

1 Corinthians Chapter 9 v 1 - 18

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[0 : 00] Good evening. Welcome to all of you, particularly those of you visiting us this evening. I do welcome you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. As we come together on a Sunday, whether it be in the morning or the evening, we come because of the good news of Jesus Christ, or as the Bible uses it, the word gospel.

And people use that phrase, the gospel truth, or that's the gospel in many sorts of ways. Well, what do we mean when we talk about the gospel? What is so great about the gospel? This is what the Apostle Paul writes as he writes to some Christians in Rome in the first century.

He says, I'm not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes. The good news is God's power, God's power available to us, to all people, simply through faith.

Not our power, not our strength, not our ability. It is God's good news which gives power to raise us to life and to bring us into that right relationship with God.

And Paul says, I'm not ashamed of the gospel. Many people today are ashamed to talk about the gospel of Jesus Christ, the good news. But if we're Christians, we're not ashamed of the gospel. We're, in the right sense of the word, proud of it.

[1 : 22] Proud of the wonderful love of God. Proud of the truth that Jesus Christ, God's Son, came into the world for us. And so our first hymn is a song which speaks about the greatness of this gospel.

It's number 150 in the hymn book. For great is the gospel of our glorious God. And this hymn speaks a little bit about what that meant, for that gospel to come to us, to the Lord Jesus.

Let's stand together as we begin to sing. 150. 150. Great is the gospel of our glorious God.

Where the sin of God, the anger of God's wrath. And penalty was great and pardoned for.

And sinners lost, and thanks to Him were brought. Oh, let the praises of my Lord be high.

[2 : 47] Of Christ's time, that I take all in time. As I may sing with those who dwell upon.

The glory, praising Jesus, King of earth. It's through the gospel, through the message of the Lord Jesus Christ, the good news, that our sin has been dealt with, and we can know God and come to God.

And so let's come to God in prayer, even now together. Let us pray. Truly, O Lord, you are the glorious God.

The God who is great. The God who is marvelous. The God who is stupendous. There's no real adjective, no real word to describe you adequately enough.

But when we think about what you have done for us in your Son, the Lord Jesus, when we think about this gospel, this good news, which is the power of God, unto salvation for those who believe, we realize that you are a God who is intimately concerned about our lives.

[4 : 14] Not a God who is distant. Not a God who is indifferent. Not a God who doesn't care. Not a God who is too busy. But a God who acts and works and is involved in this world and in the lives of those who put their faith and trust in you.

And we thank you for this power. That it's not a power that can make us proud in ourselves. Not a power that we can, as it were, accomplish great things for ourselves or become superheroes in that way.

We thank you that the good news of Jesus is that power that raised him from the dead and that power that gives us newness of life, eternal life.

Life everlasting with you that begins in this world and stretches throughout our lives here and that leads us into life everlasting. Life which saves us from hell.

Life that brings us through judgment with pardon and forgiveness. Life that endures forever in that place of perfection where you dwell in heaven.

[5 : 23] We thank you again that all this is possible. This power, this salvation, this eternal life is possible and Lord is given to us because of what Jesus has done on the cross in our place.

We sang there about him bearing the anger of God's rod. You are right to be angry with our sin. You are right, O Lord, to call us to judgment because of how we've lived and acted.

And yet, Lord, wonderfully, marvelously, beyond all that, you have made for us the way of forgiveness. For you have laid upon your own sinless and perfect son, the Lord Jesus.

You've laid upon him our punishment and our blame and our sin. He took it gladly and willingly in our place, such is his love, so that we might never have to bear that judgment, so that we might be free from that sin, so that we might enter into the peace, the peace that comes from knowing that we are accepted by God.

Lord, as we worship you, as we sing your praises, may they be from our heart this evening because of what you've done for us in Jesus. And may, O Lord, you speak to us through your word and by your Holy Spirit, that we might know again, O Lord, more of the joy, more of the delight, more of the power of that gospel, as we more and more put our faith and trust in you.

