

1Corinthians 19-02-10b

Let's continue our study now in 1 Corinthians chapter 16. We have been looking at verse 13, be watchful, stand firm in your faith, quit you like men, be strong. The idea of being watchful and standing firm is repeated enough times in scripture that we want to really pay attention to it.

I think many times we get caught up in the, it's like the Lord Jesus in the parable of the soils, that when the thorns grow up and we get caught up in the cares of this life and the thorns grow up and choke the word and make it unfruitful, and to watch for these things is important. I'm going to read you just a few passages, a slightly different version here, but they all bear on these concepts that we've seen, alertness, steadfastness in the faith, being dedicated, being committed, being a man in that sense, and being strong. In Romans chapter 13 verses 11 through 14, Paul says, Besides this, you know what hour it is, how it is full time now for you to wake from sleep.

For deliverance is nearer to us now than when we first believed. The night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.

Let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, this is sort of the quit you like men idea, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy, but put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to gratify its desires. That's Romans 13, 11 through 14. We've already covered Ephesians chapter 6, and you know the passage dealing with the armor of God.

Colossians chapter 4 verses 2 through 4, Continue steadfastly in prayer, another thing in which we can be steadfast in the faith, in the Lord, and so on, but here, steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving, and pray for us also that God may open to us a door for the word to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison, that I may make it clear as I ought to speak. What is the equivalent of that prayer now? That the word of God be preached, that God will raise up men who will preach it and teach it faithfully for those who are asking and seeking and knocking, that God will bless the efforts of those who are doing so, because it was a unique opportunity for the apostles. They are the ones, Paul doesn't say, you know, you all need to be doing this.

He says pray for me as I do it. He doesn't open door for the word to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison, that I may make it clear as I ought to speak. He doesn't later turn around and say, and you also, get out there and declare the mystery of Christ and make it clear as it ought to be spoken.

This is an apostolic function. This is ultimately set down in scripture, and we have the scriptures. We have the declaration of the mystery of Christ.

It still needs to be made clear, and it still needs to be made available to those who are looking for it. But continue steadfastly in prayer, being Gregoreo in it, being watchful in it, steadfast and

watchful in prayer. And this puts me in mind of what the Lord said about the, you know, and you hear this a lot in places where evangelism is heavily emphasized and is almost used as a yardstick for success.

How many decisions for Christ have there been? How many people have you led to the Lord? How many, you know, silhouettes on your fuselage, and so on. And here's the thing, they'll go to this passage where Jesus said, as people were coming to hear the Lord Jesus teach, he said, lift up your eyes to the field and see they are white for harvest. And then he says, pray to the Lord of the harvest that he will send workers into the field.

Pray that workers will do what needs to be done. He didn't say, let's all get up and go reap this harvest. And this is the Lord Jesus talking to the disciples who will become apostles.

But he said, pray. What does Paul say here? Pray. Not all of us are going to go in there swinging the shining sickle to cut the ripened grain.

Which is a song I learned in grade school right down here at Sequoia. Swing, it was like a Thanksgiving song. Thanksgiving Day is here, is how it ends.

But it starts out, swing the shining sickle, cut the ripened grain, gather in the corn ears gleaming everywhere. Gathered is the harvest for another year, now our day of gladness, Thanksgiving Day is here. Swing the shining sickle.

Well, not everybody is a sickle swinger. We can all pray. And Jesus said to his disciples, pray to the Lord of the harvest that he will send workers.

There are those who are given that task, pray for them. There are those who are given the task of making the word clear, pray for them, who are declaring the mystery of Christ, pray for them. Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.

Be thankful. First Thessalonians 5, as to the times and seasons, brethren, you have no need to have anything written to you. You yourselves know well the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

When people say there is peace and security, sudden destruction will come upon them as travail comes upon a woman with child, and there will be no escape. But you are not in the darkness, brethren, that that day should surprise you like a thief. For you are all sons of light and sons of the day.

We are not of the night or of the darkness. So then let us not sleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. This is impinging on our understanding of what it is to quit you like men, isn't it? Be where you're supposed to be, doing what you're supposed to do, be awake when you're supposed to be awake.

