

Rev 26-08-02b

We are in Revelation chapter 22 by way of the end of chapter 21 and 2 Corinthians chapters 3 and 4. I want to pick up in 2 Corinthians chapter 4 because this is so complementary to our study. We do not lose heart. The word here in chapter 4 verse 1 for losing heart is a composite word in Greek and the root of it is the word for weakness.

It's actually the word for evil and it is prefixed with a preposition ek which means out from. So it is literally something that comes out from evil. It is a manifestation of weakness.

It doesn't mention the heart or losing it or misplacing it or not having it. It is literally what happens. You get you get eviled out.

You get weakened out. It's badness that comes out and so because we have this ministry, this mercy from God, and this opportunity to experience the glory of God and to walk in the light of that glory, we do not get eviled out. Darkness does not overcome the light.

The light shines in a dark place and the light overcomes the darkness. That was a part of the original creation in Genesis chapter 1. It is a part of the new creation where there isn't darkness anywhere. Light is everywhere.

You don't even need the sun or the moon to provide light because the glory of God infuses everything and that is the light. The lamb is the light and his bride. Remember the two become one flesh and share in the same way that we represent the Lord Jesus as his body on this earth as he walked the earth, this original creation and partook of human flesh.

We will partake of his being. John says in his epistle, we do not know what we will be like but we will be like him. He came and became like us so that we could move into the kingdom of the Father and become like him.

It begins at the rapture. We have service and function in a non-resident commuting sort of way during the millennial kingdom when God fulfills his earthly promises to his earthly people Israel in the earthly kingdom with the earthly Jerusalem. After a thousand years when those promises have been completely fulfilled and everyone who has not previously had an opportunity to make a decision about God and the Lord Jesus, they will have made their choice.

They will have expressed either obedience and entrance into the things of God or rebellion and they will be outed at the Gog Magog rebellion at the end of the 10 centuries of the millennial kingdom. Satan will be released and this is his purpose. God works even the existence, the attitude and the program of Satan into his perfect plan.

He does not throw Satan into the lake of fire at the beginning of the millennium. He puts him on ice for a thousand years so that he cannot deceive the nations. They have no excuse.

The father of lies is incarcerated. He is bound. He is powerless for a thousand years.

What year was it a thousand years ago? This is 2026. So 1026, how long ago was that? That is the distance. That is the duration of the millennial kingdom.

We as overcomers can walk with the Lord Jesus in white. We can sit with him on his throne. We can be pillars in his temple with the names written on us to include the name of the new Jerusalem.

Read those overcomer promises. We are deciding whether or not that is important to us each day we live right now. The priorities we set, the goals we pursue, you know this.

We are determining by our choices, our actions to the extent to which we avail ourselves of God's grace and mercy as Paul talks about it here. That determines our place. So Paul says we do not lose heart.

We don't get eviled out. We are not overcome by evil. We overcome evil with good.

We are imbued with the light of the glory of God as we choose to walk in the light, as he is in the light. We have fellowship with him and he with us and the blood of Jesus Christ his son keeps on cleansing us from all sin. All sin.

1 John 1.7, 1 John 1.9. So we have this ministry. We have this opportunity. Since we have received mercy, let's make the most of it and not lose heart.

We have renounced the hidden things of shame. There are no hidden things in the eternal city of God, the new Jerusalem. It is transparent.

It is translucent. There is nothing hidden. We can see clearly.

There are no hidden things. There is no darkness that obscures. Nothing that defiles or corrupts is allowed into the city.

Nothing that deceives. Nothing that gives a false impression doesn't exist in the city. It is a city of truth.

It is a city of light. It is a city of life. That's what Paul is talking about here.

We don't walk in craftiness or handle the word of God deceitfully. How many times have we seen, beginning in chapter 19 and extending through the end of Revelation, reference to liars, deceit. Liars lose their inheritance.

Liars are kept outside, are not allowed access through the gates. Even if they are believers, all liars are outside. All liars, those who act deceitfully, we say, well, I'm not an inveterate liar.

