

Catford Lectures 2009-2010

Part 9

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| Speaker | Catford Lectures Conference; Simon Attwood; Paul Dronsfield; Hugh Clark; Nick Fleet; C. Bell; Andrew Poots; Michael Hardt; M. Best; Geoff Hawes |
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[00:00:00] Good evening, everyone. Perhaps we could begin with singing the hymn number nine.

Father, we, thy children, bless thee for thy love on us bestowed. As our Father, we address thee, called to be the sons of God. Wondrous was thy loving giving, Jesus for our sins to die. Wondrous was his grace in leaving for our sakes the heavens on high.

Hymn number nine.

[00:01:07] As our Father, we, thy children, bless thee for thy love on us bestowed. As our Father, we, thy children, bless thee for thy love on us bestowed. As our Father, we, thy children, bless thee for thy love on us bestowed. As our Father, we, thy children, [00:02:13] favor bless, by thy fruit and spirit guiding, earnestly on wars to come. And with daily strength providing, round us lead thy children home. Though our pilgrimage be dreary, this [00:03:05] is not our resting place. Shall we of the way be weary when we see the monster's face?

Knowing no anticipation, when this hope of souls rejoiced, and his promise hath been waited, soon shall hear his welcome voice.

[00:04:06] In the precious name of the Lord Jesus, amen.

Shall we just sing another hymn to 462?

O gracious God, our Father, we thank thee for thy word. To every saint so precious that speaks of Christ the Lord, we thank thee for thy spirit that moved those men of old, who in the holy record thy truth and love unfold. 462. O gracious God, our Father, we thank thee for thy word. To every saint so precious that speaks of Christ thy word, [00:05:09] we thank thee for thy spirit that moved those men of old, who in the holy record thy truth and love unfold.

For thy name, Lord, we thank thee, the earth and the sea, who doth to thine own children thy

judgment will reveal.

[00:06:06] As none of thee who knew it, thy truth could ever import, so none but those who eat it should receive it in the heart.

O may we then, blessed Father, thy gracious word believe, that we may by thy Spirit the truth in love receive.

[00:07:05] For we would thus be good to serve our faithful Lord, and in this day of conflict, cleave to his name and word.

A brother who spoke here beginning of this year or the beginning of this season said to me, [00:08:09] make sure they've all got their Bibles. Tell them to open their Bibles and to follow the passage. And so I'm glad to see that everyone who I can see have got their Bibles and it's good to follow along. And I would like to read, to begin with, a verse in the first letter to Timothy, chapter 6 and verse 11.

But thou, chapter 6, verse 11, but thou, O man of God, follow these things and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness, fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life.

[00:09:07] If we turn over into the second letter to Timothy, to Timothy chapter 3, and we read in verse 14.

But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and has been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them, that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith in which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto good works.

[00:10:14] I'm going to refer to other Scriptures in a moment.

But I would like to speak a little bit tonight about men of God.

Where we've read together in the New Testament is the two occasions in which the words are in our English language, where we read about men of God. And it is, of course, Timothy, the person who was called a man of God.

There's another reference that you might look up in 2 Peter, where the Apostle is speaking about the Old Testament Scriptures, and he could say, men of God wrote those Old Testament Scriptures.

[00:11:03] But here we find that Timothy is designated as a man of God. And when we speak of men of God, we are not just speaking of a gender, just the males amongst us. This is a possibility for every one of us to be in this scene as men of God, as women of God, to be here for God.

Because when we come to the epistle written to Timothy, we find that we're in difficult days. Indeed, in the second epistle, we read the expression, in the last days. And there are certain conditions that were relevant when the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, which are relevant today. When the Apostle wrote, in chapter 1 verse 15 of this second epistle, he could say, all they that are in Asia have turned away from me.

