

Catford Lectures 2010-2011

Part 7

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[00:00:00] Well, good evening. I wonder if we could begin by singing the hymn number 250.

From various cares our hearts retire, Though deep and boundless their desire be now to please but one. Hymn, before whom each knee shall bow, With him is all our business now, And those that are his own. Two hundred and fifty.

From various cares our hearts retire, Though deep and boundless their desire be now to please but one. Hymn, before whom each knee shall bow, [00:01:10] With him is all our business now, And those that are his own.

With thee our happy lot is crowned, Through the vast deserts broad and plain, Through the vast deserts broad and plain, Through the vast deserts broad and plain, Where the earth was found of troubles free, [00:02:06] Our holy men so heartlessly Took us beyond our care.

O'er all the way the truth abide, And all its sorrow, doubt, and strife And all its sorrow, doubt, and strife, And all its sorrow, doubt, and strife, [00:03:02] Still, O'er all this that e'er be, The song weighs to be pleased.

Let us of ye oldest reply, Of that eternal love of thine, And human faults forget.

Turn, like a dame, what thou wilt say, Hopeful as thou in what didst play, [00:04:09] Lo, here our sweet praise to thee.

In his precious name, say amen. Now, I would like, first of all, to read in the Old Testament, in the book of Numbers, in chapter 12.

Numbers, chapter 12, in verse 1. And Miriam and Darian spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married. [00:05:02] For he had married an Ethiopian woman. And they said, Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? Hath he not spoken also by us? And the Lord

heard it. Now the man Moses was very meek above all the men which were upon the face of the earth. And the Lord spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation, and they three came out. And the Lord came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam, and they both came forth. And he said, Hear now my words. Hear now my words. If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all thine house. [00:06:04] With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches. And in the similitude of the Lord shall he behold. Wherefore then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? And the anger of the Lord was kindled against him, and he departed. And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle, and behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow. Aaron looked upon Miriam, and behold, she was leprous. And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my Lord, I beseech thee, lay not this the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned. Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed, when he cometh out of his mother's womb. And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee. [00:07:04] And the Lord said unto Moses, If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? Let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received again. And Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days, and the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again. And afterward the people were removed from Hezroth and pitched in the wilderness of Paran. Now a verse or two in 1 Samuel chapter 2. 1 Samuel chapter 2 and verse 30.

Wherefore the Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house and the house of thy father [00:08:11] should walk before me forever, but now the Lord saith, Be it far from me, for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. Behold, the days come that I will cut cut off thine arm and the arm of thy father's house, that there shall not be an old man in thine house. And thou shalt see an enemy in my habitation, in all the wealth which God shall give Israel, and there shall not be an old man in thine house forever. And the man of thine whom I shall not cut off from mine altar shall be to consume thine eyes and to grieve thine heart, and all the increase of thine house shall die in the flower of their age. [00:09:03] And this shall be a sign unto thee that shall come upon thy two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, in one day they shall die, both of them. And I will raise me up a faithful priest that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind, and I will build him a sure house, and he shall walk before mine anointed forever. Now into the New Testament in Revelation chapter 2. And we'll begin at verse 12. Revelation 2 verse 12. And to the angel of the church in Pergamos [00:10:04] write, these things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges. I know thy works and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is. And thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith. Even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you where Satan dwelleth. Now in Acts chapter 18.

Acts 18 and verse 24. And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man and [00:11:04] mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord, and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue, whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. And when he was disposed to pass into Caia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him, who when he was come helped him much which had believed through grace. For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly shown by the scriptures, that Jesus was Christ.