We can be deceptive in our relationships with others. We can hide our light under a bushel. We can fail to be people of truth.

We can shade the truth. We can be dishonest. We can be deceitful.

We can take a path that is not honest, that isn't a path of light. In our words, in our actions, if we have responsibility for something, we can duck it and try to act as though something else was at work. It's someone else's fault.

Some other happenstance. It wasn't my bad choice. It wasn't my responsibility.

And by failing to own up and be transparent, we become deceitful. We become liars and we deceive ourselves. The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.

Who can comprehend it? Who can know it? Jeremiah 17, 9. We have to be people of truth. The Lord Jesus is the truth. He is the life and he is the light.

This same John wrote that in the first chapter of his gospel. He is the life and the light for mankind. The life and the light of men.

We are to walk in the light. 1 John. This same John is such an expert on the light.

It's in his gospel. It's in his epistles and it's in the revelation. Paul understood this as well.

And we see it here. We've renounced hidden things of shame. We don't walk in craftiness.

We don't handle the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation, by making things clear, get some clarity, get the truth out there because it is living and powerful, sharper than a double-edged sword piercing to the very heart of the matter. The manifestation of the truth. We commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God.

Notice man's conscience is confronted and God is watching as the light of the truth shines. And we are its emissaries. We are its representatives.

We are its messengers. We are angels of the truth. And the conscience of people in our vicinity is confronted and God is watching.

This happens in the sight of God. God is writing things down in the books. God is reckoning where there is faith, where there is obedience, where there is faithfulness to the truth, or where we devolve.

I was thinking about this in terms of walking dogs. We've got five dogs here and they're in varying stages of excitability and energy and physical health and so on. But it seems to me you could sort of break it down into three situations.

One, there's a dog that no matter what you tell them or how you try to train them, they just want, they see a rabbit, they've got to chase it. They see a squirrel and they've got to bark. You have them on a leash and a harness because they'll slip a collar.

So you've got to put a harness on them with a double D ring, put a stiff leash on there and control the dog with a leash because they can't be trusted. And you can walk them where they need to go. You can accomplish your goal of exercise and wear them out so they'll sleep and so on.

Make sure they get exercise so they stay healthy and slim and whatnot. But it's all you. You've got to have them on a leash or incarcerated in the house or in their crate or whatever.

That's the first level. The second level is you can let the dog off the leash and the dog may want to go into mischief, but the dog has learned to follow your commands. Our dog, Major, I was never more impressed.

We let him off leash when we lived down in Plano and he was in a large field and a rabbit took off across that field and Major was on a dead run heading by the way toward a cliff next to a creek. And I don't know that he would have stopped. All of his wolf instincts were in play.

He couldn't see or hear anything except this rabbit and he was catching up to it. And I yelled his name and gave him the command to stop. He locked all four wheels and skidded in the middle of the field as the rabbit disappeared over the edge to the creek.

Major stopped because he listened to the sound of his master's voice. That's a wonderful level for a pet dog to reach. What is the ideal? The ideal is the dog knows that I don't want her to go under the fence into the road or across to the neighbor's property and harass dogs or people over there.

And if the dog understands my will, A, I don't need a leash and B, I don't have to worry about watching the dog and the necessary commands to keep it from doing something dangerous, unhealthy or undesirable. In the third and highest level, the dog already knows that I don't want it to leave the property. It knows that I don't want it to eat small rabbits or chew things that are property you don't want chewed, not to make a mess in the house.

It knows this and acts accordingly. And it's largely hands-off. It's a great dog and we can enjoy each other's company without the necessity for me to issue harsh commands or attention-getting commands.

And I think about this in terms of how God deals with us. Some of us, God has got to snap a leash and a harness on us because we will just go bonkers. And God has to restrain us.

As you can see examples of throughout the Bible where God has to restrain the madness of the prophet, so to speak. God has to physically stop someone from doing something. That's the leash mode.

We improve when we want to go our own way, but there is two by four to the head guidance from God that says stop or quit stalling and go. Do what needs to be done. And we are cognizant enough to recognize a clear command from God and then we obey.