[00:12:05] They had given up the teaching that the Apostle Paul brought. And when we come to the last chapter, chapter 4, he could say, they have turned their ears away from the truth. And so there is a direct connection between the ministry that the Apostle Paul brought and the truth. And we know, as we were reminded this afternoon, that the truth of the church came through the pen of the Apostle Paul. And in a day when men were turning away from the teaching of Paul, there was a need for men of God. There is a need for individuals who are going to stand up for God. And the day in which we live in, I'm sure that we can each associate with it, that we're living in a day when the teaching of the Apostle Paul is thrown overboard. When the teachings of the Holy Scriptures, as being the complete Word of God, is being thrown overboard. [00:13:05] Where the teachings concerning the person and the work of the Lord Jesus is being done away with. And in a day like that, that we're living in, we need people who are going to stand for God. We need to have men of God. We need to have women of God.

It is not an optional extra, I may add, before we go any further. There may be some who says, well, that's all very well, but I'm not really fitted to be a man of God. I'm young, and I have my life before me, and I would like to enjoy something that this world has to offer. We will see in a moment. This world has nothing good to offer. But you know, if you're a Christian, and I trust that everybody here is a believer that knows the Lord Jesus as their own Saviour. Because if you don't, you'll be lost for all eternity. [00:14:02] If you're a believer, you are duty-bound to live here for the Lord Jesus. You are duty-bound to be a man of God, or a woman of God. And the reason is given in 2 Corinthians. We have many reasons, but I'll go to this one. This one is in 1 Corinthians 6. The Scripture says, you're bought with a price. You don't belong to yourself. You can't do as you like. Before you were converted, before you became a Christian, you could do what you like. But now the Lord Jesus has bought you. He's redeemed you. He's bought you to himself. And we can't do as we like. We are here to serve Him.

Now when we look at this subject of the men of God, and one of the wonderful things in our present day is that we can find out how many times it's mentioned by looking in a concordance. I'm not as modern as some of the people here that would go to their laptops or their iPhones. [00:15:05] I have to go to a concordance, and I have to count one by one through all the references to men in the Scriptures. And I find that in the Old Testament, there are about 75 references to men of God. The first one is Moses. I want to speak a little bit about Moses.

The second one is Samuel.

Shemaniah.

Two very familiar men come next.

Elijah and Elisha.

And then David.

And finally, and an obscure one, Agdala. Or Igdala.

And each of these men, as I've read through them and as I've thought about them and indeed prayed about them, [00:16:02] I've found one thing that seems to stand out in their lives. And I want to suggest very simply that this thing that I've picked out ought to be true of every one of us here tonight.

Because I'm taking that all of us here desire to be here for the Lord and to be men of God. In relation to Moses, the subject that I picked out from him was separation.

In relation to Samuel, I want to talk about worship.

Shemaniah, obedience.

Elijah, prayer.

Elisha, grace.

David, order.

And Agdala, we've got nothing to say about him because the scripture says very little about him. [00:17:02] But what a wonderful thing it is that you can be a man of God without anything to write up about. Just simply be in you. We will see that when we come to him. He is, of course, mentioned in the book of Jeremiah. So we come to the man Moses.

And the reference for Moses is in the book of Deuteronomy in chapter 33.

Deuteronomy 33 verse 1.

And this is the first mention of men of God in scriptures.

And this is the blessing wherewith Moses, the man of God, blessed the children of Israel before his death. [00:18:02] If I was to ask you here to write a short essay on the life of Moses, a few words that would sum up his life.

Where would you start? Where would you go? Perhaps some of you here would mention the fact that he was placed in the bulrushes. And that would be, as far as you are concerned, the important thing about Moses. Perhaps you would look at him as the one who led the children of Israel through the rivers of the Red Sea. Perhaps you would look at him as the one who received the Ten Commandments. Indeed, there are many things about Moses that we could talk about. And there is a great deal that the person Moses did.