Now last of all, in 2 Corinthians chapter 10. [00:12:16] 2 Corinthians chapter 10, and we'll read from

verse 12. For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves, but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves are not wise. But we will not boast of things without our measure, according to the without our measure, according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you. For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure, as though we reach not unto you. For we are come as far as unto us to you, also in preaching the [00:13:05] gospel of Christ. Not boasting of things without our measure, that is of other men's labors, but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you, according to our rule abundantly. To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line of things, made ready to our hand. But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth. And that should be enough for the moment. But I want really to take from what we've read tonight, is this thought of commendation. And I think from verse 18 of 2 Corinthians 10, would really [00:14:03] show us what is the most important commendation, and that's when the Lord commends. There's others in Acts 18, we probably see the commendation of the brethren, we probably see the commendation of the brethren, of fellow believers, when they witness certain things in our lives, as seen in Apollos. But there's another commendation that's mentioned in 2 Corinthians chapter 10, and we'll go on to mention this as well, but it's those that commend themselves. So we have the Lord's commendation, the brethren's commendation, and self-commendation. And Paul says of this, it's not wise. We used to hear years ago, that if you, your ears would save from jeers, [00:15:04] save from jeers, these things keep meekly hid, myself and I, and me and my, and what I do and did. But what we should have really before us, to get the Lord's appreciation, the Lord's approval on our lives. And Lord, if he approves, he will certainly commend. And so that's the most important, the most important one tonight, is to seek in our lives, what we do, what we say, has the Lord's approval, and he'll be readily willing to commend us. It may be that we have to wait to the coming day, to the time of review, the judgment seat, when we trust he'll be able to say of every one of us, well done, good and faithful servant. But just to seek even now in [00:16:03] our lives, and in what we engage in, and what we are desirous of, is really commended of the Lord, and it will bring glory to him, and encouragement to others. Now, I'm sure through the years, the Lord would gladly acknowledge of his servants, from Old Testament saints through to New Testament times, and from then on to now, the Lord would gladly acknowledge that many men and women, servants of his, have been faithful, and ready to commend them. But you know, but you know, there's only a few places where the Lord personally says of a person that they were faithful. One is Moses, Numbers 12. The one in 1 Samuel is really a prophetic utterance.

[00:17:08] It may be seen in type in the Lord, it will certainly be seen in a coming day, but he speaks about there, about a faithful priest. And last of all, where we read in Revelation, in relation to that, he speaks about Antipas. His name means against all. Here was a man who stood against everything that was contrary to God, and he paid for that desire to represent God, we might say, represent the Lord, he paid with his life, because it speaks about him being a faithful martyr or witness. And so there's three where the Lord uses the expression that they were faithful. But as I'm saying, it doesn't mean if the word's missing from other people in their testimony in the scriptures, it doesn't mean that the Lord didn't hold them to be faithful. [00:18:01] Paul said the Lord counted him faithful. Now some might say, well, that's self-commendation. But when you read about Paul's life, and what he suffered, mentioned this afternoon, mentioned the stoning, and the lashing, mentioned the shipwreck, and so on.

And still this man continued on. And he, despite all the opposition that he faced, he had this testimony, and I'm sure he had the right to be able to say that the Lord had counted him faithful. The

Lord knows his servants. He knows why he picks them. He knows why he chose Moses, and Paul, and others. And I'm sure the word faithful could be put alongside their names. Trust that in my life, that the Lord would see something that's of value to him, [00:19:01] and be able to say, maybe in a coming day, at the time of the judgment seat, he'll be able to say of me, as others, well done, good and faithful servant. So it was just really along these lines that I wanted to speak in relation to being commended. We have in Numbers 12, the most wonderful occasion, at least it was wonderful for Moses, not so for Aaron and Miriam. But this man, Moses, distinctive, he was often called in the scriptures, the man of God. He was called here a servant, but not only a servant, a faithful servant. So despite what others were saying about him, as we saw what Moses, Aaron and Miriam were saying, despite what they were saying, [00:20:05] the Lord comes out and he takes Moses, and he shows that here's one that I can commend.