[6 : 49] Be with us then in this time and help us, we ask. In Jesus' name. Amen. I'm going to ask Richard if he'd bring the notices for the coming week.

Thank you, Richard. We want a gosh tall to proclaim We hide so glad we How reind rainy during the earth The gospel of the Savior's day We sing His glory, tell His word And of His birth, the heavenly Lamb Was in the royal house so old That in us say the dark and thin The world may flesh, the light for all

Tell out that glorious peace the Lord Empty the tomb for the evil's dream He broke the bar of death And felt the free I share His victory Now we rejoice to make Him King Jesus is Lord upon all the earth This cross, the message we proclaim We sing His glory, tell His word

Corinthians on chapter 9 And if you have one of the church Bibles to hand That's page 1150 Page 1150, 1 Corinthians 9 It's been several weeks since we were in the book This letter of Paul the Apostle Writing to this church, this group of Christians In this Greek town of Corinth In the first century And we've seen that we're about halfway through or so now In that letter, it's a long letter Dealing with many problems within the church Many difficulties, many divisions Many falling out, if I can put it that way And many sins as well And so when we pick up in chapter 9 Paul is seeking to address and to teach In such a way that these problems may be resolved That these difficulties may be sorted out

And so he begins chapter 9 and verse 1 To speak about himself Am I not free? Am I not an apostle?

[10 : 15] Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not the result of my work in the Lord? Even though I may not be an apostle to others Surely I am to you For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord This is my defense to those who sit in judgment on me Don't we have the right to food and drink?

Don't we have the right to take a believing wife along with us As do the other apostles And the Lord's brothers And Cephas Or is it only I and Barnabas Who lack the right to not work for a living?

Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat its grapes? Who tends a flock and does not drink the milk? Do I say this merely on human authority?

Doesn't the law say the same thing? For it is written in the law of Moses Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain Is it about oxen that God is concerned?

Surely he says this for us, doesn't he? Sorry, pardon me Thank you Yes, this was written for us Because whoever plows and threshes should be able to do so In the hope of sharing in the harvest If we've sown spiritual seed among you Is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you?

[11 : 43] If others have this right of support from you Shouldn't we have it all the more? But we did not use this right On the contrary, we put up with anything Rather than hinder the gospel of Christ Don't you know that those who serve in the temple Get their food from the temple?

And that those who serve at the altar Share in what is offered on the altar In the same way The Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel Should receive their living from the gospel But I have not used any of these rights And I am not writing this in the hope that you will do such things for me For I would rather die than allow anyone to deprive me of this boast For when I preach the gospel I cannot boast Since I am compelled to preach Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel If I preach it voluntarily I have a reward If not voluntarily I am simply discharging the trust committed to me What then is my reward?

Just this That in preaching the gospel I may offer it free of charge And so not make full use of my rights As a preacher of the gospel And we'll stop there this evening As we come to you again our God and Father We thank you we can bring every need And concern and trouble to you We thank you that you are engaged in And concerned about the events in this world In which we live About nations and wars and all those things We thank you that we can pray for them We thank you too Lord that you're concerned about us as individuals And you're concerned about us as a local church Thank you as we thought this morning From your word you say to us that we are precious And honored in your sight That you love us And that you are with us And so Lord we thank you that when we ask things of you We're not twisting your arm We're not forcing you to do something against your will

But when we come to you and ask We are as children asking a loving A loving and caring and generous parent We thank you oh Lord that we can bring to you The needs of our own local church We do pray for the members meeting this Thursday We thank you for those Who you have brought into our fellowship Those who we are part of One body One family We pray that as we meet together We might know one mind and one heart We pray that there may not be divisions amongst us That the devil himself Might not come to divide or disturb We pray that by your gracious Holy Spirit You would be present That you would help us as we seek your will And your mind together That you would lead us in the months and weeks and years ahead Guide us oh Lord And help us to be guided And not stubborn and stick in our heels We thank you for the many opportunities we have To share your gospel in this town Week by week We thank Lord of the mums and toddlers