Don't be off in some sort of self-gratification that makes you groggy and asleep when you

ought to be awake. Keep awake, be sober. Those who sleep, sleep at night.

Those who get drunk, are drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. Now remember, this is Thessalonians, not Ephesians 6. But he's still got that imagery in his mind.

This is what a man does. Put on the breastplate of faith and love, for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain deliverance through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that, whether we wake or sleep, we might live with Him.

Therefore encourage one another, and build one another up, just as you are doing. Encourage one another, build one another up. Be steadfast, be watchful, be courageous.

Same thing in 2 Thessalonians 2, verses 13 through 17. We are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren, beloved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning to be saved through sanctification by the Spirit, and belief in the truth, sanctification, set-apartness by the Spirit, and belief, faith in the truth. To this He called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the teachings which you were taught by us, by word or by mouth or by letter. Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word. Good work, good word.

Be steadfast. That's our first four exhortations. The number five here in verse 14, let all be done with love.

You notice the italics there? Let all you done with love, all pertaining to you with love, all of your stuff done with love. You have this expanded in Romans chapter 13, verses 8 through 10. Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.

The commandments, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not kill, you shall not steal, you shall not covet, and any other commandment are summed up in this sentence. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. Love does no wrong to a neighbor, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Doing no wrong to a neighbor. So it has an active component, what you do, let it be done with love, and the things you do not do to a neighbor is the fulfilling of the law. Doing no wrong is love.

Doing what you can do in love, with love, fulfills the law. Love your neighbor as yourself. Colossians 123, continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which has been preached to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

Do not shift from the hope, the expectation, the looking forward, the anticipation that we are in a phase, we are in a time, and it is going to come to an end. Let all that you do be done with love. And all you have to do is go back a couple of chapters to the fulsome description of love that Paul gave, and this is by way of summary, this is by way of review.

He's already given them a detailed description of what that love should look like. And he says, what you do needs to conform to that. Now verse 15 and following, I urge you, brethren, and then you have a long dash, and this is a good move, Greek here breaks off in something of a similar fashion.

I urge you, brethren, you know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints. And then you have that dash again. This is sort of a parenthetical element here.

You could take out what lies between the dashes for the moment and say, I urge you, brethren, that you submit to such and to everyone who works and labors with us. Well, what are the such? The such are the household of Stephanas, the firstfruits of Achaia, those who are devoted to the ministry of the saints. Those who, in fact, are already good examples of what he has just said.

They are steadfast. They are dedicated. They are alert.

They are strong. They are using what God has supplied. He says, I urge you to submit to them.

This idea of submission is interesting because we are supposed to submit to authorities, but then we also have passages that tell us to submit to one another. What are we talking about here? Submit to the household of Stephanas and others who are such. There are believers who seem to have spent more time.

Maybe they were saved before us. Maybe they have been studying longer, have been in the faith longer, have had more experience than us. And when you look at them, you can tell by casual observation that they are mature, that they are steady, that they are not easily overturned by circumstance.

The hope of the faith is evident in them. Their spiritual gift is functioning, and the benefits of it are evident in our lives or the lives of others. And Paul says, there are those believers in your periphery, and he names them, not just here, but in other places.

One place we saw this very emphatically was in Romans chapter 16. And so Paul says, for example, in Romans 16, 1 and 2, I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deaconess of the church at Cancra, that you may receive her in the Lord as befits the saints, and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a helper of many and of myself as well. When it says to submit, it doesn't mean stand around and wait to take orders.

It means these people that have clearly got something wired together, and God is using them

and is enabling their spiritual gift to function and giving them opportunities, look at ways to help. This would be the biblical answer to the Experiencing God program. Instead of talking about, well, find out where God is at work and join Him in His work, it's a little bit closer to home.

If you see believers who are obviously being used by God in whatever capacity they have, you know the various named spiritual gifts in Scripture, those who are hospitable, who are meeting the needs of those who are needy, those who teach, those who organize, those who administrate, those who do any manner of things that are beneficial, don't be an obstruction to them. Don't hinder what they're doing. Be a help to them as they are a help to others.

