

The Corrective Epistles

Part 1

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[00:00:01] Hymn number 212.

I'd be grateful if a local brother will start an appropriate tune. Called from above, and heavenly men by birth, who once were but the citizens of earth, as pilgrims here we seek a heavenly home, our portion in the ages yet to come.

We are but strangers here, we do not crave a home on earth, which gave thee but a grave. Thy cross has severed ties which bound us here, thyself our treasure in a brighter sphere. 212. Called from above, and heavenly men by birth, who once were but the citizens of earth, [00:01:11] as pilgrims here we seek a heavenly home, our portion in the ages yet to come.

We are but strangers here, we do not crave a home on earth, [00:02:06] which gave thee but a grave.

Thy cross has severed ties which bound us here, thyself our treasure in a brighter sphere.

[00:03:03] O God our Father, in coming together at the end, or towards the end of another busy day, another day's march nearer home, we give thee thanks for giving us the privilege and the opportunity of singing with holy fervour words that we know to be true.

We recognise the immediate challenge involved in taking such words upon our lips.

Called saints, what an amazing dignity this is.

Thou hast set us apart for thyself.

[00:04:07] All that we were once connected with, as to the flesh, severed completely once and for all.

Every outstanding question dealt with to thy glory and for our eternal blessing.

And we thank thee for the measure in which our lives that we live day by day are a fair representation of that necessary response to thee, the God of all grace, for the greatness of every expression of thy love toward us.

We think of the many of thy people not so favoured as ourselves. [00:05:02] We give thee thanks for the creature comforts we enjoy. Comfortable homes, more than sufficient to eat and to clothe

ourselves with.

The congenial fellowship of like-minded believers. Opportunity to turn to thy word as individuals and collectively too. Opportunity to witness to others of thy saving grace. And we pray even now that there might be those who have turned in repentance towards thyself and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ as a result of contact with thy people this day. We commend our families to thee, some locally, others further afield, [00:06:04] and we commit them to thy care. We pray that the things that we hope to enjoy and be challenged by here tonight might come before them too, and that the immense ramifications of willingly exposing ourselves to the challenge of thy holy written word by thy Spirit, that this might have its effect upon them and upon us.

Think of some who aren't well. Think of some recently bereaved, others who are lonely and isolated, and we happily commend them to thee.

And for ourselves as we open thy word, bless to us, we pray, the reading of the holy scriptures and the comments that are made [00:07:02] that we might accept again from thee the necessity that there is to respond in personal life and godliness to thy great mercy that thou hast shown toward us. We commit us into thy good hand. We seek thy help and blessing. In the precious name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen. Would you turn, please, to the first epistle to the Corinthians and chapter 1. 1 Corinthians, chapter 1 and verse 1.

Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ [00:08:07] through the will of God, and Sosthenes, our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all but in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, both theirs and ours.

Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God always on your behalf for the grace of God which is given you by Christ Jesus that in everything ye are enriched by him in all utterance and in all knowledge [00:09:02] even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you so that ye come behind in no gift waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ who shall also confirm you unto the end that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that ye all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. Now chapter 7, verse 1.

[00:10:03] Now, concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me.

I think that will suffice for the moment. I was very pleased to receive a phone call advising me that I'd been allocated five sessions of ministry while I'm in Ipswich and Felixstowe area. That was one problem solved. How many sessions? [00:11:02] Of course, resolving one problem always leads to others. The next problem was what kind of material would be suitable to bring before you that would be best calculated at the present moment to be profitable and helpful to you. And I found my thoughts going along this line of problem solving. Now that's not a popular subject, I know. I once worked with a man, my boss at the time, who frequently gave me a policy statement.

This was his approach. He said, never make a decision today that you can put off till tomorrow. [00:12:07] And he said the other thing is never tackle a problem today that can be left till tomorrow. He

says usually you'll be overtaken by events and no decision will be necessary. And he said, with a bit of luck, he wasn't a believer, the problem will go away or resolve itself. Now, we can see the folly of that in an unbeliever. But sadly, as believers, we often give the impression that even if we don't put it into words, that's our policy about problems.