That meets on a Thursday and the Friday of 6.10 On a Tuesday And a 7.11 on the youth club Tuesday night We thank you for the food bank and the work of it Lord On Monday and Friday And those who give of their time Thank you for those who come in Week by week And who hear And speak to Christians Hear about this loving God Who meets all our needs Not just for body But for soul We praise you and thank you too For the other opportunities that you give to us Through the craft morning And Lord for the women's meeting Lord we praise you And thank you Oh Lord our God That you have placed us in this town That we might be light A light on a hill That we might be those Lord Who proclaim the praises of him Who called us out of darkness Into his glorious light And we pray especially as we think of this mission in May The opportunity of speaking to so many more people About Jesus Of sharing your gospel Lord we pray that you would be preparing Hearts and lives of many people

[15 : 52] In this town and area Lord to be receptive Give us courage and bravery And love Lord Most of all To speak to our friends and neighbours Our relatives To speak to those we meet with To tell them of this wonderful opportunity To hear the good news The gospel Of God's grace and love And we pray even now As we come to hear your word That once more That you would give us open ears Lord we don't need a hearing aid To hear what you say But we do need your Holy Spirit And we do need open and willing hearts And we need Lord That we might have sober minds That we might not treat your word with contempt We might not mock your word Or ridicule your word But rather that we might take it seriously As the very word of God himself to us So speak to us Lord Encourage us where we need encouragement Challenge us where we need challenge Convict us where we need conviction Lord make your word alive to us

And make it to bring fruit in our lives Blessing in our lives To others To ourselves And most of all to you For we ask these things In Jesus name Amen If you have a Bible near you Or to hand Then it would be helpful for you To turn back to 1 Corinthians and chapter 9 That's page 1150 Where we read just a few moments ago Because we're going to be looking at These words of God's words Spoken through his apostle Through Paul Spoken yes 2000 nearly years ago But spoken to us with relevance As we shall see Particularly for those of us who are Christians Relevance to how we live our lives How we act How we behave How we live out the power That Christ has poured into our hearts By the gospel of which we've been thinking Now all of you are aware That this year 2017 Is a year in which

The dominating issue of the day In the UK Will be the matter of Brexit And one of the topics Involved in Brexit Is the finance And the economic And the trade And all those things But one of the other topics That will be greatly Discussed and debated Will be whether the UK Still adheres To the European Convention Of Human Rights Many of you will have heard Of the European Court Of Human Rights Meets in the Hague And many people Will bring their Grievances or concerns It's the highest place Of authority Human rights Personal rights Are the great subject Of the day And wherever you turn In the newspapers Or on the radio Or on the TV It's always a matter Of someone's rights They're high up On the agenda In one sense For many people It would be argued That the most important thing In the whole world Is my right Or my rights My rights To die When I want to die To live how I want to live

To behave how I want to behave And anybody who dares To speak against my human rights Is someone that will face My full wrath Well that's nothing new We might think it's a new phenomenon Human rights Personal rights But actually when we turn back here To 1 Corinthians This first century church And this town This city of Corinth We find again That the matter of human rights Personal rights Are high on the agenda In fact we could argue That the biggest problem In the church in Corinth At that very time Was one person Insisting upon their right Over another So much so That we found As we looked in 1 Corinthians In chapter 6 Paul has to write To Christians Who were taking One another To court Suing one another Over their rights Before godless courts

And in chapter 6 And in chapter 10 We're reminded That there was a saying In the church A phrase Which probably They got from The Corinthian people Themselves I have the right To do anything Tell me that Is that not 21st century thinking Is that not Human thinking I have the right To do anything And woe betide you If you tell me not Now unsurprisingly This determination To press for And have my rights Met Has caused Terrible division In the church in Corinth Terrible division We see it right At the very start Paul having to write He says this I appeal to you Brothers and sisters In the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ That you all agree With one another In what you say That there be No divisions among you But that you be Perfectly united In mind And thought Not only were they Taking one another To court Because they were Insisting on their rights But Paul has to deal

