

Catford Lectures 2007-2008

Part 2

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Place	Catford
Date	01.11.2007
Duration	00:43:44
Online version	https://www.audioteaching.org/en/sermons/ccl002/catford-lectures-2007-2008

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[00:00:01] Good afternoon, a section of scripture in Luke's Gospel, chapter 12. I would like to cover the section from Luke 12, verse 13, through to verse 48.

Perhaps we could read it in sections. So first of all, from verse 13 to verse 21.

And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me.

[00:01:01] And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you? And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness.

For a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully.

And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do, I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years.

[00:02:08] Take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night my soul shall be requited of thee.

Then, whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?

So is he that laid up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

Thus far, the word of God.

[00:03:02] There used to be a Christian periodical, and its title was Watching and Witting.

And today, I'd like to speak about Watching and Witting for the Lord Jesus.

Actually no, I'd like to speak about Watching and Witting and Working for the Lord Jesus.

We have the Watching and Witting in verses 31-39 of Luke's Gospel 12.

And we have the Witting in verses 41-48 of Luke's Gospel chapter 12.

And I trust that we will come to those verses in due course. [00:04:01] But we have just read Luke 12 from verses 13-21, just to get the setting and to cover some of the preliminaries.

And at first sight, verse 14 might seem peculiar to us.

This person approaches the Lord Jesus and he says to him, Teacher, speak to my brother. Tutor by the inheritance with me.

And the Lord Jesus gives the reply, Who established me as a judge or a divider over you?

Jesus is the Messiah.

He comes on people.

He's been presented to the nation.

Makes me think of Solomon.

[00:05:02] And the two mothers, one of whom had lost a child, one who was a true mother, one who made claims to the child, to the baby who was not the true mother. They applied to Solomon, the king, for his wisdom to settle the dispute.

As he said, divide the child. And the true mother said, No, no, don't harm the baby. Well, it's the most natural thing, is it not?

In Emmanuel's land and with the Messiah present in the midst of his people that he would settle matters of an earthly inheritance. Because we know from Ezekiel during the kingdom, the land will be divided amongst the tribes. We have the details of it there.

But he says, No.

He says, Man, who made me a judge or a divider?

[00:06:03] The first thing we see here is that Christ is rejected.

Christ is refused.

We've reached that point in Luke's gospel where he is not received by his own people.

And this distinction is very marked in Matthew's gospel, chapter 12. And there they attribute the wonderful powers of casting out a demon. And they say it's only by Beelzebub, the prince of the demons, that he has done this. And the Lord Jesus characterizes that as a sin or blasphemy against the Holy Spirit that will not be forgiven unto men.

And he pronounces the rules then on that adulterous generation. [00:07:03] And at the beginning of chapter 13 we see the dividing point.

Jesus went out from the house, Matthew 13, verse 1, and sat by the seaside. The house.

Judea, the seaside, the nations, the Gentiles. And in the previous verses at the end of chapter 12, he only owns a spiritual link. He says, Who's my mother and who are my brother? And he stretches forth his hand and says, Those who do the will of my father which is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother. Similar thing here in Luke chapter 12. He's only going to own a spiritual link now.

Earthly purposes in God's wisdom and in God's ways are making way for the heavenly purposes. And of course the time was not yet when the Lord could speak openly and clearly about these things. [00:08:04] He said unto them, I have many things to say unto you now, but you cannot bear them. They weren't able to take them in. This new spiritual heavenly truth, this change of ways, change of deans, change of dispensations in God's ways which we know comes out more fully in the book of Acts. The formation of the assembly by the sending down of the Holy Spirit and the teaching that Paul gives us in his epistles. All this was future when the Lord was speaking but there's a little indication of it here. That he's moving on to heavenly purposes when he says that he wouldn't divide the inheritance. In the verses we've read he speaks first of all to a person. And he speaks to individuals.

And our Lord Jesus Christ still speaks to individuals today.

And we're very thankful, are we not, that he's spoken to us in a deep and meaningful and real and spiritual way. [00:09:06] The hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live. That's what would distinguish us, I take it, as believers from men and women in general. He speaks to an individual but he also says unto them in verse 50, he said to them.