When the Spirit of God draws the Hebrew believers' attention to this man Moses, [00:19:02] he could say, by faith Moses, I'm reading from chapter 11, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. And that's where I get the idea of separation. And I want to suggest that if we are going to be men of God or women of God, if we're going to live in this scene, we have to be separated. Separated from the evil that is all around us. And Moses here, there came a time in his life, and I want you to notice this, particularly the young ones. I'm reading from Hebrews 11, 24. By faith Moses, when he was come to years.

There come a time in your life when you're going to have to stand on your own two feet. Up to now, perhaps Moses had been able to go along with the crowd. [00:20:02] And perhaps you have always had the privilege and a great privilege it is to have Christian parents that has brought you along to the meetings. But there will come a time in your life when you've got to stand on your own two feet. When you have to make your own decisions. When the Apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians, he could say,

As you obeyed when I'm with you, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. Philippians chapter 2. And so young people, there will come a time in your life when you will have to make decisions. You have to make a decision, is am I going to be here to serve the Lord? Or am I going to please myself? Particularly as you get to college or to university. Away from your parents, perhaps for the first time. The decisions have to be made and you have to make those decisions. Am I going to be here for Christ? Am I going to live for the one who is coming again and he's going to reign? [00:21:03] Or am I going to live for myself and try and please myself? Well, Moses here, he looked at things and there are four things that Moses did. In Hebrews 11, the first thing he refused, he choose, he esteemed and he forsook. And I want to suggest that each one of us have got to look intelligently at what this world has to offer. And we have to look and see what there is outside. What is there that we can enjoy? What pleasures are there? And we've got to be prepared to refuse because we have something far greater. Moses could refuse all the riches in Egypt. Why? Because he looked beyond them and he saw that riches which were in the Lord Jesus Christ. And if we get a glimpse at the greatness of the person of the Lord Jesus, a greatness of that which is his and that we are going to be part of that, [00:22:04] we will be able to refuse what this world has to offer.

And so the challenge is to each one of us here. Are we prepared to say no to this world and to refuse as Moses did the people of God?

Now, some of you may look round and you may say to yourself, it's all very well for old people, but as young ones, we like life. What life is there at the little assembly that we go to? There's no life.

Moses choose the people of God.

And dear friends, it's far better to be associated with God's people, the people that love the Lord Jesus, than it is to be associated with a world which is fast coming under the judgment of God.

And so Moses, he chose, he esteemed and he forsook Egypt.

[00:23:06] It was a very difficult thing as we look at Egypt, as we see all that which Egypt had for Moses to forsake. But you know, dear friends, if he didn't forsook Egypt, he would never have been a man of God. And if we don't say no to this world and all that it is showing to us, we don't need to go far outside of these two walls, four walls, and we will see the world pulling us, seeking us to go with them and to do what they do. But Moses refused it because he looked and he saw Christ.

And you know, when we come to, if we were to have read further on in the chapter in Deuteronomy, God speaks of Israel and he says, Israel shall dwell alone. It is ever God's intention that Israel as a nation should be completely separated from all the other nations around him. [00:24:05] And indeed, when Balaam in Numbers 23 could look down at Israel, he could say, the people shall dwell alone.

This was God's order for the children of Israel. And we see that this, too, is God's order for you and me, that we are separated from a world which stands guilty of the death of his beloved son. Now, there may be somebody who says.

If I'm separated from the world, if I don't go where they go, if I don't do what they do, I won't be able to witness to them.

A very popular suggestion. And I have a good answer. I want to ask you the question, who had the

greatest witness? [00:25:01] Was it Abraham or was it Lot?

Can you think of it? Abraham was the old man up in the mountains.

The old man that had no doubt herds and cattle, the old man that looked after his household. Lot, on the other hand, he had moved away and he was right down amongst the people in Sodom.