But the goal is to enter into the thinking of God, understand his plans and purposes to the point that he can turn us loose. As Paul said in the preceding chapter in verse 17, 2 Corinthians 3, 17, the Lord is the spirit and where the spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. If we are led by the spirit, if we are filled with the spirit, don't need a harness, don't need a leash, and don't need harsh vocal commands to stop us in our tracks where the spirit is.

We cultivate understanding God's word and God's will through the spirit so that we begin to think in terms of God's perspective, God's viewpoint, God's goals and priorities. And so many times I grieve for our pets because I would love to turn them loose and they would be safe in the pasture. They could run, they could frolic, they could smell things, they could go where they want and do so many wonderful things, but I can't trust them not to go under the fence out into the road or across the road to neighbor's property and mischief or harm might follow.

And because I can't trust them to understand my will, they don't have freedom. And it's a sad thing. They would have such an enhanced quality of life if they weren't constantly on a leash or constantly getting yelled at, put that down, don't eat that, don't wet that, and so on.

Where the spirit of the Lord is, when we cultivate the presence and the power and the guiding light of God's Holy Spirit, bringing his word to our minds and being willing to do the hard things, I want to chase the rabbit. It's not right. It's not the right time.

It's the right place. Other people who don't know anything about the word of God, the will of God, the spirit of God might justify this particular action a thousand ways. But for me, the will of the Lord is clear.

Touch not the unclean thing. Hate the garments spotted by the flesh. There is a time when we endure and we bear with.

There's a time when we separate and we respect the spheres of love and operate oftentimes with great difficulty and some sorrow. But it is necessary. We want to enter into the thinking of God so that there is liberty, there is freedom.

What is the inspiration? Why would we put ourselves through that? We are looking ahead. Look at what Paul says here in 2 Corinthians 4. Verse 2, we've renounced these hidden things. We don't walk in craftiness.

We don't handle the word of God deceitfully, manifesting the truth. We commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. God is watching.

In another place, Paul says, let your moderation be known to all. Let your self-control and your

refraining from going to excess be manifest to everyone because the Lord is near. Let your moderation be known to all.

The Lord is at hand. If our gospel is veiled, this is why we have to read chapter 3. The gospel is veiled. This is what happened to Old Testament Israel.

There was a veil. They couldn't experience the unveiled glory of God. And to this day, the word of God is veiled because they don't latch onto the key, which is Christ.

If our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the God of this age has blinded. This is Babylon. This is the self-indulgence and the excess that we have seen from chapter 2 of the Revelation all the way to the present.

This is what God has judged with the seals and the trumpets and the thunders and the bowls, the destruction of Babylon, the harlot self-indulgent catering to the self-interest of others and committing fornication with them and collusion with them and participating in the grossest kinds of evil with them. It all traces back to who is God. I will be my own God.

I will make up my own rules. I will set my own moral standards and I will declare myself righteous by my standards. And you end up with a cup full of harm to others, full of abominations, full of that which is repulsive in God's sight and disqualifying in every respect from dwelling in the light.

These things will be destroyed. They will perish. These who are perishing, their minds the God of this age has blinded, who are faithless, apisteia, they are unfaithful.

And this can be true of believers. Otherwise, the light of the good news of the glory of Christ. Notice it doesn't say the cross of Christ, the work of Christ, the redemption of Christ, the atonement of Christ, the reconciliation of Christ.

It's the glory of Christ which encompasses all of those things and more. The light of the new Jerusalem is the Lamb. That is the glory of Christ.

The glory and the light are inseparable. The light of the good news of the glory of Christ who is the image of God. This is why Jesus can say, I am the Alpha and the Omega, and God the Father says, I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.

He brings things into creation and He ends them. Alpha and the Omega. That light would shine to them if they were of faith, if they chose to exercise faith, but they don't.

And having decided to be faithless, their foolish hearts are darkened. It is a response. It isn't a means.

They're not faithless because they never see the light. They see the light and refuse it, and their foolish hearts are darkened. We do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord and

ourselves, we are bond servants for Jesus' sake.