He's speaking to people in general. And how thankful we are that God in his mercy and Christ in his grace is still speaking in this world. Paul could say, we beseech you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled to God. Christ's voice was heard in the preaching of the apostles. And that the gospel preachers, quoting the psalm as it's known, it says their sound has gone out unto all the earth. Pray unto all the earth and preach the gospel to every creature. [00:10:04] So we believe in the general call.

We believe that the word of God should not just be for individuals.

And when we come to verse 22 he says to his disciples, not just for individuals and not just for believers or disciples. But to those who may hear and those who will hear. He says unto them.

And he widens out the truth.

And it may well be when he says in verse 15, beware of covetousness. That there was an element of

covetousness in the heart of the man who came to him and asked to divide the inheritance. Be that as it may. Is it not true? Of all our hearts.

That we and men and women in general need to beware of covetousness.

[00:11:03] So verse 15 he says. Take heed and beware of this covetousness.

Why? It's not because a man is in abundance that his life is in his possessions.

You might have a nice house. An earthquake could come and demolish it. Or a wind could come. A hurricane could come and blow it away. You might have your money in the bank. And the bank might crash. Such things have certainly happened in the past. But the lesson I want to bring out of this is that our lives, anybody's lives. Do not consist in the abundance of the things which he possesses.

[00:12:02] We're not to be occupied only with material things.

Not to be occupied with how much we have in the bank. Or how much we have in our barns. This man, he's going to pull out his barns. He would build greater. He'd have it all planned out. With his fruits and goods. For many years. He thought he could retire. He thought he'd have ease.

Laid up.

Reposed.

For many years. That was the human aspect of things.

God says to him. Thou fool.

If we're living for this world.

If we're living for pounds, shillings and pence. Some will remember what that means. [00:13:01] If we're only after what the scripture says elsewhere is filthy lucre. Or our barns.

Or our houses. Or our motorcars.

Or our fashionable dress. The latest electronic gadget or whatever it may be. We can give thanks for the relative comfort that we have. In this land. You've got a place like India and you've got the believers and families and maybe just two rooms to live in. So God gives us abundantly all things to enjoy. And we are thankful to him for his mercies. But. This man.

He made the mistake. He was only taking up with things down here on this earth. The here and now. And very often. The clans of mice and men you know it. He had one.

[00:14:01] He had one idea and one prospect. But a soul is required. Sickness.

Death.

We do not have a lease on life. And this very. Important.

Lesson.

Is that.

Important.

Lesson.

Is learned.

And. In verse 21. It's capable even of application to us as believers. In measure.

It says so is he. So is the one. Who lays up treasure for himself. Evidently on earth. And is not.

Rich. Toward.

God. Is it.

Treasure for ourselves. Are we.

Rich. Toward.

God. It's in striking contrast to Luke 16. [00:15:01] Verse 9.

Where the Lord again says make. And I'll read it in the new translation which may well bring out the sense somewhat better. Make. To yourselves. Friends.

With the.

Man of unrighteousness. That when it fails.

You. May be.

Received.

Into. The everlasting. Tabernacles. It gives a hint in that. That we can even. Use. Our. Material.

Benefits.

We can use.

Man or money described here is the man of unrighteousness. We can use it. For spiritual ends. We can use it. To help others. We can use it. To extend the kingdom of God. It's going to fail anyway. Says when it. Shall have failed. [00:16:01] You may be received into the. Everlasting. Tabernacles. There's a sense there. That even.

What we have in a material way. May be used. For spiritual gain. Spiritual gain. And. And then the. The exhortation is given in verse 10. He that is faithful in the least. Is faithful also in much. And he

that is unrighteous in the least. Is unrighteous also. In the much. And the least there being the earthly things. Being material. Possessions. And the much being the. Spiritual.

Possessions. And actually. Verse 12 here says. If you've been faithful in that which is. And others.

Our material wealth. Whatever we have. It's not actually ours. It's in others. It's Christ's. [00:17:02] It's to be used for Christ. He's our Lord and Savior. He's Lord.