Who had the greatest witness? Abraham was able, according to the 14th chapter of Genesis, to rescue Lot and all those in Sodom. And what a witness Abraham had, because he was a separated man. But as far as Lot, he not only pitched his tent towards Sodom, the next time we read of him, he was living in Sodom. And the next time we read of him, he was seeking to judge Sodom and to make it a better place to live in. [00:26:03] What witness did he give? When he went and told his own family that judgment was coming, they laughed at him. There is no witness if there is not separation.

The world will laugh at people that tell them that God is going to judge the world and still seek to enjoy what this world has to offer. And so I would suggest that firstly, we see in Moses a man who was separated from the evil that was going on in the world. Now we come to Samuel, and again we would read that verse which mentions him. It's in 1 Samuel chapter 9.

[00:27:03] In 1 Samuel chapter 9, we could read verse 6.

And he, that Saul's servant, said unto him, that is Saul, Behold, now there is in this city a man of God.

He is an honourable man, and all that he says surely comes to pass. Let us now go thither, perhaps he can show us our way that we should go. Then said Saul unto his servants, But behold, if we go, what shall we bring the man? For bread is spent in our vessels, and there is not a present to bring to the man of God, what have we? Here we have that this man Samuel is called a man of God.

And my suggestion, having looked at Samuel and having thought about him, is that the thing which seems to come out very forcibly to me, [00:28:03] and no doubt to others there are other points that will come out forcibly when you read the story of Samuel, is worship. If we go right the way back to the very beginning of the life of Samuel, to the last verse of chapter 2, it says, And he worshipped the Lord there.

Now I'm not suggesting that that was Samuel, because if you look at the context, you will find that it could have been Eli, Hannah and Elkanah were together. And I want to suggest very simply that perhaps in amongst them, on that day when they took Samuel to the temple, to give him to the Lord, as they were about to leave the temple, there was mum, there was dad, and there was Samuel, and there was Eli, and together they could worship the Lord. [00:29:06] And Samuel was in the atmosphere where there were those that were worshipping God, giving God the correct place. And you know, when we think of the condition that prevailed when Samuel comes onto the scene, it is a very dark day. At the end of the book of Judges, we read, Every man did that which was right in his own eyes. They weren't acting according to the word of God. We find that the very priests that were there, Hothnai and Phinehas, were sons of Belial. That means they were wicked, that God designated them as being evil. And we can read some of the wicked things that they'd done, not only in relation to the offering, but also morally in the way in which they lived. And it was in a day like that, that God was going to raise up a priest that could turn the people back to him. [00:30:04] And you know, we live in

the same sort of day. If the day that we saw in the end of the 1st Timothy and 2nd Timothy was a day of departure from the teaching of the Apostle Paul, I'm sure that we can all identify with the day in which Samuel was living in. A day when there is a wholesale giving up of God's rights in this world, where there is a moral decline in the standards in which we live. And in that day, we find that we are introduced to a priest, Samuel.

What a grand thing it is as we come out of the book of Judges. A book where several occasions we read, every man did that which was right in his own eyes. We come into the book of Ruth and we find there that God has a man. And God has a man in the book of Ruth. The last word in the book of Ruth is David, God is a king. And in the book of Samuel, God has a priest and that priest is here as Samuel. [00:31:08] But what I want to draw attention to is in chapter 7.

Chapter 7 and verse 9. And Samuel took a suckling lamb and offered it for a burnt offering, holy unto the Lord. And Samuel cried unto the Lord for Israel, and the Lord heard him. And the last verse.

And his return was to Ramah.