These individuals are often named by Paul. You have Tychicus named more than one place in Ephesians 6, after talking about the armor of God. He says, now that you may also know how I am and what I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will tell you everything.

I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage your hearts. There is encouragement from faithful believers. There is encouragement in fellowship.

He says in Philippians 2, verse 19, I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon. He's already talked about sending Timothy to Corinth. Here he's telling the people in Philippi.

He hopes to send Timothy so that I may be cheered by news of you. I have no one like him who will be genuinely anxious for your welfare. They all look after their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ, but Timothy's worth you know, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel.

I hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me, and I trust in the Lord that I shortly myself shall come also. He also tells them, I've thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, your messenger and minister to my need. He has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill.

He was ill, near to death, but God had mercy on him, not only on him, but me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. What is all of this? These named associates and messengers, such as Timothy, Tychicus, Titus, Epaphroditus, the household of Stephanus, Phoebe, there is a connectedness in people who are separated by their mutual acquaintances, right? There are extended fellowship in and through others.

They didn't have the internet, they didn't have fast mail service, and so greetings and news and updates were delivered in person. So how would this play out today? Not only are we to watch for and encourage and be encouraged by those who are advanced in the faith, but keeping up

with each other is a good thing. It is an encouragement to know how fellow believers are doing who are at a distance.

And Paul makes much of this in nearly all of his epistles. I want to know how you are doing. I have made an effort, I am sending somebody.

This cost money, it took time, but he wanted to know how they were doing. And so keeping up with each other and sharing good news of God's grace, of what's going on in the spiritual realm, speaking the truth to one another in love is a good thing. And Paul emphasizes it to the Philippians, to the Corinthians, to those in Thessalonica and elsewhere.

In the letter to the Romans, he spends the better part of the last chapter talking about the importance of fellowship and of spending time with and keeping up with believers who are obviously doing well and are healthy spiritually. We benefit from association with others who are getting it done and who are healthy in their spiritual life. It helps us by association.

If bad company can corrupt good morals, good company can help strengthen that which is lacking in us. And so lifting up the hands that hang down and strengthening the feeble knees, this is something we do for each other. And we do it by maintaining and cultivating fellowship with believers that are a source of encouragement and comfort and strength.

We put distance between those who weaken us or who lead us astray. They may be believers, but if they've got bad habits, if talking with them leaves you off in realms of gossip or backbiting or division or dissension or raising issues that throw dark clouds across the sun, it doesn't take a genius to figure out that's not fellowship to pursue. That's not contact to maintain and cultivate if it drags us down.

But Paul is consistent in identifying believers that have spiritual momentum, and he says, associate with them. Spend time with them. If they've got something going on, be submissive.

If they've got a good idea, hear it out. Help them out. Let's move forward.

Let's take what the Holy Spirit is doing in and through healthy believers and join in that. So I urge you, brethren, these saints who have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints, that you submit to such and to everyone who works and labors with. And you notice us is in italics.

Any co-workers, any co-laborers that are getting done those genuine, fruitful, God-glorifying works, done in the right way for the right reasons. I'm glad about the coming of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus. For what was lacking on your part, they supplied.

And what he's saying here is, you couldn't all come, so they are representative of you. They have delivered probably a letter from the Corinthians to Paul. And this is Paul's response that will probably be delivered back by those same men.

They refreshed my spirit and yours. Therefore, acknowledge such men. There is refreshment of spirit.

And you can't always describe this. You know it when you experience it. There is spirit refreshment.

And we are drawn closer to God. We are motivated and strengthened not only by what we know from God's Word, not only by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, but also that presence and power and that knowledge of the Word in others. Healthy Christian fellowship is a part of a healthy Christian life.

And we suffer without it. So when we find it, we cultivate it. We encourage it.

We try to maintain it. This is the exhortation at the end of nearly every epistle. And it is something we need to pay attention to and do ourselves.

The letter closes here, verses 19 through 24. The churches of Asia greet you. All of this is greetings.

Look at the number of times you see the word greet. Churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Priscilla greet you heartily in the Lord with the church that is in their house.

The church is in their house. This is a good place for a church. Even if you hear the occasional dog bark.