It is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The new Jerusalem is all about the glory of God and the Lord Jesus as the Lamb. We have this treasure in earthen vessels, verse 7, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.

We have this. We've already seen it in chapter 19, and we're going to see it again in chapter 22. Not the messenger, the message, the content of the message, the fullness of the glory of God that that message communicates.

Not the messenger. Remember when John wanted to fall down at the feet of the angel, and he said, ora me. This is the imperative from horao, where we get horizon.

Don't look at me that way. May is the negative, and it literally says see not. What it means is don't view me that way.

Horizon, horao, that's the view. Bleppo, there's other words for seeing. This is horao.

Your perspective is wrong. Your view is wrong. Not that view is a literal translation, and because John is looking at him and bowing before him, he says, wrong view, and he goes on to explain it.

We'll see it momentarily, but let's finish in Paul. The excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed.

Remember when we've seen the judgment seat of Christ, and Paul says, other foundation can no man lay, but that which is laid, it was to these same Corinthians that he wrote this. Let every man be careful how he builds on the foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, and stubble. He's talking about pastors, but it is applicable to everyone.

Here he is talking about himself and his associates who are messengers of the truth, Barnabas and so on. We have this treasure on earth in vessels. Excellence of the power may be of God, not of us.

We are hard pressed on every side, but we're not crushed. We are perplexed, but not in despair. This should be all of us.

This is an example for all of us. If our faith is real, if our hope is secure, then nothing is going to crush us. Nothing is going to make us despair.

Opposition, persecution. We know we're not forsaken. I will never leave thee nor forsake thee, the Lord Jesus says.

Persecuted, but not forsaken. Struck down, but not destroyed. Bent, but not broken.

A lot of opposition, but I'm still here. Always carrying about in the body. This is the life in which we experience death.

Sometimes it is a slow descent, a gradual process of disintegration and a disheartening loss of function and of strength and of ability and of opportunity in this physical realm. We carry about in our bodies the death of the Lord Jesus. Remember what Paul says in another place, the death he died, he died to sin.

The life he lives, he lives to God. So when we carry about in our bodies the death of the Lord Jesus, we are looking out for sin and separating from it. Eschewing its practice, its presence, its effect in our own lives.

We've got to hunt it down. We've got to figure out where it is. Did you ever walk into a room and it smells funny? Smells bad? You think, did something die in here? Or what is that smell? And you can't see right away.

And you end up looking under the kitchen sink and, oh, it's the kitchen trash or something that's been in there a day or two and it's effusing some malodorous scent. Or maybe there's a mouse caught in a trap and you didn't check the trap and now the mouse is decomposing and there's that stench. Maybe one of the aforementioned dogs has done something in the house they shouldn't have done.

But you walk in and you've got to track it down. Where is that coming from? Maybe there's spoiled food. And not that I have personal experience of any of these things.

I'm just saying that we can sense that there's something amiss and we need to spend some time to track it down. Where is the problem? And it's up to us. We pray.

We ask God for wisdom. We ask that the Holy Spirit will illuminate so that we can see clearly and confess and separate and begin afresh our dedication to walking in the light as He is in the light so that we can maintain fellowship and function. So we carry about in our bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus so that the life of Jesus also may be manifest.

We are learning how to live in the light and in the life that will culminate and be fully expressed in the New Jerusalem. We're learning it now. If we can do it in difficult days and difficult circumstances, how much more will we experience and enjoy its fullness when this life and this hardship and all of these pressures and discouragements are left behind.

If you can do it against opposition, it's easy to do it without. Death is working in us, but life in you. Since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, I believed and therefore I spoke.

What do we know about this? You've been in grace and truth long enough, every single one of

you. When you see this, what do you know? That is an Old Testament quote. Paul says, according to what is written, I believed and therefore I spoke.

And if you've got a New King James, it's got a helpful note there that says Psalm 116 verse 10. Keep your finger here and turn back to Psalm 116. Because as you know, these Old Testament allusions assume that you are going to go back and access the entire footnote.

