33 : 23] Okay, so their behavior was right, that's the idea. It just means right. They did what was right. It was right. You know, sometimes it's just things that are right, aren't there?

Like, yeah, that's the right thing to do. That's what that word righteous means. It means honesty. They just did the right thing. Right? They ate their broccoli. Why? It's just right. Nobody likes it. But it's right. They put out the bins on a Thursday. Nobody likes it, but it's right. Is that Thursday? Yeah.

No one likes it, but you've got to do it. They handed the lost wallet in when they found it on the floor. That's right. Okay? There's some things that are moving that decision.

They did what was right. And then he says that their conduct was blameless. Now don't get confused with this word blameless and perfection. They don't mean the same thing, thankfully. Right? So this means that any mud that was thrown didn't stick.

[34 : 29] It means unprovable. And so just in those three words, they relate how Paul's conduct was like a mother towards them. And then in verse 11, he kind of switches roles and tells them how he was a father to them.

So he says, for you know how like a father with his children we exhorted each one of you. That is a beautiful little word, exhorted. It means to bring to one side. It's got the idea of power to come alongside, like parallel.

He said, look, I was not only gentle, we not only just did the right thing, but look, we also had family meetings around the table.

Like I didn't stand at the bottom of the stairs and yell at you to clean your room. Like I brought you alongside and said, look, this is what it means to live in this family. This is what we need to do. I called you to my side and he said, I encouraged you. And that word encourages, I gave you the courage to do it. Like, get up and try again. It's this picture of a mother or father, just a person, you know, when a young child falls off their bike.

[35 : 42] Right? We don't go to that child and go, yeah, fall off, yeah, give up. Never ride a bike again. What do we do? You know, we pick them up, we dry their tears, we dust them down, put a plaster over their blooded knee, put the handlebars back on the right way, sit them on the bike, give them a push, and we say, you can do it.

Don't give up. Keep going. And literally three yards down the road, what's happened? They've smashed into a tree, and we go again, and we go again, and then all of a sudden, they're riding a bike, and actually all of a sudden, not so far afterwards, they're learning to drive a car, and things get a little bit heated inside a car, than they do when you're pushing someone off on a bike, but it's the same idea, isn't it?

You know, you stalled on a hill? Well, give up, you may as well. We don't say that, do we? We go, come on, put a handbrake on, put it in neutral, don't worry about those idiots behind you.

Start again, go again, come to a roundabout. Don't worry, keep going. And that's what Paul is saying about their Christian life. He's saying, we came alongside, we brought you alongside, we said, look, just keep going.

How can we help you? How can we disciple you? We encouraged you, we gave you the courage to keep going, that's what that means. And then charged you, that word is about testimony, elsewhere Paul uses it to say that he was innocent of any wrong charges against him and his life brought testimony to it.

[37 : 42] That's the word testimony. It's the idea that Paul uses his own experience and his own shortcomings in his own journey of grace to motivate them to keep going.

And so look, that same idea, you know, we would say to our children when we're sat next to them in the passenger seat and they're driving and you say, you know, the first time I went out driving, I crashed, don't worry about it.

Or we're pushing them off on their bike and you're like, don't worry, every time I go out I get run over, don't worry about it. And that would be true if it wasn't for Laurie even today because I don't know how to cross the road.

So he's using, he's saying, I'm using my own experience, I've told you about my own journey, I was a terrorist, remember? And do you remember how God kind of met me? The same way that God met me, he's met you, it's no different.

That's what Paul is saying. And then he says, he uses this phrase right in the end, which we don't have time to unpack, but I think it's a summary statement.

[38 : 54] Like I don't think Paul is saying anything different in this next statement where he says, to walk in a manner worthy. I don't think he's not moving on to something else, he's just giving this summary statement of everything he's just said.

As if to say, like, you know, I encouraged you, I charged you to walk in a manner worthy. That word worthy is axios. It's a, I love the idea of, it's the life that weighs as much as your mouth.

You know, your life bears testimony. You don't just talk about it. Your life bears witness to it. Manor worthy, axios.