Never make a decision today that we can put off till tomorrow. [00:13:05] Never tackle a problem that can be left till the next day, and so on. Now, be that as it may, in this or any other locality, it does lead to the healthy exercise of inquiring from scripture as to whether or not problems need to be tackled and should be tackled and the best way to do that. Bearing in mind that you've allocated me five sessions, this led on to the thought, ah, Paul wrote five epistles to Christian companies which were of a corrective nature. As we know, seven major epistles addressed to companies of believers [00:14:07] bear the name of the Apostle Paul. Romans laying the foundation of Christian truth, Ephesians giving us the top stone of Christian truth, both of them instructional, and the other five that he wrote had a strong corrective element. I thought, I trust, it works out to be so, that there will be merit in having a look at the five corrective epistles coming from the hand of Paul, see what the problem was, and see how the text of each epistle gives us details as to how the problem had to be tackled. [00:15:02] If in so doing, it furnishes us for whatever problem may come along tomorrow or not next year or until the Lord shall come, well that, of course, will be helpful too. Another general remark, and then into Corinthians. I never, or certainly rarely, feel free to name names about those I receive help from.

I'm not afraid to acknowledge help received, happy to receive help from any source. But I would be loathe to give the impression that if I give you the source of information as to someone who passed on something helpful to me, [00:16:04] I'm loathe to give the impression that I have a doubt as to the veracity of the suggestion, and I'm leaving myself the escape clause by suggesting, well, if you don't agree with it, or if it's wrong, don't blame me, with Mr. So-and-so. The other thing is, or another thing is, if something is true, it stands on its own merits to be judged by the plumb line of Holy Scripture. If others feel free to say, well, as Mr. So-and-so said in 1927, well, I will listen to that, and that will be helpful. But, certainly, another thing is, I may have heard a brother say something, I may attribute it to him, [00:17:03] and, of course, he in his day no doubt heard it from someone else. Very, very little of what we hear and say is original in the sense that it's the first time it's ever been said. What we have to make sure is that whatever we hear, or whatever we say, it has been judged in the light of the truth of Holy Scripture, we've made it our own, and then we are free to pass it on, so that if anyone says why, well, we can give some reason for the hope that is within us. I say that because there must be few of us who haven't heard the five corrective epistles of Paul put together under the five Ds.

Now, that's a good letter to choose because it comes into the text of at least some of the epistles. [00:18:03] The grave matter at Corinth was disorder, moral disorder.

As we come through the New Testament, we next come to Galatians, who were deceived, they were deluded, on a major matter.

Philippians gave every evidence of dissension, and that needed to be corrected too. The Colossians were wrong as to doctrine concerning the person of Christ, and the Thessalonians were in a dilemma concerning those who had fallen asleep in Christ. If the Lord will, we look at the last four on further occasions.

[00:19:01] Tonight, we are going to look at this matter of disorder. Disorder. That was the problem. Disorder.

It's certainly true.

In many areas of the country, in many of our meetings, that's what I'm speaking about, that perhaps for several years, for any one of a number of reasons, we have neglected to tackle problems, not excluding the matter of godly order, as laid down in Scripture.

If we aren't careful, [00:20:03] and if we haven't yet arrived there, the time will shortly come, when having neglected to deal with problems, for so long, we will find ourselves, if we don't now find ourselves, completely incapable of dealing with problems that arise after such an extended period of neglect.

Paul was aware that things weren't right at Corinth.

He had a great feeling for them.

Read the Book of Acts, refresh your memory. How long time he had spent with them.

How he agonised before God for them.

[00:21:02] Knowing their condition.

And then he receives a letter from them. I only read that brief comment in chapter 7.

Concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me.

They asked him questions about relationships between the sexes. They wrote to him about that.

But like the Lord Jesus, when the Lord Jesus was asked a question by many, he didn't so much answer the detail of the specific question as answer the questioner. The Lord invariably drew the attention of a questioner of things that he needed to know and to put right. [00:22:03] And then the detail would follow. I'm sure many examples from the Gospels come to mind. Now, Paul did not turn immediately to a detailed answer about the question that the Corinthians posed. And perhaps there's a lesson for us in this.