Even if you hear the occasional child cry. It happened in younger days. We had a woodpecker banging on the side of the building here this morning.

But it's a house. And you have such things happen in a house. But it is a church in a house.

And there are those who serve the Lord by hosting and making sure that the infrastructure is there for a meeting to take place. We have sort of a virtual home where many can join us at a distance. And we praise God for that and for those who make that possible.

And those who join us in that way. But the churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Priscilla greet you.

The church that is in their house greets you. All the brethren, verse 20, greet you. All the brethren greet you.

Greet one another with a holy kiss. What is a holy kiss? Is it like holy smoke? What is a holy kiss? Well, we understand that our culture by permitting so much in the way of emphasis on sexuality. It used to be kept in its proper place behind doors.

It wasn't in entertainment. It wasn't talked about in polite company. We had respect for one another.

We had respect for privacy. And we talked about other things. And in those days, nobody thought it was unusual for a man to put his arm around another man's shoulders.

Nobody thought it was unusual for two people of the same gender to hold hands, to walk down the street holding hands. And this is just really odd and strange and peculiar in our modern day in this country. But if you go to other countries, it is still pertinent.

You can go to many African countries and there will be two men, perfectly normal, heterosexual, not strange men, who will walk holding hands. Women will walk holding hands. People will put their arm around one another and give one another hugs.

They will greet each other with a kiss. In nearly all circumstances, this is your greeting, like you see in Europe, where it's a peck on each cheek. Many times it's just putting your cheek, your left cheek to their left and vice versa.

It is an intimate greeting. They say, well, now it's just a holy handshake. This greeting one another with a holy kiss was a sign of two or three things all at once.

It is respect. It is acceptance. And it is in the realm of holiness.

Many things can divide us. Many things can separate us. Class, in this day, master-slave.

If you're in the slave class, you would not be acceptable. Race has been a big division factor, not only in this country but in others. Caste in India and places that have a rigid class system.

Economic status, the way you dress, how warmly are you welcomed when you go to a gathering and here's the table with the \$900 suits and here's my table with the \$45 Sears jacket. And people will naturally gravitate. The holy kiss, we tend to worry about the kiss part because everybody wants to see sexuality in a kiss.

What we really want to look at is the holy acceptance and respect. Greet one another with sanctified acceptance and respect. If you translate it that way, you don't have to worry about is this a kiss on the mouth, what is it? We've destroyed the ability to have an intimate walk, an intimate greeting in a lot of ways because of the promiscuity and the overt attachment of sexuality to nearly everything in our lives in this country.

There are still places where that is not so and Americans are shocked to look and see hand-holding and intimate greeting. Someone from another country coming to this country, it's not unusual for them to get into your space. They stand exceptionally close and we keep backing up and they keep advancing and they're wondering, you know, what's the matter? Why do you keep backing up? Well, there is a difference in the acceptable distance and in this country, anybody that gets very close to you, we start looking askance.

We're uncomfortable. It's a part of body language but part of the increase in distance is due to anybody that gets very close, this culture starts thinking sex. Greet one another with a holy kiss

is part and parcel of what he just got through saying about the household of Stephanus and Fortunatus and Achaicus.

These men who come and convey greetings and maintain fellowship and warmth of attachment, all of these people that are at a distance are greeting you. They are thinking of you. They warmly welcome you at a distance.

Youth who are together greet one another with similar intimacy and warmth, respect and acceptance and it is in the realm of holiness. The holiness transcends. This is why he can say in another place, there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female.

We are one in Christ. What is he talking about? He's not saying that all of those distinctions have disappeared or that they don't have a place or an importance in another realm, but when it comes to fellowship, when it comes to greeting one another with warmth, acceptance and respect, it doesn't matter Jew or Greek. It doesn't matter male or female.

It doesn't matter slave or free. You're one in Christ. That's what the holy kiss is.

Don't let any artificial source of division How did this letter begin? Artificial sources of division. I am of Paul, I am of Apollos. No, you are all in Christ and all things are yours.

So, don't draw distinctions. Don't put somebody at the head of the table and somebody else down at the foot. Greet one another.

