

Colossians 1:24-27

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[0 : 00] If you will please take out your copy of God's Word and join me in Colossians chapter 1. An astute observer would note that this morning on your bulletin says that I'll be preaching a sermon on Hebrews chapter 2 verses 11 through 16.

And that was correct up until 5 a.m. this morning. So, the prominent theme of the book of Hebrews, which we are working through together normally on Sunday morning, is the supremacy and the finality of Jesus Christ.

The letter written to the Hebrews by an unsure author, but a man certainly who was pastoral toward them, was written to a group of Hellenistic Jews who likely had been expelled from the Roman center and are living out on the outskirts.

Likely a small group, likely a group huddled together in a home, opening up this letter to read it, and they had been tried.

They had been hated for their devotion to Jesus Christ. And we pick up on that as a secondary theme of the text. That he's writing to these Christians to say to them, Jesus is the superior way.

[1 : 31] Don't be tempted in the midst of suffering to go back to Judaism or to turn to any of the Roman gods. Christ is supreme and He is final.

He's the ultimate and final sacrifice. Christ is the way that we are made right with God. So, we're going to see this theme.

We're going to see it picked up again and again and again throughout the book. And we are in the thick of it already here in Hebrews chapter 2.

And I just want another week to work out the implications of verses 11 through 16 and then probably on into verses 17 and 18 next week.

But, I do want us to also consider this idea of Christian suffering. I want to take a little more time on it and then we'll dive into Hebrews 2 again next week, Lord willing.

[2 : 31] To stop and to think in our American context. Are we called as Christians to suffer? And what does that look like?

We are sold often a bill of prosperity in our country as Christ followers. And it is not the biblical gospel.

So, it's good for us to take some time to consider that. In fact, most of my work this week was writing a massive introduction to that very end to get into the text.

And so, this will be a bit of an introduction in that way. So, I want to look today at Colossians chapter 1 verses 24 through 27.

And before I read it, I want to remind you, beloved, that this is God's Word to us. It was written for His glory and for our good.

[3 : 32] We would all do well to listen to it in order to believe its promises and obey its commands. And Paul writes to the church.

Colossae. Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake. And in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of His body.

That is, the church. Of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you. To make the Word of God fully known.

The mystery hidden for ages and generations, but now revealed to His saints. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Now there is so much good in these four verses. There is so much to be mined out of them. But, this morning I just have two points.

[4 : 41] And they are, number one, the aim of Paul's ministry. What was Paul working to accomplish? The aim of his ministry. And number two, the means of Paul's ministry.

So first, the aim of Paul's ministry. We see this worked out throughout the text.

He became a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ to make the Word of God fully known. He says in verse 26, it's the mystery hidden for ages and generations, but now revealed to His saints.

Jesus Christ Himself, verse 27, Christ in you, the hope of glory. Paul is aimed at God's purpose in the world, which is to make Christ known amongst all peoples everywhere.

The purpose of God in history is that the gospel of reconciliation spread to all the peoples of the world and yield God-centered, Christ-exalting churches.

[5 : 58] This is what he's working toward. You want to know, what is God's purpose in the world? It's this. The gospel of reconciliation spread to all peoples of the world and yield God-centered, Christ-exalting churches.

People for His praise. This was the promise of the Old Testament. Psalm 22, verse 27 and 28 says, All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you.

For kingship belongs to the Lord and He rules over the nations. This was the promise of Jesus to His disciples.

Matthew 24, verse 14, Jesus says, And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

This was the design of God in the cross. As heaven's worship proclaims in Revelation 5 and verse 9, You were slain, and by Your blood You ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.

[7 : 16] This was the final command of our risen Lord found in Matthew 28, verse 18 and following.

He says, This was the God-given aim of Paul's apostleship.

Romans 1, verse 5, Paul writes, Through Christ we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of His name, Christ's name, among all the nations.

This was Paul's holy ambition, rooted not just in a unique apostolic call, but also in the Old Testament promise that is still valid today.

In Romans 15, verse 20 and 21, where he cites Isaiah 52 and verse 15, Paul writes, I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation, but as it is written, those who have never been told of Him will see, and those who have never heard will understand.

[8 : 54] Also in Acts 13, verse 47, where Isaiah 42, verse 6 is cited, So the Lord has commanded us, saying, I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.

Beloved, this was the purpose of the sending of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 1, verse 8, Jesus says, You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

Again, the purpose of God in history is that the gospel of reconciliation spread to all the peoples of the world and yield God-centered, Christ-exalting churches.