Yes, he's going to talk about disorder.

Whether it's inside marriage or outside of marriage, he's going to address this problem of moral disorder. But before he does, he begins with that opening section which we read together, where the thing that is emphasised, as ever in these epistles, is that which is according to God.

[00:23:06] When we get to the second epistle, second Thessalonians, second Peter, not so much second Corinthians, but the last day epistles, James and Jude, before dealing with the problems there, in every case, the writer, by the Spirit, draws the attention to that which is established by God in Christ by the Spirit, that which is not subject to disorder, that which is not subject to failure or breakdown. And then the necessary other matters are gone into. So it is at Corinth.

Not the time or the exercise to expound this opening section, [00:24:06] except to say this.

The apostle says, God who is faithful, God who is entirely consistent with what he declares himself to be, God has conferred upon you the utmost dignity.

We took account of it in the verses we read, in the hymn that we sang in commending ourselves to God in prayer. The implication straight away is this. Since God in his holiness has wrought from himself and for himself, and conferred upon you such a holy dignity, [00:25:05] what holiness, what dignity, what practical holiness becomes those who have been called out of the world, those who have been brought to light by the confession of the name of Jesus Christ as Lord. And so he goes into that first of all. Now, what I propose to do now, as a framework so that we can all take away and meditate on it for ourselves, is to see the outline that Paul gives to them, giving God's idea about order.

Yes, they have asked him about disorder. It's a necessary problem to be tackled, but notice how he does it. [00:26:04] In chapter one, he details for them the preaching of the cross. We do well to take account of the words the Holy Ghost teaches. Very often we can get at the heart of the matter in any book or scripture by focusing our attention on significant phrases. Chapter one, then, the preaching of the cross. And we'll come back to that. Chapter two, the activities of the Holy Spirit of God in achieving on earth what man could never achieve for himself.

[00:27:04] Chapter three, building on this, we get a treatise on building work in general and the tests that need to be applied to any building work that is done. This leads in a very direct, straightforward way in chapter four to the matter of stewardship, building the ultimate test and, in view of that, the matter of stewardship. Now, all this in a very orderly way against this background of disorder in the Corinthian assembly. And then, beginning at chapter five in a detailed way, but really pulling together the threads of things that have been said onwards from chapter one, he says, right, you've drawn my attention to one aspect of disorder, [00:28:02] he said, but I will take the opportunity of referring to other things that need to be drawn to your attention. And again, we have, if you like, we have another set of Ds.

Where we read in chapter one, verse eleven, or verse ten, I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you. Now, the root cause of much that was wrong at Corinth [00:29:01] was that too much was made of prominent brethren.

It's a pitfall into which we can fall so easily.

The ministry of Mr. So-and-so appeals to me.

Well, that may be right. It may be that the approach of Brother So-and-so is just right for the way that I think. That doesn't mean it's best overall or most suitable for someone else. But even in the gifts that the Lord has placed in the assembly, for my help, can become a means of raising one man on a pedestal above another. Or it may be that I think Sister So-and-so is the most godly sister I've met. [00:30:01] She is the only one with the answer to any moral problem that arises. Well, all that I think about such a sister may be perfectly true. The devil soon gets in in causing us to look to others than the Lord Jesus Christ for our guidance and our power. Well, it was like that at Corinth. I don't think for a moment that the party spirit was crystallised personally round Paul and Peter and others like them. I think, as a matter of grace, that Paul takes it to himself. He doesn't refer to the real party leaders at Corinth. He says, for instance, it would be wrong to be split over whether you're going to follow Paul

or Peter or anyone else. [00:31:08] Whether in conversation, whether on the platform, whether formally or informally, we do well if we quote others when we are pointing out good examples to follow.

And if we find it necessary to speak of errors to avoid, we do well to refer it to ourselves and not to other people. How sad it would be, seemed to be so at Corinth, that reference selfward when a good example was sought, criticising others when negative things had to be said. Let us take the practical point. Look for the best that we can in others.