He should have control. He's not Lord of all. He's not Lord at all. And it says. We have to be faithful. We have to be faithful. In that which is in others. In. Our material possessions. Which are of Christ. It says then who shall. Give to you your own. And our own possessions. That which is really and truly ours. Is actually our spiritual portion. That's what. Is truly the believers. That is something. Which will not be taken from us. That's something that's going to go through. That's something that is eternal. And the benefits that we have along the road. They're actually. Under the control and authority. Of the Lord Jesus. So what we have in Luke 16. In their use of material things. Is in contrast to. This man here. Who was laying up treasure. For himself. And who did not bring. [00:18:01] God. Into his.

Reckoning.

So now we might read the next section. To continue. Verse 22.

Through to verse 30. He said unto his disciples. Therefore I say unto you. Take no thought for your life. What you shall eat. Neither for the body. What you shall put on. The life is more than food. And the body. Is more than clothing. Consider the babies. For they neither sow nor reap. Which neither have storehouse nor barn. And God feedeth them. How much more. Are you better. Than the fowls. Which of you with taking thought. Can add to a statue of one cubit. If you then. Be not able to do. That which is least. I take ye thought. For the rest. Consider the lilies. How they grow. They toil not. They spring not. And yet I say unto you. [00:19:01] That Solomon. In all his glory. Was not a red. Like one of these. If then God. So clothe the grass. Which is today in the field. And tomorrow is cast into the oven. How much more. Will he clothe you. O ye. Of little faith. And seek.

Not what ye shall eat. Or what ye shall drink. Neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things. Do the nations. Of the world seek after. And your father knoweth. That you have need of these things. But seek.

Ye first.

Rather seek ye. The kingdom of God. And all these things. Shall be added unto you. Fear not little flock. For it is your father's. Good pleasure. To give you. The kingdom. Sell that you have. And give alms. Provide yourselves bags. Which wax not old. A treasure in the heavens. That faileth not. [00:20:02] Where no thief. Approaches.

Neither moth. Corrupteth.

For where.

Your treasure is. There will.

Your heart.

Be. Also. Thus far.

The word of God. To verse. 34. And I wonder. Did you bring a. Bag with you. This afternoon. Some of you. I wonder.

Have you brought any. Bags with you. It's a great question. Now. If you go into. Some of the. Supermarkets. Some of them. They won't even give you. A bag at all. Some of them. They'll just give you. A paper bag. Now. They'll not issue. Plastic bags. Any longer.

Because of the environment. Certainly.

In the Republic. Of Ireland.

If you want to. Purchase something. There.

And you buy a bag. You have to pay. For it.

I think.

[00:21:01] There's some. Government.

Tax on it.

So. This is the history. Of bags.

But. The set of bags. I'm asking you about. This afternoon. Is. Spiritual.

Facts.

It says.

Here. That we have to. Provide.

Ourselves.

Bags. Which.

Don't.

Grow old.

Perhaps.

A more literal. Translation. Would be.

We have to.

Provide.

Ourselves.

Purses.

Which.

Do not.

Grow old.

I had to.

Get a new.

Purse.

Because.

Somehow or other. The coins I had in it. Had worn a hole on it. And. The coins were. Starting to fall out. But here's a purse. Which doesn't grow old. And here's a treasure. Which.

Does not.

Fail. In the heavens. Because it says. Where.

Your. Treasure is. There.

Will. Your. Heart.

Be. Also. [00:22:01] It doesn't say. Where.

Your. Heart.

Is. There.

Will. Your. Treasure.

Be. It's very often called it that way. But it says. No. Where.

Your. Treasure.

Is. There.

Will. Your. Heart.

Be. Also. And. You have. to. You have.

A heart.

But. You know.

The. Life. Is. More than food. And more than clothing. And we should not. In the first instance. Be concerned. About these things. Because.

The answer is. God. Will. Take. Care of you. He feeds.

The ravens.

Which.

Were common. In. Palestine.

They don't.

Have a storehouse. Nor a barn.

They don't.

Store it up. Yet. God. Feeds it there. He says to us. [00:23:01] You're.

Better than the. Birds.

God. Takes.

Care of the. Birds.

Surely.

He can.

Take care of his. Sins. This is the assurance. We have.

From the Lord. Jesus.

And. He said.