We should have said he went from year to year in a circle. And his return was to Ramah, for there was his house, and there he judged Israel, and there he built an altar unto the Lord. You see what is absolutely vital in the life of Samuel is that here was a man who was the leader of worship for the nation of Israel. [00:32:09] Here was a man who brought that which typically would speak of the Lord Jesus Christ. And he offered it, and he offered it for the nation of Israel. And that is absolutely vital that we as a company of the Lord's people get together where we can worship God. And perhaps we should ask ourselves the question, what is worship? What does it mean when we say we've been to a worship meeting? We all know, I think, what a prayer meeting is. When we go to a prayer meeting, we ask God for things that we need. But when we go to a praise meeting, we thank God for what he's given us. But when we go to a worship meeting, do we not thank God for what he is? And the wonderful thing, and if we want a definition of worship, I think that we can see it in one of our hymns, hymn number 53. [00:33:10] The glories of his work we bring, the glorified we see, his deep perfections gladly sing, and tell them forth to thee. And so not only do we see that Samuel was the leader of worship for the company of the children of Israel, but when we come to the last verse, we find that when he went back to his house, he there built an altar unto the Lord. And I believe that one of the sad things is that when we get together as saints of God, and particularly when we gather on the morrow to remember the Lord in our death, there is a great opportunity that we can worship, we can give him, give the Lord Jesus and give God that which is due to him. [00:34:04] We can worship him. Yes, we can praise him for what he has done. But you know, do we also in our private home lives, do we have that opportunity when we as individuals can give God the right place? And do we just leave worship for the older brothers in the morning meeting? Or is it something that each one of us, sisters and young people alike, that we can get a time, we often used to hear, of the quiet time when we get before the Lord and when we can pour out our hearts to him in prayer, but also when we can thank him and worship him for what he is. And I think we see that in Samuel, a person who put God first.

The next one is in 1 Kings 12.22.

[00:35:13] And verse 1 Kings 12.22.

When we speak of this man, and this is the only reference that we get apart from the corresponding verses in Chronicles.

The point that I want to emphasize here is that he was a man who was obedient to the word of God. [00:36:02] In the next chapter, we read of a man of God, and it could indeed be the same person, but he's not named. And he went, and he disobeyed the word of God, and we have the sorrowful state of his death. But here, he is in total obedience to what the word of God says. The scriptures tells us in relation to Saul, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. And if we had time, we could go back into 1 Samuel 15. And there we see that God told Saul. So Saul, the king, the one that he had been raised up. He said, I want you to go, and I want you to smite the Amaleks. I want you to get rid of them as a nation. Because what they did to the children of Israel, and Saul goes along. And when he went there, he smote some, but the good, the king, and all the best sheep, and all the best cattle, he kept. And to him, Samuel could say, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. [00:37:08] And I want to stress that if we are going to be men of God, and women of God in this day, we have to be obedient to the word of God. And the word of God has to be the prime thing in our lives.

Now, how can you obey something if you've never read it? How many people here are drivers and have never read the highway code? Certainly, I would be amongst those that in the last 10 years have never read the highway code. For some reason, we haven't got time and we think we know. How many of us here are seeking to serve the Lord and seeking to do what he wants us to do, and have never read the scriptures through in the last 10 years? This is a challenge to each one of us. I don't want you to go home tonight and say, well, what he said was all very good and nice. [00:38:06] I want you to go home tonight and say, I'm going to have to do something about it. Because if I'm going to be obedient to the word of God, I'm going to have to read it. I'm going to have to get to know what the word of God is all about. And we need to read the Bible. We need not only to read it in our Bible readings and in our meetings, that's not sufficient. We need to read it in our homes. We need to read it more than any other piece of literature that we have. And it always saddens me when I see people with books, novels that are about that thick and their Bible is never read. If we are Christians at all, and if we want to stand for God, we have to put the reading of the word of God, the number one thing in our lives. Because there are many things in the Bible that we know. But sad to say, we don't keep them.

[00:39:02] I could tell you things that we all know and we all like to obey. And the first one that I'm sure that we're pretty, pretty acquainted with is the New Testament teaching in relation to marriage, where it says, don't be unequally yoked. And how often do you hear the preachers stand up here and we can preach that very clearly because it's scriptural. And we can say you shouldn't be unequally yoked with an unbeliever.