[00:32:02] Let us be as critical as we need to be with ourselves. You see, when we say, yes, if there are problems, they should be tackled, let us not get into the mould or the mind where we are always looking for something to carp and criticise about. There's enough without looking for it, I'm aware. But Paul says, now look, he says, don't put Peter and myself on a platform. He says, judge everything as before the Lord. And this was the root problem. And really, right through from chapter one, right through to chapter four, this matter of divisions and party spirit came through again and again. And because there were four chapters taken up with that, it shows how vital it was. [00:33:04] When we get to chapter five, we get a reference to conduct which was entirely disgraceful. Disgraceful conduct.

We see it in scripture.

Sadly, we've seen it in our own generation, in the country where we live.

Matters which at one time wouldn't have been countenanced, wouldn't even have been discussed, certainly not in a mixed company. We find that in our land, matters which the Bible would call utterly disgraceful conduct, have been, first of all, tolerated, then condoned, [00:34:09] and we are at this stage in our nation's history where these matters are even promoted now as something to be looked upon with favour to show how clever and sophisticated we've become. We are getting very like Corinthian, very Corinthian in the standards of conduct which are accepted and promoted in society in which we move. In chapter six, he moves on to this matter of disputes. Again, if there are divisions, party spirit, one vies with another as to the degree of sophistication, as to the conduct. It gets worse and worse, a downward spiral. [00:35:02] It's also true that where divisions are tolerated, that this will lead to disputes.

How sad at Corinth.

The apostle says, now look, you are equipped positionally to judge matters on behalf of God.

Your destiny in the world to come is to fulfil that role. You'll even judge angels.

And he says these little matters that crop up locally, you're not even morally fit to deal with them. What a disgrace, he says, that these matters which even some of the nations abhor in Corinth, and you're flavoured by the local situation, he said, [00:36:04] and you're even tolerating and preening yourselves on how sophisticated you are. Well, he says, disputes arise and you cannot even resolve them as brethren together. How obnoxious to God that those who are going to be set as judges on behalf of their Lord and Christ were even going to court, having civil actions one against another. Wrong way round. Inviting the world to judge between brethren instead of anticipating the time when judgment would be committed to those who are Christ's. Well, in chapter 7, the matter they immediately asked about, there was this matter of domestic disputes. [00:37:10] He's considered social matters, he's considered business matters, and now he considers domestic matters. Oh, they don't

run away, do they? Troubles in the family.

Troubles in business.

Troubles in the world.

All prompted.

All beyond their moral power and moral will, because there was so much of that which we must return to very shortly, this matter of the preaching of the cross.

Chapters 8 and 9 goes into this matter of idols.

[00:38:05] Divided affections.

The struggle between utter integrity and loyalty to Christ and giving to other things or other people that personal fidelity to their Lord and Saviour. And he goes into this in chapters 8, 9 and 10. Now, having gone into that necessarily, he said, now you've raised with me the matter of order. He said, with a measure of reluctance, he said, because I feel so strongly about them, I've gone into these matters, but in order to transfer your thoughts away from man's disorder to that which is far more profitable for you to consider, God's order in the assembly.

[00:39:08] Very simply, basically, in chapter 10, we get much necessary teaching about the fellowship, Christian fellowship and its responsibilities, relating that to what he speaks of as the Lord's table. Chapter 11, he speaks of the sweetest privilege and the expression of that fellowship, the Lord's supper. Chapter 12, he outlines the gifts that have been established in order that there might be an orderly growth and development of the body of Christ, how orderly God is.

[00:40:04] And in chapter 13, he gives an account of the very atmosphere that is intended to regulate and govern the fellowship, the atmosphere of divine love. Chapter 14, he talks about the gifts in function. No point in having gifts there unless they are seen to be put to use and functioning for the development of the body of Christ in that atmosphere of divine love.