We. You know.

We. We can't.

Some of us might have liked to. At one time. Add to our.

Physical height. Or growth.

Some of us might like to reduce in other ways. Might like to reduce our girth. But certainly in the

natural process of growing. We can't determine that. We can't add to it. That's the natural process. And. God says.

That's the least thing. You know.

We can't.

We can't.

We can't.

We can't.

We can't.

We can't.

We can't.

We can't.

We can't.

We can't.

We can't.

We can't.

We can't.

We can't.

[00:25:21] We can't.

We can't.

And. Now. When. I say that.

I say.

I say.

I say.

I say.

I say.

I say.

I say.

The spiritual relationship comes into view. In Resurrection the Lord Jesus says. I send to your father. I excuse me? I send to my father. He's preeminent at all things. He must have the preeminence. I send to my father and your father. And to my God. And your God. There's the spiritual. Link. Is there brought in. But even in regard to the material things. We have a Father in Heaven.

I can say my father. I can say to you as a Christian believer. Your father. He knows.

What things. You have need of. We have to be aware of covetousness. That was the first thing we learned. But then on the other side. We have to be. Aware of overwhelming anxiety. [00:26:01] Because.

God will.

Take care of you. He knows.

Those things. That you need. And he tells us to get our priorities right. In verse 32. He says.

I send to your father. I excuse me? I say.

I say.

I say.

I say.

I say.

I say.

I say.

You have to get your priorities right. In verse. 32 seek the kingdom of God. In Matthew's gospel. I almost put it at runaway. Because we're so familiar with it in Matthew. It says.

Seek ye first. The kingdom of God. His righteousness. And all these things. Shall be added unto you. So we have to give.

God's things.

First place in our life.

But here it's just.

There's not. A comparison here. It's just a statement in itself. Seek. The kingdom of God.

And in regard to our physical and material needs. Will be taken care of. All these things. Shall be added unto you. And then it. That was wonderful encouragement in verse 32. Fear not.

[00:27:01] Little flock. Again this tells us. That the Lord is rejected. It's telling us. He's refusing. His followers in this world. Will be rejected. Will be rejected. Will be rejected. Will be rejected. Will be rejected. Will be rejected. Will be rejected. Will be rejected. Will be rejected. Will be rejected. Will be rejected. His followers in this world. Are going to be a little flock.

At this particular time. The Lord says. Fear not.

Little flock. To me.

I'll be glad to hear. What anyone has to say. But to me.

It supposes his rejection. We've already looked at that. He's bringing in heavenly purposes. He's not concerned. With earthly inheritances. Here again.

He's rejected. When we come down. The verses.

We start with. Fear not.

Little flock. Fear not.

Little flock. Fear not.

Little flock. The Lord's purpose. We start watching. And waiting. And working for him. In view of his return. We find he's an absent Christ. He was rejected here.

He was accepted there. No longer on earth. But he's in heaven.

[00:28:03] So he is.

A rejected Christ. And he is an absent Christ.

And his followers. Are. A little flock. And we may just be a little flock. Here. This afternoon. And not all the chairs may be added. And not all the places may be filled. Do you think God doesn't take notice of us?

Do you think God doesn't weigh up the faithfulness? It's in view that we travel across London. To be present with the saints. And under the sound of the word of God. Or from further afield. Just a little flock.

Let's not get discouraged because we're few in number.

Because we're already told it's going to be the case here. Even the Lord Jesus said. Where two or three are gathered unto my name. There am I in the midst. He knew it would come down to that in certain instances. [00:29:02] And in certain localities. And he provided for it.

The two.

It just comes down to a husband and wife. Or the three.

There may be more in number. We can be thankful.

For every evidence of God's working here in this world.

And where believers are more numerous. But he's provided for the lowest plurality.

For just two or three.

And he's promised his presence.

To be with such who are gathered to his name. And here.

Speaking of those surrounding him. He says to the disciples. You're a little flock.

But. We may be fewer on earth. Christianity may be unpopular.

In your approach.

You may speak of post-Christian Britain. Post-Christian society. [00:30:02] We may be diminished down here.

We may be strict.

We may be feeble.

We may be fewer.