Equality of value in Christ is expressed at the table that he talked about. When you come together, you're not eating the Lord's supper. You're not looking at each other in that way as all purchased with the precious blood of Christ.

Remember, even the disciples did this at least twice. Who would be the greatest in the kingdom? A dispute arose among them. Who will be the greatest? Those who are greatest and those who aren't, if they're viewed that way, aren't going to be greeting each other in the same way.

That's got to go away. Greet one another. On a level playing field, no division, no artificiality, no distinction.

There is warmth and respect and acceptance in Christ, in holiness. All the brethren greet you, so greet each other the same way. The brethren here aren't looking down on you.

Don't look down on each other. Here is the salutation with my own hand. Paul's.

And you get the idea that this last paragraph, everything that remains, is written in Paul's own hand. So, for whatever reason, maybe he has difficulty seeing. We have another letter where he says, see what large letters I write in my own hand.

In order to see what he's writing, he had to write big, I think being stoned or the other quippings and scourgings. If that scourge even wrapped around his head one time and hit him in the eyes, he would be needing an amanuensis to read and to write from then on. There's no lens replacement in the ancient world.

So, here is the salutation with his own hand. Paul's. And you would imagine, if he's going to take the effort to write in this case, whatever he writes is going to be very important.

What does he say? If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema. Let him be anathema. If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus, what is the basis for separation? What is the basis for not greeting with a holy kiss? For not associating, for not supporting, for not submitting? What is the basis? What is the exception? You can't be blind and ecumenical in all cases.

You can't just join the world council of churches because in some way, shape or form, somebody says we're a church. There is a standard of separation. When is someone anathema? If they don't love the Lord Jesus.

The Lord Jesus Christ. If you confess with your mouth, the Lord Jesus, and you believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you're saved. Romans 10, 9 and 10.

Confess with your mouth, believe in your heart. If anyone doesn't make that confession, John says, anyone who doesn't say that Jesus is Lord, is antichrist. Well, are you supposed to greet and love and enfold antichrist? Obviously not.

If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ. So, how do I know if I should greet you and maintain fellowship with you? How do you know if you should greet me or maintain fellowship with me? How do you know? You say, well, Paul says, it's whether or not you love the Lord Jesus. What does that tell you about love for the Lord Jesus in terms of its visibility? If you can't tell whether or not someone loves the Lord Jesus, probably not holy kiss and greeting time.

Your love for the Lord Jesus ought to be a feature that is evident, manifest and visible. People who come in contact with you should find out very quickly that you love the Lord Jesus. Because anyone who doesn't love the Lord Jesus, we need to put a distance between.

The one thing Paul writes in this letter with his own hand, after 16 chapters, make a distinction. If anyone doesn't love the Lord Jesus, break off association. Anathema means get the hints.

We're not talking. We're not greeting. We're not having fellowship.

You're not a part of the assembly. You're not a part. I'm not submitting.

You're not a part of what I do. I'm not a part of what you do. Anathema is quarantine.

It is separation. It says accursed. What was accursed? Leprosy in the Old Testament? What did you do with lepers? Doesn't mean that you didn't love them, but what did you have to do

procedurally? Stay out of the camp.

Stay away. Contact with you defiles. And it could be an intimate member of your nuclear family, but if they've got leprosy, they are anathema for purposes of contact and fellowship and function.

Until that condition was cured, they had to cover their face and cry unclean. Well, Paul in the New Testament says that same notion of necessary separation applies to those who do not love the Lord Jesus. Love for the Lord Jesus should be evident.

It should be manifest, and not by us making some overt attempt. It should flow from the time we wake up until the time we go to bed. If we are people of prayer, if we are steadfast, if we are watchful, if we are acquitting ourselves like men in the sense of dedication to our duty and our function and our assignment, if we are being strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, then our love for the Lord is going to be evident because that's what motivates it.

Why would you bother to do those things? You're watching because you love the Lord and you don't want to be a big disappointment to Him when He returns. You don't want to fail at the evaluation. You want to reflect His glory.

You don't want to be ashamed and found naked because you didn't put on the righteousness that He died to give us. If you love the Lord, you will do the things in verses 13 and 14. If you don't, Paul says, healthy believers need to stay away from you, and they will.