And then we can turn and very often the brothers can turn and we can say the sisters shouldn't speak in the assembly because we have New Testament scriptures, which says, let your women keep silent in the assemblies and we can press that. But, you know, when we were reading through Ephesians here not so long ago at the Bible basics in chapter three, we read there things which start to hit and start to affect us, because when we read in the word of God and in Ephesians chapter four, it says, let no lying. [00:40:05] Scripture says we shouldn't lie. Do we obey what the scripture says? Or do we say it doesn't really matter because it's only a small lie? Scripture says in 28 of the same chapter, we shouldn't steal. Do we take something from our employer because we think he doesn't see us? Scripture says, let no corrupt communication proceed out of our mouth. Do we say things which are wrong, which are evil? Are we being obedient to the word of God? And the scripture says we should love one another. And I think this is perhaps the greatest challenge, that do we obey the word of God and love one another? Those people that we don't like, those people that naturally we don't get on

with, but the scriptures tell us that we should love them. And I believe if we're going to be men of God for the Lord down here, [00:41:04] well, then we have to be those that love one another. We have to be those that know the scriptures and obey them. Good thing it is to be obedient to God's word.

In 1 Kings 17 verse 18.

And she said unto Elijah, what have I to do with thee, O thou man of God?

Art thou come unto me to call my sins to remembrance and to slay my son? Again, when we are thinking of Elijah, what is the topic that comes to one's mind as we read about him? The thing that always comes to my mind when we talk about Elijah is the words from the Apostle James in the New Testament. [00:42:03] You could speak about Elijah as a man of like passions as we. In other words, Elijah was just like you and me. He had the same feelings. He had the same thoughts. He liked the same things as we did, but he said he prayed. What a great thing it was that Elijah could pray. And it's the greatest privilege or one of the greatest privileges that we have as Christians is that we can pray. In Hebrews 4 we read there of three things that are left for us in this wilderness journey. First of all, there is the word of God.

Then there is the high priest. And then in the last verse, we have the throne of grace. We have that place where we can go to to receive mercy and to receive help as we pass through this scene. And in the story of Elijah, we see a man who was prepared to pray. And what a good thing it is and what a vital thing it is for us as a Lord's people, for us as men of God, for women of God, to be marked by prayer. [00:43:10] And very opening words that we have in chapter 17, we are immediately introduced to Elijah. But before we come to him in 1 Kings 17, we find that he had already been praying. And he had been praying that it might not rain. And you know, why did he pray that it might not rain? Because he had already read the word of God. He had already read what it says in Deuteronomy. And there it says, if the nation turns away from me, God says, if the nation turns away from me, I'll stop the rain. I'll stop the weather.

And here we find that Elijah, having read those Old Testament scriptures, is praying according to the word of God. And it is absolutely vital that we know the scriptures as we've already said. [00:44:04] And that we obey them and we pray according to the word of God. You know, there are men in the Bible who made prayers which were never answered. This very man that we're talking about, he prayed that his life may depart from him. He said, I'm no better than my father's. Take my life from me. But you know, God never answered his prayer. And as a matter of fact, Elijah never died. Chapter 2 of the 2nd Kings, he goes straight to heaven. And there's another man who prayed. And that prayer wasn't answered. I'm thinking of Peter, Luke 5. When he saw the Lord and the multitude of fishes that he had got, he fell down at Jesus' knee and he says, depart from me. But the Lord never departed from him. And I believe that Peter was eternally thankful that he didn't depart from him. And it says in the book of James, again, we ask for things, but we ask amiss that we might consume it on our own lusts. [00:45:03] And you know, dear friends, prayer is absolutely vital, but it's got to be according to the mind and the will of God. What a wonderful example we see of this in the life of the Lord Jesus. That when he was here, he was a man that was marked by prayer. If you read in Luke's gospel, seven times we read of the Lord actually praying. It actually says the word in the text. But there are perhaps other times, 14 times when he is seen speaking to his father. What a testimony. The Lord Jesus is seen in Luke as the son of man. And if it was needed, we can say reverently for the Lord Jesus to speak to his father. How much more for us in this day in which we live to be marked by prayer. So Elijah is a man that is marked by prayer.