Fear not little flock.

It's your father's good pleasure.

To give you the kingdom. What a view that gives us. What expansion.

What glory.

He comes out of heaven the rider.

In Revelation 19.

There are those who follow him.

Who are called.

And faithful.

And through the armies. That are in heaven.

What a wonderful sight.

That is.

The rider.

On the white horse.

[00:31:01] Called faithful and true. In righteousness. He judges and makes law. But there are those. The armies which are in heaven. Followed him. Comes.

All the saints.

With him.

What a glorious day.

That will be. Of course he'll come to take us. To be with himself. It's necessary. The rapture is necessary. In order for the appearing. Because when he appears. According to Colossians. Then shall we appear with him in glory. We may be in the sufferings. Of the plague.

But the glories. The glories of the mind. The glories will follow. Sufferings of Christ. And the glory.

Which will follow.

We're a little flock.

Christ is absent.

He's refused.

Cause is in reproach.

Let's not get discouraged. By looking at present things. Let's seek the things that are above. [00:32:01] Let's seek the kingdom of God. Let's have Christ in view. Let's live where our treasure really is. Where our possessions really are. Let's fill our purses.

Or our bags.

With spiritual treasures. Let's encourage one another. Cause we're going on.

To endless day.

We're going on.

We're going on.

To the glories.

Of the kingdom.

Not that we deserve it. Not because of any merit in ourselves. But because it's our father's good pleasure. To give us the kingdom. It's in the purpose of God. Surely if anybody could give it. He can give it.

He's the power to give it. Every man a liar.

God says.

The Lord Jesus says.

That he's going to give us. The kingdom.

[00:33:01] Let's keep our treasure. Let's keep heaven.

Let's keep the kingdom in view. Even though there may be discouragements. On the earthly side of things. It's our father's good pleasure. To give us the kingdom. And then where our treasure is. Our hearts going to be there also. So now.

Let's move on to verses 35. To 30.

To 40.

Let your lamps be gilded about. And your lights burning. And ye yourselves.

Like unto men that wait for the Lord. When he will return.

From the wedding.

That when he cometh and knocketh. They may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants. Whom the Lord when he cometh. Watching.

Verily I say unto you.

That he shall gird himself. And make them to sit down to food. And will come forth.

And serve them.

And if he shall come in the second watch. [00:34:01] Or come in the third watch. And find them so.

Blessed are those servants. And this know.

That if the good men of the house had known. What hour the thief would come. He would have watched.

His house to be broken through. Be ye therefore also ready. For the Son of Man.

Comes as an ark.

When ye think not.

It's the coming of the Lord. That's in view.

And in Luke's gospel.

It's viewed as a moral truth. And the parable that he speaks. Is giving an analogy.

And the bottom line.

The point that he's emphasizing. Is that we should be watching. For the Lord to come.

He desires.

That we should be watching. And he desires.

That we should be with him. And the significance.

Peter asks the question. In verse 41.

[00:35:01] Lord speakest thou this parable unto us. Or even to all.

And the Lord in his answer. In verse 42 he says.

That clearly indicates. That the moral.

Of the story.

That the application is. To each one of us.

Dear brothers and sisters. This is a truth for us. It's a truth for our hearts. And what the Lord says here. Is something which should characterize the believer. And not only so.

He says that there's a blessing in doing it. There's a blessing in doing it. Blessed are those servants. And then in verse 38.

He speaks about the second watch. Or the third watch.

And if he comes then and finds those servants watching. Blessed are those servants. There may be a little indication. In that verse where it speaks of the second watch. Or the third watch.

Look in fact.

Not from the perspective from which he was speaking. But now for us.

[00:36:01] Second watch, third watch. May suggest.

A length and period of time. And the first millennium has gone. And the second millennium. Now we're in the third millennium of the Christian era. The third watch.

There's no fourth watch. And we know he may come. At any moment.

And in view of his coming. It says we should have our. Loins girded about.

Peter tells us that we're to gird up the loins of our mind. And we're to have our loins. As it says elsewhere.

Girt about with truth.

So our thinking processes. Our attitude of mind.

Should be governed.

By the truth of the word of God. That our loins girded.