[20 : 59] With the sensitive issue Of the rights Within marriage Of the husband and wife Of the rights Of freedom To eat Or to do Whatever I like No matter how much It might affect Somebody else Just in the chapter Earlier Chapter 8 In verse 9 Paul has to warn them Again Be careful however That the exercise Of your rights Does not become A stumbling block To the weak In other words My rights matter It doesn't matter About your rights I don't care About your rights I care about my rights And if my rights Caused you to stumble Or caused you harm Or caused you problems Or caused you difficulties That's your problem Not mine Do we see there Again dear friends The very selfish Aspect Of human nature And how it Shows itself In so many ways The sad truth is That as I've shown And as we've seen Not only was that true

Of the church in Corinth That's true Of Christians All through the ages That's a problem That we face Even ourselves In a local church In a national church In the church Of Jesus Christ In a world Where animal rights Individual rights The rights of the child And the rights Of everything else And anyone else Are pushed forward It's not surprising That even as Christians We find ourselves Struggling Because within us There is that desire To have what I want My rights Fulfilled You see the matter Of rights Which is good In one sense Because it was set up To protect people From being harmed Or abused Or misused By those who are Stronger than them Has gone too far It's gone beyond What it was meant for Has become a poison A cancer A corruption In society And sadly Has crept into The church as well With destructive results As we see here in Corinth

As we see in many Different churches Even in our own land As we know Even in our own hearts In our own relationships And what does the Bible Tell us What does the Bible Tell us about the Christian The Christian is somebody Whose mindset Is being transformed Who's being changed In the way That they look at their world Look at their lives And look at others So that their understanding And their view Of these things Is like unto Christ's Paul when he writes The Romans And the Christians there Tell us not to be Pressed into the mold Of the world's thinking But rather that our minds Be renewed And God does that By his spirit That's why We must be born again Of the spirit of God Before the change Can begin Many people think Well when I When I become a good person Then I can become a Christian When I sort my life out And get everything right And do good things Then I can come to know God The Bible says Quite the opposite We come to God

As we are Sinners With all our faults With all our warts With all our problems And we come And we ask him To change us He's the only one Who can do it Lastingly Effectively Properly Properly And so Paul As he writes here Talks a lot about Human rights In this chapter You may have picked it up That on five occasions Six occasions He speaks about Rights There in verse 4 Don't we have the right Verse 5 Don't we have the right Verse 6 Is it only I and Barnabas Who lack the right And it goes all the way through Right until we get to The very end of the passage We read Verse 18 So not make use Full use of my Rights How is Paul going to deal With this What's the antidote To that mindset Of my rights Of me What do we need to do We need to exalt Something else Above our rights Something has to be More important to us

Than my rights Being fulfilled Or my rights Being met There's a film That I haven't seen For many years now It's a 1980s movie Called City Slickers It's about a man Called Mitch And he's 39 years old And he's having A midlife crisis And so His friends Get together And take him On a cattle drive Hoping that He will be able To find purpose In life Be able to work Out his problems His wife Particularly Hopes he'll resolve His worries About the meaning Of life And on this Cattle drive With his two friends There's a very old Fashioned cowboy Called Curly Curly teaches him To face his problems By concentrating On the one thing That is most important In his life Concentrating on the one thing That's most important In his life That's very similar To what Paul Has to say here

[26 : 01] The whole emphasis Of chapter 9 Really Is Paul speaking About his rights As an apostle Being given up Being laid aside For something Which is much More important Something which Is much more valuable Something which Is much more Vital It's the one thing That Paul was willing To lay aside His rights for To sacrifice All his rights for What is it?

It's exactly What we've been Thinking about And singing about So far this evening There's nothing So important As the gospel Of Jesus Christ That's why he says there In verse 12 Halfway through But we did not Use this right On the contrary We put up with anything Rather than Hinder the gospel Of Christ Why is the gospel So important Why is it so important?