Psalm 116. I love the Lord because he has heard my voice and my supplications. What do we do in times of hardship, when we are pressed on every side, when we are tempted to despair, when all of these things that are true that Paul speaks of, that we renounce shame.

And even though we're hard pressed, we're not crushed. We're perplexed. We're not in despair.

We're persecuted, not forsaken. We're struck down, but not destroyed. Carrying about the dying of the Lord Jesus in our body, looking forward to that resurrection life.

And he refers back to this song. He doesn't quote this idly. It's not just a little snippet.

Paul recently read, I think, or recently remembered and reviewed in his mind this entire Psalm. I love the Lord because he has heard my voice and my supplications. Because he has inclined his ear to me, therefore I will call upon him as long as I live.

The pains of death surrounded me. The pangs of Sheol laid hold of me. I found trouble and sorrow.

Then I called upon the name of the Lord. O Lord, I implore you, deliver my soul. Gracious is the Lord and righteous.

Remember what Paul said back in chapter three, that we have mercy. And in verse one of chapter four, we've received mercy and we do not lose heart. We don't get eviled out.

That's what it says in the Psalm. I called upon the Lord. Gracious is the Lord, verse five.

This is mercy and grace. They're two sides of the same coin. Gracious is the Lord and righteous.

Yes, our God is merciful. Psalm 116, verse six. The Lord preserves the simple.

Don't have to be a rocket scientist for this. It's a simple decision. Am I going to cave? Am I going to collapse? Am I going to wallow? Am I going to circumnavigate the center of my own soul? Or am I going to look to the Lord? It's simple.

And the Lord preserves the simple. Those that figure out that this is not hard. I can either trust myself or I can trust the Lord.

I can either give into despair or I can turn to the hope of Israel, the hope of the church. The Lord

preserves the simple. I was brought low.

He saved me. That's pretty simple. Somebody was trying to crush me.

The Lord delivered me. It's not hard. Return to your rest, O my soul, for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you.

Don't concentrate on the negative. Remember the bounty of the Lord in his mercy. Verse eight.

You have delivered my soul from death. You have delivered my eyes from tears. You have delivered my feet from failing, from falling.

My soul, my eyes, and my feet. My soul is the seat of my thinking, the area where my faith resides. My eyes, this is how I look at life.

Am I going to look around and cry? The Lord has delivered my eyes from tears. He's given me a different perspective, a different view. I can look at my hope and I'm no longer sad.

I'm no longer discouraged and sorrowful. And he has delivered my feet. I can walk the narrow road and head for the straight gate.

He has placed my feet on solid ground. I can scale the cliffs like the goats. I will walk before the Lord, verse nine, in the land of the living.

He doesn't think about I'm walking through rocks and shoals and difficulties in the valley of the shadow. I'm walking before the Lord. The Lord has delivered my feet.

The Lord has given me eyesight to see the path. I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living. That's how I'm going to look at my circumstance.

Remember Paul saying, God is watching. We bear witness in the sight of God. Every man's conscience is in the sight of God.

I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living. Now, our quoted verse, this is what Paul was thinking of. This is what he cites.

I believed, therefore I spoke. I'm greatly afflicted. I said in my haste, all men are liars.

I temporarily didn't aim my faith at what I know of God. What we believe is what we're going to speak. What are we going to speak? Paul says in Corinthians, I believe, therefore I spoke.

We have the same spirit of faith according to what is written. That's 413 of 2nd Corinthians, spirit of faith. Or we can say, I'm greatly afflicted and all men are untrustworthy.

All men are liars. All men are deceitful. Can't trust what they say.

I said that in haste. I believe, therefore I spoke. I was hasty.

This is why we have to slow down. We have to spend time in reflection, center our hearts and our souls, appeal to God in prayer, cultivate the presence and the comforting power of the Holy Spirit. What shall I render to the Lord? Verse 12, for all his benefits toward me, I will take up the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord.

I'm not going to sit there looking at my circumstances saying I'm afflicted and everybody around me can't be trusted. They're all liars. That's one way to look at life.