Who calls you, and notice this, into his own kingdom and glory. This is all about walking in God's kingdom. Paul's words here call us to a higher standard.

A way of life that echoes the character of Christ as disciples. Like a loving mother or a guiding father, we are called to nurture, we are called to encourage, we are called to challenge one another as we walk in our journey of faith.

[40 : 16] And notice like Paul isn't calling us to live this way because it's easy or convenient. Like this isn't easy. And it's certainly not convenient.

He's calling us to live this way because it's worthy. What is it worthy of? He's not saying that we are worthy. Like he's not saying that, you know, good job guys.

Like you're worthy to walk like this. What he's saying is that your life, my life, should be the same weight of what Christ has done for you.

To the same degree that he has saved you and called you and chosen you like we saw last week. Live your life that same weight.

God calls us to live worthy. And he calls us to live worthy. Notice that end phrase. Into his own kingdom and glory.

[41 : 26] That isn't Paul just kind of rounding off what he wants to say in a nice cute way. He's like, I have nothing else to say. Kingdom and glory, they're Christian words. Let's use those. Right?

Because he's like establishing those Christian words for us. What do they mean? Well, look, he's simply talking about how to live a life worthy of the kingdom you've been saved into.

you've been saved into a kingdom. And so the weight of living in that kingdom or the weight of being saved into that kingdom is the same way you should be living in that kingdom.

This is not about living in the world's kingdom that he's been contrasting all of this chapter. to live in the kingdom to live a life worthy of the kingdom is to live in the tension of now not living in God's kingdom but one day living in God's kingdom.

It's to stand firm in a world that actually often pushes back. It's to declare the gospel even in the midst of much conflict. It's to walk in a manner that reflects the eternal hope that we have in Christ.

[42 : 44] And so Paul is able to say walk in a manner axios your life weighs as much as everything else. Manner of God who calls you.

Interesting isn't it? You've been chosen and now you've been called. Sometimes I wish that we would place as much emphasis on being chosen as we do or much emphasis on being called to walk as we have chosen.

There's books written on being chosen, being elected, being predestined. There's not as many being called. But you're called. We're called.

Why are we chosen? Because we're called. We're called to live in this kingdom and it's his own kingdom. And so with God's help.

Let's do that. Let's walk in the kingdom that he's called us into with boldness and strength.

[43 : 51] Walk in worthy today and tomorrow. Let's pray together. Father, thank you for your word. Thank you, Lord, that we have this testimony of Paul.

Lord, thank you, Lord, that we can look to you to be the one who owns the kingdom because you're the king. And Lord, we do pray, Lord, this morning, Lord, that you would help us to be people who

are pleasing to you.

Lord, we don't want to be arrogant and close our ears to others, Lord, but certainly, Lord, we don't want to elevate people's opinions over, you know, the opinion that you have of us.

And Lord, so we want to please you. And we pray, Lord, that we would just make you bigger in our lives. Lord, that we would make pleasing you bigger in our lives.

Lord, that we would know what it means to be bold and courageous. Lord, that we would be rooted in the love that you have for us and the identity that we have in you.

[45 : 00] Lord, that nothing can remove your love from us and nothing can remove that identity that we have in you. And yet, Lord, we try and people try so often to rob us of that.

Lord, and so we pray again this morning, Lord, help us to know that love so intimately and so overwhelmingly, Lord, that we become pitchers and not leaky cups.

Lord, that we would know that love and that love, because we are loved, we would know how to love. Lord, we want to thank you this morning that you do love us.

Lord, we thank you this morning, Lord, that you don't love us because we are good. You don't love us because we have made ourselves accepted.

We don't, we're not loved because somehow we have first pleased you. Lord, we thank you, Lord, for that one way gracious love that you have for us.

[46 : 02] And Lord, we just want to praise you this morning, Lord, that we might be in a difficult position this morning, Lord, we might find ourselves in a hard place like Paul.

But this morning we can rest assured in that love. And though people's opinions of us might change and people's opinions of us might vary from person to person, Lord, we can be assured this morning, Lord, that your love for us never changes.

So Lord, we thank you for that, we praise you for that, in Jesus' name. Amen.