And now in 2 Kings 4, 7. 2 Kings 4, 7 says, Then she came and told the man of God, and he said, Go sell the oil and pay the debt.

[00:46:28] As for Elijah, all our commentaries will tell us that Elijah is the prophet of grace.

And I believe, you know, they are absolutely true. And as we read through the story of Elijah, we see a man that brought something different to Elijah. Elijah came on the scene as we've seen him with judgment. And Elijah goes off the scene, well off what we have recorded in the second Kings chapter 1. [00:47:01] He brings down fire from heaven. He goes off with judgment. But Elijah, Elisha, he begins with blessing.

What a wonderful thing it is that as men of God and as women of God, we should bring that grace, that wonderful blessing that the Lord Jesus brought when he was here. And, you know, as I read through this, and we've just got time just to look at one in 2 Kings 2 and verse 19. Elijah, in the beginning of 2 Kings 2, he has gone across the river Jordan.

He has gone up to heaven and Elisha is left.

And Elisha crosses over the Jordan and the first place that he comes to, as did Joshua, was the city of Jericho. And in verse 19, the men of the city said unto Elisha, [00:48:02] Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, but the water is nought and the ground is barren. And he said, Bring me a new cause and put salt therein. And he went forth unto the spring of water and cast the salt therein and said, Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters. Here we see the first act of Elisha, an act of absolute blessing.

Jericho, as we know, was the city of the curse. It was in Joshua's day that they said, He that buildeth the city, there was a curse put upon it. And it wasn't until in the days of Ahab that that city was built. And here it is still a city where the waters were barren. It was a city which was pleasant to look around. And, you know, here is a picture of this world, a world when God created it in Genesis 1 was very good. [00:49:04] A world in which there are wonderful sights and pleasure to look to our eyes in relation to nature. But what had happened? Sin had entered into this world. And as far as this world was concerned, it was barren. There was nothing there. And along comes Elisha. And what is he going to do and what are we going to do in a world which is marred by sin? What can we do?

He brought this new curse and he put salt therein and he cast it into the water. What a wonderful picture this is of that new life which the Lord Jesus has brought. The old days, the old idea and the law, keeping of the law, didn't satisfy. It didn't meet anybody's need. When the Lord Jesus came, he could meet men's need. And I believe one of the things that should mark us as men of God is that we have a desire. [00:50:01] And that we have a concern for those that are lost. And that we want to speak the gospel. And we want to tell them about the Lord Jesus Christ. And using every opportunity to speak about him. I was only hearing yesterday of a young man. I say he's young because he's younger than me. And he knows he's dying with cancer. And he's a doctor. And he knows all about what's going to happen to him. But he's full of Christ. And he wants to tell others about him. What a grand thing it is to have that grace. To be wanting to bless other people. And if we're going to be men of God, we need to tell others of the gospel. Not only in the gospel meetings. But in our private lives with our family and with our friends and with those that we mix with. Let us be those that will speak about the gospel. Well, I want to finish on time. And as we come to the last two. [00:51:01] Simply in relation to David.