Because of course The gospel Is the only way By which a person May enter into A relationship With the living God The gospel Is the good news Of Jesus Christ That brings us Into fellowship With God We read there At the very start Of the meeting Didn't we This evening Paul says I'm not ashamed Of the gospel Because it is The power of God That brings salvation To everyone Who believes And that gospel Of our Lord Jesus Christ Is so important Because it is The only real thing That will unite People from diverse And different backgrounds The gospel is the only thing That can bring people together That can bring them together And make them one people One church One body This is what we've seen Around the world Through history Paul speaks about it here Uniting the Jew And the Gentile Two people Who are poles apart With different gods And different lifestyles But in the gospel

These two poles apart People came together And so we find Around the world People who once Were enemies Of friends In Palestine In Israel There are those Who are Palestinian Arab And Jews Who both believe In Christ And are worshipping together We see it in Northern Ireland Which was And still is A place of such division Between Protestant And Catholic The gospel Bringing them Together The gospel Transcends all race All colour All creed All background All intellect All nationality All language And so we have This wonderful picture Of heaven Given to us In Revelation Where we're told That there's a Multitude That no man can number Of people Worshipping and praising God For every tribe And tongue And nation Under heaven And it's all Because of the gospel There's nothing That unites Churches Local and national More than the gospel One of the sadnesses

That we see around About us And I've seen again Through history Is that In the church Of Jesus Christ There have been Divisions and schisms Schisms and those schisms On the whole Have occurred Because one group Have insisted upon Their rights Over another group Their right to practice What they want to practice Or believe what they want To believe Or to deny others The right to do What they want to do But there have also Been times when Division has been Necessary for the gospel This year 2017 Is a very important Historical year 500 years Marking the beginning Of the Reformation When Martin Luther And others like him Took a stand For the gospel And said we cannot Be part of a church Which does not Teach the gospel But denies the gospel The greatest blessing Really in our world Apart from the sending Of the Holy Spirit On Pentecost Surely was the Reformation When God brought

[30 : 04] Freedom and light To people who were In darkness Any fellowship That we have As believers here In this local church Any fellowship We have with other Christians Is based firstly And primarily Upon the gospel We can have Other things That unite us Other things That join us Together The bible version We read Or the hymns That we sing Or the place That we meet Or the locality But we cannot Have less than The gospel Because if we exist As a group of people And it is not The gospel Which is the Fundamental And central thing That brings us Together Then we might as Well be The darts club We might as well Be a running club We might as well Be anybody else A singing club Only the gospel Brings us to Christ And only the gospel Unites us together And the sad thing Is this Is that the Christians Here in Corinth Who had been so Radically transformed By the power Of the gospel So much so That Paul says

Of them You were once Idolaters You were once Adulterers You were once Thieves You were once Robbers You were once Homosexuals All these things Now have been Taken away You have come to Christ And been transformed They had lost sight Of the gospel That united them They had lost sight Of it In all their rights In all their wants In all their Pleasures So Paul's solution Is to remind them Of the rights That he has given Up for the gospel That's what chapter Nine is It's all about Paul But it's not Paul Boasting about himself He's saying Look For me There's one thing That matters It's the gospel And I've given up All my rights As an apostle Because I love The gospel And that's the gospel That you should love And unite you to He starts off Doesn't he And talk about His freedom As an apostle As an apostle And he was an apostle He talks about His qualifications Not everybody Is an apostle We're all Christians We're all priests

Okay Talk to me about that If you're concerned About that We all have Entrance into God But we're not all apostles Paul was an apostle Because one He tells us He'd seen the Lord Jesus Risen from the dead That's the mark Of an apostle So you can't have one today He says also As an apostle The Lord had blessed The work of his preaching And the church in Corinth Were the proof of it That if God wasn't with him And using him That people wouldn't Have been saved But they had been And the church at Corinth Were part of that People had Criticised Paul They had made judgment On him He says in verse 3 For the church at Corinth Were the evidence That he was God's man At God's time Through whom God Was working So what rights Did Paul have As an apostle What rights did he have That he'd given up Well there were some Very natural rights We might say That he'd given up For the gospel There in verse 4 Don't we have the right To food and drink