And in chapter 15, he comes again to this vital matter. He said in both first and second epistles, he comes again and again to this basic fundamental truth, [00:41:01] the personal bodily resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and the personal actual coming of the Lord to bring this time of disorder to an end once and for all. And then in chapter 16, to emphasise that Christianity is essentially practical, he goes into various salutations and practical matters. Now, in going quickly through the epistle like that, that he's seeking to transfer their thoughts away from the negative side, the problems that were local, onto things which would better occupy their time, we need to just refer back briefly to chapter 1. [00:42:11] In chapter 1, he puts his axe to the root of the tree. He said, all these matters of disorder, the one you referred to me in your letter of enquiry, the other matters that I felt it necessary to refer to you, he says, all of these things arise because they are the activities of man, man according to the flesh. And he says, in case you haven't considered it before, in case you've forgotten the teaching I gave when I was with you, he said, something has taken place in the history of the world which has brought to a judicial end before God [00:43:06] this old life which you lived before. And of course, in chapter 1, he says, the event which brought the history, your one-time history, to an end before God was the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Read the detail of chapter 1 again. We cannot fail but arrive

at this conclusion. Man's wisdom gets us nowhere in the things of God. Hard lesson to learn.

Man's wisdom gives rise to the various kinds of disorder that the first ten chapters detail. [00:44:03] Happily, he turns immediately to the second chapter and said, if man's wisdom gets us nowhere in the things of God, the Holy Spirit of God conducts us into the very depths of God. It's a salutary lesson to read chapters 1 and 2 together.

At Corinth, the local society preened themselves on the sophistication, the intellectual giants that there were, [00:45:08] the cleverness of the human mind, and the degree of tolerance in their enlightened minds of things that ordinary people would abhor.

But Paul says, you're coloured by the same thing, and he says, that kind of thinking made it necessary for Christ to die, the death of the cross. And there's no room for man's thinking or man's intellect or man's society. And every step of the pathway to progress is in the hands of the Holy Spirit of God. [00:46:08] Happy hunting ground for the Bible student, but that's the simple message. I feel I should leave that there and turn to the second epistle. Would you turn, please, to second epistle and chapter 2. As we read some verses, ask yourselves these questions. How was the first epistle received by the Corinthians? Was it acted upon?

Was there a positive result?

And if there was, what was that result? Chapter 2.

[00:47:02] I read, with your permission, the first 11 verses.

I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness. For if I make you sorry, who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me? And I wrote this same unto you, lest when I came I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice. Having confidence in you all, that my joy is the joy of you all. For out of much affliction and anguish of heart, I wrote unto you with many tears. Not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you. But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part, that I may not overcharge you all. [00:48:04] Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many, so that contrarywise he ought rather to forgive him and comfort him, lest perhaps such an one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him. For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things. To whom ye forgave anything, I forgive also. For if I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ. Lest Satan should get an advantage of us, for we are not ignorant of his devices. Chapter 7, verse 6.

[00:49:04] Nevertheless, God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus, and not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me, so that I rejoiced the more. For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent, for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrow to repentance. For ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of, but the sorrow of the world worketh death. [00:50:10] So on, really, till the end of verse 16. Whatever approach you or I would have taken in writing to the Corinthians in what we have

as the first letter, the best way of assessing the result of that letter is to read the second. How different the tone! The major matter that Paul had raised with them as to detail was this matter of gross immorality.

[00:51:08] And he said, deal with it, even if it needs, and he says, in this case it does, even if it means severing your connection with him. Oh, that's harsh, you see. The first thing, of course, was sorrow before God at their condition which tolerated it.

The second thing is, all discipline is with a view to restoration.

And unless that's in mind, there's no point at all in taking the first step. These letters make that plain. [00:52:03] Some of the Corinthians, you know, they said, he's frightened to come and see us. He can't look us eyeball to eyeball and tell us where we're going wrong. It's like that now, you know. It's impossible to write a letter, pick a telephone up, and say the most terrible things. And say the most terrible things that we wouldn't dream of saying face to face. Some of the Corinthians had that impression about Paul. He has to say, look, if I wrote instead of coming, it wasn't that I was afraid to face you with it. He said, but if I'd come, I would have spoken more strongly, not less. He said, at least I could keep my feelings in check, writing soberly as before the Lord. [00:53:06] And he says, I'm delighted now that my letter first of all caused repentance in the company at tolerating the matter, and then ultimately the action you took led to repentance in the individual. He says, well, now be as ready to receive him again as you were to take the disciplinary action at the time. Oh, how easy it is to say.