He's faithful in all mine house as a servant, and that servant there takes the usual word that's often used, a servant as a bond slave. Here's this man, Moses, my bond slave. When we go to the New Testament, it's almost quoted again, just slightly I think different, but it says in Hebrews 3 and 5, I think the verse says, speaking again about Moses, my faithful servant Moses. Moses was faithful, but the word servant in that portion doesn't take the usual word for servant, which is bond slave. In fact, the word for servant there [00:21:01] is only used once in the New Testament, and it's in relation, obviously in relation to Moses. But there it was an opportunity for God, for the Lord to speak about Moses as one who was of real value to him, Moses. And yet these people here were speaking against him, and the thing it said that the Lord heard it. Now it may be that you and I were maybe attacked from without, and maybe attacked from within. I'm very sad if it is, but if there's things in our lives that the Lord will commend, we can surely rejoice in the fact he's shown approval to our lives. And despite what others say about us, just to make sure that they have no ground for speaking about us and doing things [00:22:02] that, well, they have right to speak because I'm wrong in this, wrong in that. But if we have a conscience, a clear conscience of how we live and how we want to serve the Lord, then the Lord will bless us and will certainly commend us. It's often been said that if, that we should look after our conscience and leave God to look after our character. Leave it in the Lord's hands. And so we have this brought before us in relation to Moses. Now as it says, the Lord heard it, and of course he was going to come out and he was going to show in this simple, this way of his confidence in this man, Moses. And despite what Miriam and Aaron were saying. Now Moses as a servant, as I said, very distinct, very distinguished. And the Lord came out, you might say on his side, and he showed [00:23:02] just of what value Moses was to him. Now Moses as a servant, you know, we often hear the expression, a modern day, I suppose, expression that they have little baggage or anything that would hinder them. And I've often thought about Moses. I may be wrong, maybe someone will keep me right. But I've been trying, racking my memory. Sometimes it's not very good, my memory, but I don't think you ever read of anything that Moses possessed as his own. When he was in the palace in the first 40 years of his life, he was in someone else's house. When he was in the backside of the desert for his second 40 years, it was his father-in-law's flocks. And when he was 40 years in the wilderness, it was the people of God. [00:24:03] He couldn't say, although God did say to him, the people you've brought out. But Moses reminded the Lord that it was his people. And so in that way, Moses had nothing really to hinder him, except his lack of faith. We know the story, how the Lord said what he was going to do. Well, I'm not very eloquent. Nobody will listen to me, so on, so on. But the Lord would have none of it. But here was a man who was distinct, and it may be that some here today might think that there's, as regards the testament, they might feel that they are nothings, non-entities. But you know, the Lord might have his eye upon you and me, but have his eye upon us so that we can be of real service to him. And if we feel we have the Lord's mind, and we have the Lord's things at heart [00:25:03] to promote him, to glorify him, then the Lord will make sure that we

have the ability in the spirit to be of service to him, to be a real servant, and a servant that the Lord could say of us, faithful. And so this man, Moses, he was got at by Aaron and Miriam, but when the Lord comes out and says, my faithful Moses, he's not so who is faithful in all mine house. And so it was really this point where the Lord was commending him.

Not him that commends himself is approved, but here was the Lord showing his approval of Moses in what he was saying about him. So if we have the most important one, the Lord's commendation, [00:26:03] we have the one that shouldn't be in our mouths, self-commendation. And of course, Miriam and Aaron were really commending themselves. Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses?

Hath he not spoken also by us? And the Lord heard it. The Lord heard it.

You know, Israel in the wilderness, they were affected by their memories. As I said, sometimes I forget names. I even forgot my daughter-in-law's name at one time until her mother put me right. But anyway, in the wilderness, Israel were marked by this, that they forgot things that they should have remembered and they remembered things that they should have forgotten. They remembered [00:27:08] the food of Egypt. They forgot they were under a taskmaster in Egypt.

They forgot God's promise. Excuse me on the decline of throat here. They forgot God's promise when he could say, if I take you out, I will bring you in. Three days into the journey after the Red Sea, they murmured at the waters of Mara. That's how quickly they forgot the deliverance that God gave them. They forgot God's promise. But one of the saddest things it said about them in Psalm 106, that they forgot that God was their saviour. Now imagine that. [00:28:04] Imagine you and I forgetting all that God has done for us. Imagine forgetting the grace that has been showed towards us. Forgetting the value of the death of Christ, whereby we are brought into blessing. Imagine forgetting that. Well, Israel in the wilderness had problems with their memory. Now Aaron, he had obviously taken on this feature, a bad memory.

A bad memory. Here he's saying, has God not spoken by us as well?