This was the aim. This was the work of Paul in the establishment of the Church of Colossae, and in this church, Paul's ministry necessarily, some would argue it is.

We're not sure. But this church that the book of Hebrews is written to that we are in the midst of studying now, that all peoples everywhere would hear the gospel of Jesus Christ.

[10 : 10] This is Paul's aim, and it is ours as well. Secondly, the means of Paul's ministry.

Paul says this very peculiar thing at the beginning of verse 24 in Colossians chapter 1. He says, Now I rejoice. I find great joy in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of His body, that is, the church.

The suffering of Paul was not a consequence of His ministry, but rather a strategy of it.

If it's clear in your mind, it was not a consequence of His ministry. And what I'm saying to you is it wasn't an avoidable thing. It wasn't a consequence of what He was doing.

It was a strategy of it. It was part and parcel of His ministry. Suffering was a primary means by which Paul spread the gospel of reconciliation to all peoples of the world in order to yield God-centered, Christ-exalting churches.

[11 : 37] And beloved, nothing has changed. If you believe that it has, then you have failed to believe the gospel rightly. It is the error of much modern preaching, and it is akin to the prosperity gospel that would say, rather believe in Jesus and He will make you wealthy and healthy.

That's prosperity gospel. And so many of us so quickly and readily reject that. But this more subversive prosperity gospel says, believe in Jesus and you can keep your wealth and your health. He may not make you that, but what you have is still yours. Add a little Jesus to the mix. And change isn't really necessary to follow Jesus.

Beloved, the way of Jesus is the way of suffering. If we are to follow Christ, then we will suffer in this world.

And that is a broad suffering. There's a lot that's involved in such suffering. We will have trouble in this world.

[13 : 02] Let's look at the call of the gospel of Jesus Christ a bit together. Jesus said in Mark 8, verse 34 and 35, if anyone would come after me, if we're going to follow Jesus, Jesus says, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

For whoever would save his life will lose it. But whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospels will save it. Beloved, the cross is a place of death.

The cross is a place where we put aside ourselves for the greater walk of following Jesus. It's where we begin to reorient who we are toward Him.

It's where we treasure Him above all else, come what may, because we have Christ. Matthew 10, verse 16.

Jesus says, Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Romans 8, verse 36.

[14 : 18] Paul here cites Psalm 44, verse 22, where he says, As it is written, for your sake, we are being killed all the day long. We are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.

And if you look just before that in Romans 8, verse 35, the portion granted to those who are in Christ is tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, and sword.

Jesus goes on in Matthew 10. I just read to you verse 16. This is verse 17. And following, Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues.

And you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake. Why? to bear witness before them and the Gentiles.

That people would know that I am the Christ. Which leads us to this interesting thing that Paul says, In my flesh, I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions.

[15 : 36] We must be very careful at this point to not think that the affliction of the saints is somehow salvific. That our suffering has anything to do with the remediation of sin.

I do not atone for anybody's sin in my suffering. Christ did that. Christ accomplished that. His death was perfect to accomplish that work.

Here are some examples from the book of Hebrews. We are going to see this theme again and again in our study as well. Hebrews chapter 7 and verse 27. He, being Christ, has no need like those high priests to offer sacrifices daily first for his own sins and then for those of the people since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.

So we are not sacrifices in that way. Hebrews chapter 9 and verse 12. Jesus entered once for all into the holy places. not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood. Thus, securing an eternal redemption. Having paid for all of the sins of the church in his suffering.

[16 : 55] Hebrews chapter 9 and verse 26. The second part of it. Jesus has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

And then Hebrews chapter 10 and verse 14. For by a single offering, Jesus has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified. So, do not be mistaken, Jesus' sacrifice was not lacking in its power to redeem the church from its sin.

Jesus' life and death was fully sufficient to save for all time those who have placed and will place believing faith in him. How then are Christ's afflictions lacking?

John Piper wrote a little book called Filling Up the Afflictions of Christ where he wrote this, What is lacking in the afflictions of Christ is not that they are deficient in worth as though they could not sufficiently cover the sins of all who believe.

What is lacking is that the infinite value of Christ's afflictions is not known and trusted in the world. These afflictions and what they mean are still hidden to most peoples.

[18 : 22] And God's intention is that the mystery be revealed to all the nations. So the afflictions of Christ are lacking in the sense that they are not seen and known and loved among the nations.

They must be carried by missionaries and those missionaries complete what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ by extending them to others.

How? How do they extend that to others? A man named Epaphroditus can help us with this. In Philippians chapter 2 verse 25 and following, Paul writes to the Philippian believers, I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier and your messenger and minister to my need.

he was sent to Paul as a minister to his need by the Philippian church. For he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill.