There's so much that could be said of David. But I'll read the verse in 2 Chronicles 8.14. 2 Chronicles 8.14 And he appointed, according to the order of David his father, the courses of the priests to their service, and the Levites to their charges, to praise and to minister before the priests. As the duty of every day required, the porters also by their course at every gate. For so had David, the man of God, commanded. The reference to David as the man of God occurs in three places. [00:52:01] Here is the first time we read about David as a man of God. And the next two are in the book of Nehemiah chapter 12. And if you read those verses, it is always in connection with order. And you know what I like about this? Is that David told the people what to do. And it was according to what God had already said. When we think of Moses in the tabernacle, how many times is it recorded that it was according to the pattern shown him in the mount? And we know that Moses, when he built that tabernacle, it wasn't something haphazard. It wasn't something that he dreamed up. It was something that God gave him. And God told him exactly what to do and how to build it. And Moses was faithful in all his house, Hebrews 3. And he built the tabernacle according to what God showed him in the mount. And here we find that David, he's the man of God. And he's sticking to the order that God had told him. He's sticking to that particular way in which God had said there should be these actions in the temple. [00:53:06] You know, when we bring it up to the present day, we don't have to wonder how are we going to run? How are we going to run our assemblies? How are we going to act in our meetings? Because we have it in the Word of God. It is there. It is clearly laid down. We mentioned this afternoon the truth, what the Apostle Paul brought out in 1 Corinthians 12. And you know, if we want to know the order that we should act in relation to the remembrance of the Lord and the supper, we know exactly where to look. It's in 1 Corinthians 11. There we have laid down the facts of the supper. And as we read through Paul's letters to those churches, do we not see there is a definite order given? And if we are to be men of God, and if we are to be here for him in a scene of his rejection, I would like to suggest that there should be order in the way in which we gather, [00:54:03] in the way in which we meet together as Christians. That order has to come from the Word of God. How sad it is when we look around us and we see many of the established churches and their order doesn't come from the Word of God, but it comes from the prayer book, which they have, some men, maybe godly men in the past, have written. And yet the Word of God is laid to one side. If we are going to be here in this scene of his rejection for him, as men of God, we need to take heed to the order that is given to us in the New Testament epistles in relation to the church. And then I come to our final character.

He is in Jeremiah 35. [00:55:02] I'm sure he's one that we wouldn't have turned to.

An immediately thinking of men of God. Indeed, I had to look up the reference that I had written to find it, to read it today. And it is in 35 verse 4.

And there we read, I brought them into the house of the Lord, into the chamber of the son of Hanun, the son of Agdala, a man of God. That's all that we read about him. But, you know, I like that because here was somebody who was simply doing what he could do for God.

You know, that is what we want to happen today. We want you as individuals to simply be here, doing what you're doing for God.

Simply to live a life of Christianity.

[00:56:05] To live as Christ lived down here.

And so, I finished what I was going to say.

My time is up, but I trust that each one of us, as we think about these men of God, I trust that each one of us here will realise that it is our responsibility to be here for the Lord Jesus. To live for him.

And I want to suggest that these seven features should be true of each one of us. First of all, we should be separated from this world, which is coming under judgement. Secondly, we should have that spirit of worship, of giving God what is his due. From our hearts, we should give him praise. Thirdly, we should be those that are obedient to the word of God. That we read the word of God, and we know it. That we spend time in prayer.

[00:57:02] And that as a result of that, there will be the going out of the gospel, the grace that will go out to others, in a saving grace. There will also be an order, not only in our lives as individuals, but in the assemblies to which we gather. And finally, we will just be there as Christians, as those that are living for the Lord.

We're going to close with singing that hymn that we quoted, number 53.

Bless God and Father in thy sight. We bow and own thy grace.

We worship in thy glorious light, which shines in Jesus' face. The glories of his work we bring, thee glorified we see, his deep perfections gladly sing, and tell them forth to thee. Number 53.

Bless God and Father in thy sight.

[00:58:05] We bow and own thy grace.

We worship in thy glorious light, which shines in Jesus' face.

The glories of his work we bring, thee glorified we see, his deep perfections gladly sing, and tell them forth to thee.

[00:59:01] He fills thy presence, fully known to thee, alone his worth.

But in our hearts thy light has shone as suns of heavenly birth.

Lord Jesus Christ, we praise thy name, in God the Father's name, and worship thee, the Holy Lamb,
[01:00:03] whose blood has brought us near.