When a year before, or maybe just under a year, Aaron gave instruction to the children of Israel when they wanted something tangible and seeable. They didn't want anything to do with a hidden God [00:29:08] or a hidden Moses. And so Aaron gave instruction what to do with the golden ear rings. And from the golden ear rings came a calf, golden calf. And the word from the children of Israel saying that these be thy gods, O Israel. Aaron did that.

And without saying, right, get rid of the golden calf, he mentioned that they should be celebrating the feasts. And this is one of the most horrendous things in Christianity today, is the mixture of what's false and what's real. And Aaron was behind this. So he should have remembered [00:30:01] what he did to the children of Israel. He caused them by his instruction to build this golden calf. And so again, he is one who set himself up. And so in Moses and Aaron and Miriam too, we have one hand, we have the Lord's commendation, faithful, and we have and we have two that really promoted themselves. They spoke about themselves.

Hath the Lord not spoken by us? Well, I don't think the Lord was going to speak through Aaron or Miriam. And the very fact what took place, the Lord departed, Miriam was stricken down by leprosy and Aaron really had to go cap in hand to Moses, the man of God, and plead for his sister.

[00:31:05] But you see, there's the point. It's one on one hand, the Lord's commendation. The Lord stood by Moses. Now Moses wasn't perfect by any means. We know that. And it was an act of anger that kept him from the promised land. But yet he was a servant that the Holy Spirit was pleased to announce time and time again, Moses, the man of God. He was one that shone out. He was one that set the Lord before his own things. He was one that chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season. Here he pleads for Miriam and the Lord gives the instruction and eventually she's healed and received back into the thing. But the sad thing here is, and we're really just passing on, the sad thing because [00:32:06] of what they were saying and because of what happened and because of the judgment upon them, it says in verse 15, she was shut out of the camp seven days and the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again. You know, we may try and promote ourselves. We may try and promote someone else who's very friendly with us. But you know, at the end of the day, whether it's strife, jockeying for position, whether it's this kind of thing, the people of God suffer. And it's for seven days. You might say, well, it's not too long, seven days out of 40. They should have been across the wilderness in about 11 days. It took them 40 years to get over the wilderness and there's another hindrance. Seven days maybe, but it was still a [00:33:05] hindrance. The minute we try and promote ourselves and commend ourselves, no matter what way it will be, will only serve to be a hindrance to the people of God. So it's really a judgment on our lives and on our attitude to things. Pass on to first Samuel, I want to watch the time. First Samuel, they said it's a really prophetic statement here. And I will raise me up a faithful priest. I shall do according to that which is in my heart, I shall do according to that which is in my heart and in my mind, and I will build him a sure house and he shall walk before mine anointed forever. When I think of this verse, I often think about what we have again in Hebrews in chapter two, [00:34:07] speaking about our high priest above. It speaks about him, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God. Now you and I have someone above that represents us.

He knows your trials. He knows your tribulation. The hymn writer penned the words, the hymn writer penned the words for he has felt the same. And just to remember that we have one here who, as I said, he knows all about the journey. He knows all about the aches and the pains and it knows all about the old age and infirmities and the isolation. The Lord knows all about these things. [00:35:01] And again, he can administer that grace necessary for the pathway. And so on the one hand, I may be taking too much liberty here, but on the one hand, referring to our Lord Jesus Christ, because we can see a type of the Lord Jesus there as the one who now fills the presence of God. And he's there for us. And again, in chapter three of Hebrews, maybe we better find it. It speaks about to consider. I'm going to find a place.