And I just love this attitude of Epaphroditus. He's concerned because they heard that he was sick. Wonderful example of self-forgetfulness. Indeed, he was ill near to death, but God had mercy on him and not only on him, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

[19 : 47] I am the more eager to send him therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. So, receive him in the Lord with all joy and honor such men.

So, you get the story of what's happening here as Paul's writing to the Philippian church. Verse 30, For he nearly died for the work of Christ.

Because he was sent, he got sick, and he almost died. Paul says, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.

And this phrase in Philippians chapter 2 is the exact same phrase that Paul uses in Colossians chapter 1. What was lacking in the afflictions of Christ, lacking in your service to me.

And I think this helps us to understand rightly that the way that we take the affliction of Christ to others, that they might know him, is that we suffer like Christ suffered. We have a presence amongst people, a suffering presence amongst people, that we also experience the afflictions of Christ.

[20 : 55] And we display those afflictions to others. And we walk in those afflictions with a great faith and a great God who is redeeming people for his name. So suffering was a primary means by which Paul spread the gospel of reconciliation to all the peoples of the world in order to yield God-centered, Christ-exalting churches.

Beloved, this is a divine strategy, not merely a consequence. suffering. Now at this point I have to imagine that you've got all kinds of questions about what suffering is.

I've spoken so general and broadly about it. I think we suffer in a lot of ways in this world. I think we suffer in ways that are common to all people in this world with things like sickness.

Our bodies are failing. We are ever being reminded that we are headed swiftly towards death.

Some of you are young. I think most people in the room probably have that feeling when you wake up in the morning of, oh no.

The process of getting out of bed is painful. I typically roll onto a shoulder and drop a knee down to the floor and start on my knees. And I wish it was because I was there in prayer to the Lord.

[22 : 16] I'm just trying to stand up in the morning. The pollen count is up. I felt like I had sand in my eyes. Yesterday. This is sin in the world.

The world is broken. It is desperately broken in very normative ways. We experience it in deeper ways as well.

We experience it in the loss of loved ones, old and young. Tragedy strikes families all the time. We see it in the broad suffering of the world around us.

People starving to death. People without parents. There is so much brokenness and pain in this world. And as Christian people, we ought to rightly view that through the lens of sin.

Look at the curse and its rampant nature in the place that we are. I think we ought to experience those things in a way that is unique amongst peoples of the earth because we understand what caused it.

[23 : 13] sin. But more than that, particularly within that, the church throughout the ages has been persecuted for righteousness and we are not those who get to escape this.

We don't get to live in America and escape people not liking us for our faith. And that's going to take a different shape where we live than it does in other places. I am fully aware that no one here is going to be beaten for being a Christian leaving this place.

I would be so astoundingly shocked if that were to happen. I probably shouldn't be, but I would be. It's probably not going to take that shape.

But it might look like you being passed over for a promotion because your boss really doesn't care for you all that much because you keep telling him of his wickedness and calling him to turn to God. Being a follower of Jesus Christ is going to press you to speak boldly to people about their eternal damnation.

It may look like school teachers, you not being able to hold your position any longer because you can no longer hold your tongue and you must tell these children about this Jesus that you love so much.

[24 : 30] I pray that all of you have school systems you can carefully navigate and preach faithfully the gospel without being fired. It may mean that your neighbor doesn't want to talk to you in the driveway anymore.

That he very quickly scrambles inside or he pulls in the garage and closes the door before he gets out of the car because he knows you may come over and want to tell him that he needs to repent and believe in Christ.

I think that we don't experience enough suffering in this world because we're not faithful enough in our pursuit of Christ. I think we're this weird blend of Christian in the world.

I think the way we live as Christians to other Christians in the world would be shocking. It would be strange. They would come over and want to talk about our experience and we would have no idea what they're talking about.

So much that we do has been Americanized in a very unhealthy way. Suffering is a divine strategy.

[25 : 36] And if you are sitting there and you're thinking wait a second I don't want to suffer. My impulse is not to do this thing there's a naturalness to that.

That's normative but you want to love Christ more and you want to love the way of Christ more and you want to live for eternity and not for now.

If you would forsake Christ in order to not suffer then you are not in Him. You have not experienced His lavish grace and mercy to you.

Tertullian who was a Christian who lived from about AD 160 to about AD 225 said the oftener we are mown down by you Romans the more in number we Christians grow the blood of Christians is seed and this is true in the world today if God were to suddenly gather together the church global today we white European Christians nominal in our devotion to Christ would be the minority and the odd ones.