Well those are common rights Surely to everybody To be able to eat And drink To have food But Paul Had given up Those things at times He'd gone hungry For the sake of the gospel He writes later In his second letter To the Corinthians I've known hunger And thirst And have often Gone without food He was willing To lay aside Even the very natural things The comforts In one's sense of life Because the gospel Was more important to him He talks about the right Of getting married As well Just as some Of the other apostles Had done This teaching In some parts Of the church That a minister Must be celibate Goes against the Bible It shows very clearly That he had the right To take a wife He had the right To be married And have a family All those things Are good Nothing wrong with them Even Peter He says And that's That word there That name there Cephas Is Peter He had the right To do that But he didn't Celibacy Is not something

That should be imposed Upon us Celibacy Isn't something That makes us A better Christian Than others But neither Should it be unusual For some of us We're called To be single Some of us We're called To be married Not one better Than the other As we saw In a previous chapter And Paul and Barnum Surely they had The right to be paid For the work That they did But it appears That they weren't It appears that They had to work For themselves Paul we know Made tents That was part Of his job And he'd often Have to work And earn money For himself To support himself So that he could Take the gospel Freely to people He was He and Barnum Were working twice As hard Doing two jobs And being paid For one And yet he says Well it's only natural Isn't it That people Are paid for what They do Verse 7 He talks about Different types of jobs A soldier A vineyard keeper Or farmer A shepherd All of them Get their living From their work That's natural

[35 : 07] That's right They get their needs Met through their labor And God has made it clear In his law as well That's to be the case For he says there Verse 8 Is this merely Human authority No the law God's law And God had passed A law That an ox That was treading The corn And that would be If you Maybe you've seen Pictures of an ox Yoked to a Long staff And at the end Of that sort of Beam Is a Mill Wheel Grinding up the corn Grinding it To make flour He says even there God has said You mustn't muzzle it You must allow it To eat the bits of corn That spill over the top So that it's fed Clearly he says If God cares about animals He cares about people And he does Cares even more For his people So Paul says this I'm a I'm a spiritual farmer I've sowed a harvest Amongst you We know that's the word

He talks about it Earlier on In chapter 3 About him and Him and Apollos One waters One sows the seed There's a harvest To come A spiritual harvest And a material harvest And so Paul says Shouldn't I be Careful Shouldn't I have My needs met As I serve And work for you And for the church In fact God has Laid down a principle Not only in the law But in the ceremony In the temple As he says there In verse 13 Those who serve Who were priests They received From the temple What they needed The offerings That were brought Were separated So some of the offering Went to the priests So in everything In the natural sense And the spiritual sense Those who serve Should be provided for Yet Paul Doesn't insist upon it Paul has not Said you should do this Or you should do right This Or you letting me down All his rights Were legitimate All his rights Were acceptable As an apostle But he foregoed

But he forewent them He gave them up Verse 15 I have not used Any of these rights For the sake of the gospel What makes the gospel So important That we should be willing To follow Paul's example That the church in Corinth Should be willing To follow Paul's example Of not insisting upon Our rights What makes this gospel Of Jesus Christ So important That even the natural things That we expect Expect We are to be willing To forsake The rights To be popular The right To be liked The right To be honoured Respected Thought well of The right To have Enough money To do exactly What we want to do The right And we can add Whatever we like there

To have a happy Family home The right To have a new car The right And so on None of these things Are wrong in themselves None of these things Are unacceptable In themselves But Paul says Our first concern Our first delight Our first desire Is that we should be People of the gospel Who share the good news Of Christ That should be the thing That motivates And drives us Not my right And the reason Is this That everything That we insist upon For our rights Is only material And physical And for the body But the gospel Is eternal And for the soul And when all These things are gone When the house And the car And the money And the holiday And all these things Have gone And we are left With nothing At the end of life The only thing That will matter Is the soul Because we say You can't take them With you And the men And women