Chapter three, verse one, it says, wherefore, holy brethren partakers of the heavenly calling, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the apostle and high priest of our profession, Christ Jesus was faithful to him that appointed him as also Moses was faithful in all his house. [00:36:04] And then the verse I mentioned and Moses verse five was verily was faithful in all his house as a servant for a testimony of those things which should, which were to be spoken after. And so on, but just to have our eyes fixed on the one above the Lord Jesus Christ himself. If you feel sorrow, if you feel sorrow for yourself, keep your eye on him, who fills the presence of God. And that in the consideration is not a fleeting glance or a fleeting moment reading the verse and then passing on. It's to contemplate the verse. It's to really dig it up and make it good to ourselves and to go in the strength of the one who now sits there as our great high priest. It says there, [00:37:04] in all things that behold him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. Now, where we have in the first Samuel chapter two, where we read, he speaks about a faithful priest, but before that, he tells us all about the house of Eli

and his sons, so evil, it says they caused the children of Israel to transgress. That's what the priesthood done. That's what happened when evil men were in that position. But you know, the contrast is getting our eye on the one who fills the presence of God. [00:38:01] And we know that all secure there. And that's why he's saying, we'll consider him as the apostle and high priest of our profession as a puzzle. We've often been told this when he brings God to us, the messenger of God to us, the Lord Jesus. But as high priest, he takes us to God in all our weakness and all our shortcomings and failures. And if we are before him, we can certainly prove that he was a faithful, a compassionate and faithful high priest in things relating to God. And it says there that he made a reconciliation for the sins of the people or propitiation. He paid the price of our salvation. And he made a reconciliation and that's where he sits now. And that's where he would have us to want to be engaged with, with himself and to realize that we are there because of what he has [00:39:05] done. But when we go back into first Samuel two, I believe it, as I said, it was a prophetic utterance and I believe in a way it's still to be fulfilled, but not now a priesthood in the likeness of Aaron or Eli marked by failure, but the Lord was going to raise up another priest.

And again, this is, if I can understand it right, a faithful priest who shall do according to that, which is in my heart and in my mind. And so really looking at this prophetic utterance, I think he's going to come about in a millennial scene. And I think you have to go to Ezekiel, which we've had no time to read tonight. Ezekiel 48, and it speaks about priests of the sons of [00:40:08] Zadok. And why I think is, I'm almost certain what it's meaning here, because it says he shall walk before my anointed. Now I looked up all the books I had in it and all I think said that the anointed here is not an anointed priest, but an anointed King. And only one could fill that place and that's Christ himself. And so this priest will, and I will build him a sure, and he shall walk before my anointed forever. And so it's taking a millennial picture here. And God is going to make sure there'll be those there who will be for his glory and for the honor of our Lord Jesus Christ when he speaks about his anointed. And the contrast comes in, as we [00:41:07] mentioned the house of Eli and it says about them that they caused the people to transgress. But when we see Christ as our high priest above, faithful high priest, if we look at it in that way as a type, we see one who had made reconciliation for the sins of the people. Christ met us in our need. The people, the sons of Eli, they caused the people to transgress. What a contrast, what a difference. But then also it says of these priests in Ezekiel 48, but the priest that are sanctified of the sons of Zeruk, it says, they kept my charge, which went not astray when the children of Israel went astray, as the Levites went astray. [00:42:07] So here's a priestly family that's going to be for God's glory in a coming millennial scene. And walking before his anointed, the anointed King, the Lord Jesus Christ. We've often been told that Brother Frank Wallace used to, some of us knew obviously, but he used to tell us that the priesthood in a coming day will look back to what was accomplished at the cross. Whereas the priesthood in the Old Testament was looking forward. But here's a coming day that is going to be displayed in this world. And there's going to be faithful men in the priesthood, bringing glory to God and exalting Christ. And Christ having that preeminent place, everything will be settled. [00:43:04] No thought of failure, no thought of sin entering in. These people will be there for God's pleasure and glory and exalting the one who now is rejected, but one day will take up the reins of government. And the one who was so treated at Calvary's cross, despicably by the hands of men, it says in another place that he shall bear the glory and he shall sit and rule upon his throne. So the thing today, dear brother and sister, is to have your eye on the man above. Keep your eye there. Keep Christ before you. And despite what you experience in this world today, I'm sure there's saints who are agitated because of what's happening in the Middle East. [00:44:01] Frank Wallace again used to say, he wants a proof that the Lord's almost here. He says, you look at the banks and look at the money market. Now that was 10, 15 years ago he said that to us. See what's happened in the last year or two. We're on the verge of the Lord's coming. It's assured to us. The