How difficult sometimes to do.

Not speaking of this locality, but how easy it would be if there was a brother or a sister that was awkward, difficult to get on with, if we managed to contrive excommunicating them, whether righteously or no, [00:54:07] when it was evident there was restoration before the Lord.

How easy it would be to say, well, really, do we want them back again? Didn't they cause a lot of trouble before? Are we sure that we want to subject ourselves to that again? Paul says, be more ready on the side of restoration than you were necessarily on the line of discipline.

And he says, not only does that make it right among yourselves locally, he says, what freedom I now feel. Read quickly, but not too quickly, through the first epistle and then straight on through the second epistle. [00:55:07] Notice the change of the mood.

Notice the change in the style. Notice the difference in the kind of thing that he speaks about. As it was between the local believers, so it was between the apostle and the Corinthian company.

He's free to speak about himself, for one thing, in a way that he hadn't been before. Read the personal remarks that he makes about himself, his history and his feelings, in the second epistle, that he wasn't free to detail in the first. Having done that, having cleared his own relationship with them, notice how he presents the truth objectively in Christ, [00:56:14] and then the necessary subjective answer, in the way they live one with the other. Again, if you look at chapter one, in the second epistle, as to cause, speaking objectively of the Lord Jesus Christ. In chapter one, he talks about the sufferings of Christ. Four times in the letter, he speaks about the gospel of Christ. Chapter eight, he speaks about the glory of Christ, or the chapters two. Having outlined the truth objectively, referring it, first of all, to the Lord Jesus Christ, he says, [00:57:01] because of this, and because I'm free to tell you

some of these wonderful things about your Lord and Saviour, he says, having tackled your problem, having taken the necessary action, having now been restored in happy fellowship one with the other, having dealt with the party spirit, he says, there are graces and virtues and qualities, proper to Christ personally, that can now be seen amongst you. Browse through, he speaks of the sweet savour of Christ. He speaks of the epistle of Christ, the living demonstration of the life of Christ that comes out in the believers. He speaks about the constraining power of the love of Christ. Again, in chapter eight, he says, he know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. [00:58:06] Towards the end, he speaks about the meekness and the gentleness of Christ. And then, in that well-used so-called benediction, again, he refers to this matter of the grace of Christ. As you read in a continuous way through the letter, notice that these moral beauties of the Lord Jesus can now find expression in the lives of the Christian believers at Corinth, because they've faced up to necessary matters and they've resolved them to the honour of our Lord Jesus Christ and in accordance with what scripture has said. [00:59:01] No suggestion that the sweet savour of Christ or the grace of Christ or the meekness and gentleness of Christ coming out in their lives individually or collectively in the first epistle. But once they'd faced up to the issue, resolved the matter under the guidance of the Apostle Paul, their sorrow and his sorrow turned to joy and these moral beauties are able to come out in this happy way. Taking that as an outline, I'm sure there's much food for the soul in going through these epistles, bearing in mind that the necessary foundation is laid in chapters one and two, that man's wisdom gets nowhere in the things of God because it was brought to an end in the cross of Christ, but that in the new life, lived before God here upon earth while we wait for the coming of the Lord, the only available power is the power of the Holy Spirit of God. [01:00:23] Let us sing in closing hymn number 422.

Easy to take the words upon our lips, true enriched spiritual experience insofar as at any moment there is nothing outstanding between us as individuals before the Lord, as companies of the Lord's people. God and Father we adore thee, for the Christ thine image bright, in whom all thy holy nature dawned on our once hopeless night, thou didst send him as the witness of a life beyond compare. [01:01:07] Think of those lines against what we've been hearing about the gentleness and the loveliness of Christ. By thy spirit we received him, now in Christ how blessed we are. The whole hymn 422. We adore thee, for the Christ thine image bright, in whom all thy holy nature dawned on our once hopeless night, thou didst send him as the witness of a life beyond compare.

Thou didst send him as the witness of a life beyond compare.

[01:02:13] By thy spirit we received him, now in Christ how blessed we are.

Praise be thy is, his transcending, all that hails the heart and voice.

His love, love, love unending, hearts to give of their own joys.