In the world right now the fastest growing churches are growing in places where we don't hear about because they're underground. They're highly persecuted. Places like Iran, China, you hear reports coming out of China because it's a little bit looser now in these days.

[27 : 12] As many as 10,000 people a day professing faith in Christ. We're the minority. We're the strange ones. The blood of Christians is seed.

John Piper adds to Tertullian's quote, for almost 300 years Christians grew in soil that was wet with the blood of martyrs. The suffering of God's saints ought to be the norm, not the exception.

It ought to be normative and beloved, we ought to be all the more bold because of the place we live. What are we afraid of? A little derision, being made fun of?

Oh, someone's going to call me goody-two-shoes because I called them to the ways of God. I'm not going to be as liked as I would like to be. We should be more bold. We should be astoundingly, we don't even really have to be all that wise in the way that we proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ because we're not going to be imprisoned and we're not going to be put to death.

We should press on and press in. So let me just ask you, are you willing to bear up under discomfort for the sake of Christ?

[28 : 30] I wonder how we would respond if there were picketers at the front of our property on a Sunday morning. If people were saying hateful things about you claiming to be a Christ follower as you pulled in, how likely would you be to navigate through such a throng to be able to gather with the church?

Worse yet, what if there were threats made concerning our lives? What if someone called up and said, if your church keeps meeting the way it's meeting, I'm going to show up one day, would we continue to meet?

Would we so want to be together to praise this God that has loved us so much that we would be willing to risk such a thing? Would you all gather at dawn in a secret place because the danger was so high, because you are so hungry for Christian fellowship and the preaching of God's word? If I sent out a message and said, hey, we had a threat placed on the church, and so this Sunday instead of meeting at 1030, we're going to meet at 5am, because we're going to get in and we're going to get out before anybody would ever show up to our property.

How many people would be here on that morning? For so many, gathering with the church seems to be a thing they do when they have nothing else to do.

[29 : 56] Paul writes in 2 Timothy chapter 3 and verse 12, Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

And Paul is not here saying that if we want to be godly, we have to go to dangerous places for the gospel. Paul here is saying that the gospel is dangerous. Pursue Christ where you are and you will be persecuted.

This shouldn't be some far removed foreign theory of the Christian life. What is missing in your life that prevents your affliction?

What comfort do you hide behind? What sacrifice do you need to make? The contemporary Romanian pastor Joseph San, who has suffered greatly at the hand of Russian communists, stated, Christ's suffering is for propitiation.

Our suffering is for propagation. Love that. The seed of the gospel is sown through the suffering of his people. Jesus said in John chapter 12, verse 24 and 25, truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone.

[31 : 20] But if it dies, it bears much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Jesus here is not just referring to the death of the martyr, although he certainly is, but also to the daily dying of disciples of Jesus who take up their crosses and follow him, follow the example of his life and death.

Our Lord was a suffering servant. It is insane for us to call ourselves little Christs and to not suffer. Christ suffered.

God himself made flesh, emptied himself, became humble as a servant, and he suffered on our behalf. Jesus says, John chapter 13 verse 16, truly, truly I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.

The message of Jesus Christ is that he lived, he suffered, and he died for us. And his messengers are meant to bring that message in.

Our suffering. The proper Christian life is one of daily death. And Paul writes in 2 Corinthians chapter 4 verse 8 and following, we are afflicted in every way but not crushed, perplexed but not driven to despair, persecuted but not forsaken, struck down but not destroyed, always carrying in the body the death of Jesus.

[33 : 02] so the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus sake, so the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

So death is at work in us but life in you. There's this impartation of life to those who see us suffer and bear up under it for the joy of Christ.

Sam Storms in his devotional book on Colossians entitled The Hope of Glory wrote, Suffering for sin is a reproach. Suffering for suffering's sake is perverted.

Suffering for the sake of Christ and His people is grounds for joy. Peter writes in 1 Peter chapter 4 verse 13 and following, Rejoice insofar as you share Christ's suffering that you may also rejoice and be glad when His glory is revealed.

If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed because the spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler.

[34 : 20] He's saying, don't be dumb. Your suffering for being a bad person is not suffering for Christ. Yet, if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name.

And all of this is why Paul is able to say, now I rejoice in my sufferings. Suffering for the name of Christ is to join him in his suffering, to be united with him in his suffering.

in Acts 5. In Acts 5, we see the record of the apostles called together, verse 40, and put on trial. It records when they had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the

name of Jesus and let them go.

Then, they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. And every day in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.