Lord himself said, I will come again. That's a promise. And that's what we rest on. Not only is that assured to us, it's certain. It says, and it's imminent as well. The coming of the Lord's drawing nigh. The believer can say, the believer can say, as the apostle Paul can say, that he that shall come will come and will not tarry. So despite all the agitation that's going around about, if we keep our eye on the man above, he'll take us through many a storm, many a doubt, [00:45:05] just to have our eyes there, fixed there, the Lord Jesus Christ. Man, ourselves marked by failure. The man above never failed. Everything that he did down here, everything that he said, every act, every thought in his head brought glory to God. And so we should really have the vision of our souls filled with the man above, the one compassionate, merciful, the one who's faithful and never fails.

And he would have us to be occupied with himself. We read also in Revelation chapter two, Antipas was my faithful martyr who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. It must have been some [00:46:15] terrible place this, Bergamos. It says that Satan's seat was there. And that is, his power was there.

His power was evident. It may have been in the idolatry that was seen. It may be in those politicians of the time, their corruption and so on. But it says there was a special man there called Antipas. As I said, his name means against all. He stood against all. He wouldn't compromise. He wouldn't give over to accommodate those who were bringing in wrong doctrine. We didn't read the verse, but it speaks about the doctrine of Balaam and so on. He never compromised and he [00:47:04] paid with his life. No wonder the Lord says about this man, he was faithful, faithful. What a commendation and what a commendation he will receive in that coming day. I'm sure the commendations will come thick and fast for Antipas.

What he stood for and what he stood against. As I said, I don't really want to go into all the details there. If you want to read more about the details or go in for the details, I would commend you to come to Kilkeel in May, because there's going to be the seven churches for the subject arenas. I'm inviting you on behalf of the Kilkeel brethren. Two years ago, I asked you if you'd been to Scotland and there was a lot of no's and it's still a lot of no's. [00:48:03] Please, if you want to be encouraged, Kilkeel and Findochty in Scotland, take the opportunity. You'll be made very welcome. And if you want to read more about Pergamos, come because the readings in, as I say, in Kilkeel is going to be in the seven churches. But however, this man stands out as a true servant of the Lord. Didn't say enough a lot about him. He just said that he was faithful, a faithful martyr, faithful witness. He was going to speak up for the Lord and for his truth. I remember years ago, I got a phone call at work from someone who said to me, you know, I think we should compromise a little. I said, compromise the truth? What are you talking about? Well, maybe not compromise, maybe bend a little. I said, that's compromise. Well, maybe not bend, give and take. I said, that's compromise. [00:49:05] Everything you read in the dictionary about compromise is what he was saying. You can't compromise the truth. And this is what happened with Antipas. So despite what others were saying, some might be saying, well, we've really got to live safe here. We'll keep quiet. No, Antipas spoke out. And the problem with Pergamos at that time was seduction and greed seen in Balaam. But what marks us in a day when we need to stand for the Lord, what marks us?

With what we say and what we do, how we live, does it mark us out as those who will stand faithful for the Lord? Well, we need grace for it, as we heard about today. In every aspect of our lives, it's grace from start to finish. Grace, indeed, met us in our need. Grace brought the Lord [00:50:07] Grace brought the Lord Jesus Christ down to where we were, caused him to give himself for our sins. And grace will see us home. As one of the other hymn writers put it, he'll see us safely home. But in the

day of difficulty, of danger, let us be marked by that which marked Antipas.

Stand out for the Lord. Now, I don't think we're in any danger in this country at the moment of dying for our faith, but you never know what the future holds. But the past, I should say, in this country, in England and Scotland, Wales, I better bring the Welsh in as well, and Ireland, many perished because they were not [00:51:01] prepared to compromise the truth. They stood for the Lord in an evil time and they paid with their life. So let's be like Antipas and stand out and labour for the Lord. And the time is just about away and so it's really just to finish in relation to Acts 18.