Healthy believers do not maintain association with those who don't love the Lord. Let them be anathema. Then what does he conclude with? O Lord, come.

He's back to watchful, steadfast. What are we watching for? You do not know what hour the Lord returns. O Lord, come.

Come as soon as you can. Don't we feel this way? If you love the Lord, and if you have nothing to hide and nothing of which to be ashamed, and you're doing everything you can to fulfill the potentials and the opportunities that God puts in your path, then the sooner the Lord gets here, the better. I can't wait to see Him and to have Him see what He has been able to do in my life and in my soul and around me through that which He provided, the strength that He gave me, the power of His might.

O Lord, You gave me five talents. Here's five more. The guy with the five talents couldn't wait for the Master to come back.

He's going to be so happy when he sees that I took those five and I got five more. The guy that got three couldn't wait for the Master to get back. You gave me three, I've doubled them.

Here's three more. Joy at the return of the Master. What about the guy that got the one talent, shoved it in his pocket in a rag, and when he comes back he says, Well, you know that thing you

gave me? Well, here it is.

Didn't lose anything. And he's rebuked. You should have done something with this, and you didn't.

When you do what you're supposed to do, if you study hard and you know your stuff, you enjoy the tests, because you're shooting for the high score. Man, I hope I can, you know, last time I got a 95. Maybe I can get a 97 this time.

Maybe I can get a 98. You have confidence when you do what you're supposed to do, and you know what you're supposed to know, and you're ready for it to be measured and to be shown. You diet like a fiend, and you're trying to lose weight.

You want to step on the scale and see that number go down, and you say, That sacrifice was worth it. Not eating that ice cream and drinking those milkshakes was worth it. Look, pounds are dropping.

The evaluation is a joy, because it reflects that you're doing what you're supposed to do. O Lord, come. Paul says, I'm ready for Him to come.

You should be ready for Him to come. Be not ashamed at His coming. Then he concludes, The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Spiritual closeness. Spiritual intimacy.

It is healthy. It is up-building. It glues us together.

Let everything you do be done in love. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. And you notice he says, Lord Jesus Christ, twice.

And it's always helpful to reflect on those three things. Lord goes back to His deity. Yeshua goes back to His humanity and His role as Deliverer.

And Christ, Mashiach, the Anointed One, is His office, His function, His future. Lord Jesus Christ. Paul doesn't idly select the titles sometimes he says Christ, sometimes he says the Lord.

When he says Lord Jesus Christ, this is everything you know about the Lord Jesus Christ. Everything about His deity, everything about His humanity, and everything about His function, and His office, and His mission. The fullness of it.

My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. In Christ Jesus, Amen. Wonderful letter.

A lot of grist for our spiritual mill. It's been a wonderful study. And I trust that we've been able to illuminate portions of it as we've gone through.

We will be starting a new study next time. It is the Gospel of Matthew. Looking forward to it.

There's nothing better than looking at the Lord Jesus at first hand. His words, His works, His life, His interactions with those around Him, start to finish, the narrative, and the truths, and bringing that life to life in our hearts and souls is always a wonderful journey to go through. So we'll be starting that next time, but we'll close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank You for the inspiration and the preservation of Your Word, the fullness of it. We have so much that we can look at. We have so much by way of example, by way of encouragement and exhortation, of caution, of warning, guidance.

There is no question we can ask that Your Word does not illuminate the answer and the way in which we should go in the hands of Your Holy Spirit and with Him speaking the truths of Christ in our hearts. We have all of the equipment for every good work, and we pray that as we reflect on what we've learned in the course of this study, we ask that God the Holy Spirit will show us where we have opportunity to apply it, to be motivated and encouraged, places where we need to change our mind, where we need to be more watchful, where we need to be stronger, more dedicated, where we need to be more sensitive to those around us so that we can truly do all things with love and be prepared and be excited on that day when the Lord Jesus returns and takes us to Himself and for those who are qualified to present us before Your throne. We thank You for these truths and we pray that our fellowship will reflect the glory of the Lord Jesus.

We ask it in His name. Amen. For more information, visit www.fema.org