And I love that account of Luke. Luke's very to the point record. They're charged, they're beaten, they're charged not to preach about Christ, they're so happy that they got to suffer as Christ suffered, and what do they do?

[35 : 40] They go around teaching that Jesus is the Christ. Again, if you're not okay with this teaching, then you do not treasure Christ as you ought to.

The way of Jesus is the way of suffering. Now I want to show you this from the book of Hebrews in closing. So turn with me if you will to Hebrews chapter 10.

Beloved, beyond the suffering of Christ, there is a great and eternal joy that awaits us.

We get a taste of that joy even here and now, and we'll have so much of it later. And the writer of Hebrews makes this case across the text.

I'm so looking forward to working through the entire book of Hebrews and picking this theme up again and again and again. But I want to show you that he makes the argument to them to persevere to keep on in their suffering and he makes it first Hebrews chapter 10 verse 32 through 35 with their own experience.

[36 : 58] He reminds them of themselves. He argues! them with their own case. He says, but recall the former days when after you endured a hard struggle with sufferings sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction and sometimes being partners with those so treated for you had compassion on those in prison and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one.

Therefore do not throw away your confidence which has a great reward. So they themselves are suffering right they're being publicly exposed reproach there's evil words being spoken against them affliction there's likely some kind of physical persecution happening and at times they're partnering with some who've been imprisoned and in prison in those days if you didn't have somebody come and help you you died you had to be fed being imprisoned so they're exposing themselves as Christians going and helping those that are in their church that have been imprisoned and what happens in this act their property is plundered as they leave their house people go into their house and they take their property and they do this odd thing that you joyfully accept it why because you knew that you have a better possession and it's a possession that abides it's a possession that no one can take from you the author of Hebrews says so don't throw away your confidence this confidence you expressed so well because it has a great reward like Christ now and Christ forever turn over now a page or two to Hebrews chapter 11 and verse 24 the writer of Hebrews is pointing these Hebrew believers to a greater faith and he gives them this example of so many who by faith by faith by faith and it says verse 24 by faith Moses when he was grown up refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter you remember Moses was a prince of a wealthy nation choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin passing sand through his fingers fleeting pleasures of sin he considered and I love that the author of Hebrews does this

Moses didn't have this particular thing in mind but we get this inspired commentary on what's going on as Moses is looking forward to being gods right to belonging to God he considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt for he was looking to the reward!

so he makes a case to the Hebrews by their own argument then he does it with Moses and Moses is giving up the fleeting pleasures the treasures of Egypt for the greater treasure of Christ himself and then he makes the argument with Christ Hebrews chapter 12 verse 1 and 2 so following 11 we have all of these who buy faith and then the writer of Hebrews says therefore since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses all of these faithful ones that have gone before us let us also lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us right in the midst of our suffering let us run with endurance looking to Jesus seeing him as our example the founder and perfecter of our faith who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross despising the shame and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God so as we suffer in this world we're to look to

[41 : 29] Jesus who shows us how it is we are to suffer and how did he do this? he looked to the joy that was set before him he looked to the eternal reward of being seated at the right hand of God

and then again in the life of Christ Hebrews chapter 13 verse 12 and following so Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood therefore let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured the author is doing that let us follow Christ to where Christ went bear the reproach that he endured why?

for here we have no lasting city all the pleasures of this world are going to turn to dust one day but we seek the city that is to come it's a better city it's a more glorious city it's an eternal city where Christ will reign forever and we will reign with him Paul rejoiced in his sufferings because he knew that it was for the gain of the Colossian church and it was for his eternal reward this is glorious this is wonderful that we would want to follow Christ in a way that we suffer that we're looking toward an eternal reward the good of others and the glory of God on your bulletin there's a quote from John Trapp who is a 16th century

Anglican commentator and he said this simple thing and I just like it stuck in my brain this week he that rides to be crowned you're headed to your coronation ceremony you're going to this most glorious event where you will reign with Christ he who rides to be crowned will not think much of a rainy day press right on through it so in conclusion suffering is a primary means by which we are to spread the gospel of reconciliation to all the peoples of the world in order to yield God centered Christ exalting churches Christ family church exists to glorify God by experiencing proclaiming and displaying the supremacy of Jesus Christ in all things including our suffering to all peoples beloved we must ask ourselves if we are living to this high mark as a community of faith

I am confident that we have much work to do and I am confident that the Lord will be kind to us as we study the book of Hebrews together let us together yield ourselves to the will of the Father live such radically God oriented lives that come what may we will hold high the supremacy of Jesus Christ so that God will draw men to himself for the praise of his glory let's pray together God