Was the servants attitude as well. Suggest movement.

The children of Israel when they were about to move. Out of Israel.

The night of the Passover. They had their loins girded. [00:37:01] Practically speaking we should be ready to go. Ready to meet the Lord when he comes. The servant when the Lord. Got down to wash the disciples feet. He gathers up.

That service.

Readiness.

Watchfulness.

And a light burning.

Testimony.

In view of the Lord's coming. Are we seeking to witness to others. With a lamp of testimony. Are we seeking to.

Have our lamps burning. And we.

Light on to men.

That wait for their Lord. It's the picture of an eastern marriage. Where the wedding.

Takes place and the groom. Will return with his bride. And those in the home.

Are waiting.

It's a joyful occasion. In their joy and waiting. In expectancy.

So as soon as they hear the knock. And they open on to him. Immediately, well as I say. [00:38:01] It's a moral truth.

And that should characterize our hearts. We need to be watching. And. Light on to men that.

Wait for their Lord.

We've got the two things here. Waiting and watching.

And the Lord says.

Dear one.

Today.

If that's your attitude. If that's your attitude. You'll be blessed.

There'll be a character of blessing. And it's a blessing of a high character. Because it says that the Lord will. Come forth.

And. Make us to sit down.

Recline at table.

And he will serve them. We know that his servants. Shall serve him.

But what grace.

The Lord comes for us.

But he'll be there.

Taking account of.

Even in the language of the scripture here. [00:39:01] Serving those.

Who have watched.

And waited for him.

We'll be blessed.

By his company.

And we'll be blessed by his care for us. When he comes.

If we watch for him.

Down here in the here and now. We have to watch and wait. Read on from verse 41.

And Peter said unto him. The Lord speakest thou this parable unto us. So eaten to all.

And he makes it general. The Lord said who then is the faithful and wise servant. Whom his Lord shall make ruler over his household. To give them their portion. Of meat in due season.

Blessed is that servant. Whom his Lord when he cometh. Shall find so doing.

And the truth I say unto you. That he will make him ruler. Over all that he hath.

And we'll stop our reading there. At verse 44.

We have in verse 45.

That servant.

On faithful Christendom. [00:40:01] False precaution.

I take it down to verse 48. And you can look at that in your own time. But here the Lord says there's blessing. In activity.

In service.

And if we serve the Lord. During his absence.

We will have the blessing. And the blessing here is. In giving the household their portion. Of meat in due season.

How important it is.

The food supply.

The measure of corn in season. And that's why the brothers. Have arranged this.

Opportunity.

For us to be together.

That we might be fed.

That we might be fed up spiritually. We might profit.

From the word of God.

This exercise to sustain the Catholic lectures. How important.

The ministry of the word of God is. Food for the people of God. The measure of corn.

[00:41:01] In season.

It says that also.

The portion of meat in due season. That which is appropriate. Appropriate for the occasion. We don't give.

An infant nursing.

At his mother's breast. We don't give strong meat. We don't give it sir Lord's steak. That would cause problems. So. We need to realistically. Find out where our brothers. Our sisters are.

Spiritually.

Be it on a one to one basis. Or be it collectively.

Paul in his ministry.

From house to house.

That was his pastoral heart. That was his method of proceeding. And he got down.

Alongside the people.

And he.

Gave them convenient food. [00:42:01] The menu.

Was suitable.

And we can think of it in connection. With spoken ministry.

Conferences.

And the local bible readings. That are here.

They are exercised from time to time. To bring something of a spiritual. Nature.

Before their hearers.

It can be in the gospel. It can be in written ministry. During the readings.

Printed books.

That's been exercised.

In spite of feebleness. To get the truth of God out. First to the people of God. To have the measure of corn. In season.

To look round about the household. And to have the care of souls. So there's blessing.

In that also.

And our time has gone.

But may we.

[00:43:01] Be blessed.

In looking for Christ God. Living as a part.

Watching and waiting for him. So we can open to him.

To those eternal habitations. And may we also be blessed. And seek.

To feed the people of God. And to ensure.

That they get that.

Which will build them up spiritually. Building yourselves up. In your most holy faith. We seek the things.

That are.

About 492.