Now, if we have had in Moses one who was commended with the Lord and the future priest and also Antipas had the Lord's commendation, if we have in Aaron and Miriam self-commendation, we have one here in Acts 18 who was commended by the brethren. Others saw this man. Just let's quickly go over what it says in verse 24 of Acts 18. First of all, it says he was mighty in the [00:52:06] scriptures. Keep these things in your mind. He was instructed in the way of the Lord. So he had obviously the wisdom to apply the scriptures to his way down here for the Lord's interest here. He was fervent in the spirit. He spoke and taught diligently the things of the Lord and he spoke boldly in the synagogue. Now, when it goes down to verse 27, it's obviously a letter of commendation. It says because they wrote when he was going to go to Achaia, the brethren wrote exhorting the disciples to receive him who when he was come helped him much which had believed through grace. Now, when he arrived there, this letter obviously had come with [00:53:03] them and they said that this brother is of real value. He's of real value and I've no doubt they would mention some of these things. He was real value and really what I wanted to take out of it was that when he did come, he helped them much or he contributed much. We've had some who've come to where I used to be and they caused nothing but havoc. Taking young brothers and sisters with them and these young brothers and sisters now are nowhere. Absolutely nowhere. They were being nurtured in the truth. They were sitting under the ministry of a teacher, Frank Wallace again, a local man, but when they went against [00:54:02] Frank's advice to stay where they were, be established in the truth here and the Lord will bless you, but they were taken away by someone else. They're nowhere now, but this man when he came, he says he helped them much and so it's a challenge to us all. Are we a helper or are we a hinderer? Do we contribute to the local assembly or do we withhold? You might say like Moses, well, I really just can't speak or pray or the Lord, the Lord will see you through. He gives us strength as long as you have the desire for it, but the scriptures are open to us all, not just a book to be taken up like a novel and set aside. It's to be established in the truth [00:55:04] and to be of real value to the saints. Now, this man had a wonderful testimony and he was a help to all these believers. He was a helper. Remember our brother John Blackburn when he had to locate to another place? After he had gone, someone says to him, well, how did you get on and where you are now? He says, you know, he says, I really just wanted to fit in. I just wanted to be a help there and he was. Like this, I'd say Apollos. Now, Apollos, his name means destroyer, but Apollos didn't live according to the meaning of his name. He lived according to his desire to be of service to the Lord. And you think about these different things and it's just a little point there that where they said, well, receive him. [00:56:02] We commend them to you. He'll be of real value to you. He'll be a helper. At the end of the day, would they say that about you or me? I trust it will be something that I could say. I trust even more importantly that the Lord would commend it because remember, it's not him that commends himself that's approved, but whom the Lord commends. If we commend ourselves, Paul says, it's not wise. It's not wise. It's whom the Lord commends.

But if the other thing is to show in a letter of commendation, can the brethren with confidence be able to say about us, yes, well, he's a great help. He's gone in for the Lord's things. He'll be a helper to

you. [00:57:03] He'll be a contributor in your meetings. And the only thing that I would think that Paul has destroyed would be the against those who were saying different things about the Lord and that he showed by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ. I wonder if what we say will convince others because that's what it said. He might have convinced the Jews whether they bowed and were saved. I'm sure some would be saved, but at least he was going to speak out for the Lord and be a testimony and be a help at Achaia. And he was commended to the local brethren by the saints of what they witnessed in this man Apollos. I wonder if we could close by singing the hymn one hundred and eighty two. Oh Lord, how blessed this day by day we pass along our pilgrim way to know that we are thine, [00:58:06] thine through redemption's precious blood, which cleanse, which brought us now to God thine through redemption's precious blood, which cleanse, which brought us now to God in righteousness divine. One hundred and eighty two.

Thine through redemption's precious blood, which cleanse, which brought us now to God in righteousness divine.

[00:59:02] Thine ever thine to be with thee, forever of thine own must be.

Thou will hold me alone from thrusting place to devotion.

Oh Lord, in me can God be feared, to follow and to serve thee here.

[01:00:04] Through the walls to climb, to be folded everlasting until we reach thee in that sea where thou wilt hold us nigh.

Lord, may we always own thy claim and overcoming in thy name from earthliness be free.

[01:01:01] And by the day may one of them with you be straight, the path be fled which leads us now to thee.

Amen.