That we live amongst Today dear friends Are people Who live for these things And have no concern For the soul And if we do not Tell them the gospel Of Jesus Christ If we do not Point out to them That without Christ And his gospel Then everything That they fight for And pursue Is ultimately Going to lead To their eternal grief And sorrow And sadness Then we Have put Our rights Above The gospel Jesus didn't He warn Again and again About putting Material things first In Matthew 16 He says What good will it be For someone To gain the whole world Yet to lose their soul He didn't say That God doesn't care About our food He didn't say That God doesn't care About our needs God doesn't care Whether we go hungry God doesn't care If we're unpaid Of course God cares About those things In fact that's the point The point is that They are things That God cares for And promises to provide For those who

[40 : 11] Will put him first For those who Make the gospel Their concern And living for Christ Their concern He promises that Not only will we Receive our natural Needs But more besides That's why Paul Writes as he does He doesn't write here To say to them Okay I've showed you That my rights are You should feed me Water me Clothe me Look after me Therefore now Come on Let's see the color Of your money Quite the opposite He says I'm not writing These things In a hope That you will Provide my rights He's not sending Them a begging letter He's not making An appeal He never preached The gospel For profit He was under A compulsion To preach the gospel The spirit of God Within him The reality That he was a Christian within him Made him To be driven With this desire I just Got to tell People about Jesus And that

Meant that At times He was willing To give up To sacrifice Those rights So that they Might not become A hindrance Or a stumbling Block to other People hearing About Jesus What about you And me dear Friends What is the Number one What is the Thing that we Want more than Anything else What is the Thing we live for More than anything Else What is the Thing that Motivates us To get out Of bed In the morning What is the Thing that Drives us When we go To work Yes it's Important that We provide For our Family Yes it's Important that We are not Lazy Or shirkers But dear Friends are we Driven by the Gospel Is that what We desire Are we willing To put Christ First above All else And making Christ first The primary Goal in Our lives You see Whatever you Do dear Friends Whatever we Do whether We're in Work we've Said this Again and Again haven't We whether We're in The workplace

Or in The home Or in The church Or in The street Why are We there Why has God placed Us in That particular House in That particular Time Why has He placed Us in This family Why has He placed Us in That workplace He's put Us there That we Might be Light To a Dark world That we Might be Witnesses To a Saving God That we Might be Those who We don't Have to be Missionaries Like Paul Or others But we Need to Know what's Most important What's Number one And the Wonderful promise We have And we've Already Intimated This is What Jesus Says here In Matthew 6 Do not Worry Saying What shall We eat Or what Shall we Drink Or what Shall we Wear For those Without God Run after These things And your Heavenly Father Knows that You need Them But seek

First his Kingdom And his Righteousness And all These things Will be Given to You As well Putting Christ First Means That we Shall never Be without Putting Christ First Means That we're Entrusting Ourselves To the God Who does Everything Well Putting Christ First And following Him And living For him Means that we Are saying God all These concerns Are yours And I know That you're Faithful And that you'll Provide We've got We've got this Mission coming Up Have we In May An opportunity To make the Gospel known To the people Of Whitby To our Neighbours To our Friends And maybe And maybe That we Think Well I Don't Want to Ruin My Relationship With my Friends I don't Want to Sacrifice What people Will think Of me As a Fanatical Christian I don't Want to Sacrifice What my Family may

Think of Me Or whether These people Will either Invite me Around their House Anymore Or be Sociable With me Let me Ask you What's Most Important Does that Really matter More than Their soul More than Their salvation More than Hearing the Gospel Or is That one Thing Which drove Paul Drive you We're going To sing our Final hymn It's a Wonderful hymn Which we know Only too well Speaks about The desire That we Could have A thousand Tongues Not just One But a Thousand To speak Of our Saving God Five Five Six Oh for a Thousand Tongues To sing My great Redeemer's Praise My great

[45 : 33] My great Redeemer's Praise My great Redeemer's Praise The glories Of my God and King The Jerry Hay, Mark My■ The Lord, my God, assist me to proclaim, assist me to proclaim, to strength will hold the earth abroad.

The honors of thy name.

The Lord, my God, assist me to proclaim, to strength will hold the earth above.

He justified my grace. He justified my grace.

We will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

[48 : 12] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.