But the psalmist here says, I need to look at the Lord. What can I render to the Lord for all of his benefits? I will take up the cup of salvation. Reminds you of Psalm 23.

God prepares a table before me in the presence of my enemies. He anoints my head with oil and my cup runs over. I will take up the cup of deliverance, of salvation.

I will call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows to the Lord now in the presence of all his people. Paul says, I know whom I have believed.

I'm persuaded he's able to keep what I have committed to him against that day. What do vows represent? This is commitment. Am I committed to walking and living a life of faith or am I falling off the wagon and getting distracted and self-centered? Our vow is to represent the Lord Jesus.

Our vow is to exploit God's grace and God's salvation, to take advantage of the presence of the Holy Spirit and the power of the Word of God. We commit to this. We know who we are.

We know why we're here. That is represented by the vow. We need to keep our commitment, knowing that God will keep what he has committed to us against that day.

I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people. Remember, there are others in the periphery. What we do is observed and it makes a difference.

We don't live our lives to please people. We don't live our lives to impress people. But the reverse side of that coin is we have an effect on people around us.

And it doesn't hurt to remember that trusting God, looking to God, praying to God can be a light that shines and can draw others to God, not to us. In the presence of all his people, precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. It's precious.

Why is the death of God's saints precious? What exactly does that mean? Death is the point at which our training ends and our future eternal life begins. And God is paying attention. When, where, and how are we going to finish our training phase and enter into our function phase and our service phase in the eternal future? It's important to God.

God calculates it. He schedules it. And a large part of that has to do with to what extent we are availing ourselves of opportunities to learn and to grow and to make ourselves ready as the wife of the Lamb for the eternal future.

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. People say, he's just going to take good care of us at the point of death. That is true, but that's not what it's talking about in this context.

What do we do as we carry about in our bodies the death of the Lord Jesus? We have the opportunity to learn things we can never learn in the eternal future. We will never again push against evil. We will never again get eviled out and be tempted to lose heart.

Pushing against that resistance gives us strength, gives us skill, gives us new thought patterns that we will carry with us into the eternal future. God knows how long to leave us here. And as long as we are learning and growing, there is the opportunity to be more prepared, better fitted for service and function.

Oh Lord, truly I am your servant. I am your servant, the son of your maid servant. I've got a heritage, my mother.

You have to wonder if this isn't David, and there's a lot about David's mother that can be speculated when he says he was conceived in iniquity and born in sin. But the psalmist here says, not only am I your servant, my mother was your servant. And what a God send it is and what a blessing when you have people in your periphery, elders, who set an example and who can give us a push in the right direction in terms of faith.

You have loosed my bonds. I am your servant. My mother was your servant, but you've loosed my bonds.

What does that mean? What did Paul talk about? In Christ, there is liberty. There is freedom. If we learn enough, we don't have to be kept on the leash.

We don't have to be constrained because we think like God. We know where the lines are. We know where the borders and the boundaries are.

We know what is beneficial. We know what is self-interested and self-serving and what pleases our Heavenly Father. I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving and will call upon the name of the Lord.

Once again, he says, I will fulfill my commitment to the Lord. Now in the presence of all his people, this has an effect on the community. Our faithfulness, our commitment has a resonance, has a witness, has an effect on those around us.

It doesn't say, I will go tell people and I will try to drag them in a direction I think they should go. I

will keep my commitment. I will learn enough that God can loose my bonds so that in freedom, I will still please him and still serve him effectively.

And that is going to have an effect on those around me. In the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of where? In the midst of you, oh Jerusalem. For us, this is the new Jerusalem.

This is the Jerusalem to come. What an opportunity. Well, this all prepares us.

Let me just give you a quick anticipation of what we will be seeing in our next study in chapter 22. In chapter 22, verse 10, do not seal the words of the prophecy of the book for the time is at hand. In verses eight and nine that precede that, John saw and heard these things.

When he heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. He said, don't do that. Your view is wrong.

Hurrah-oh. May. Bad view.

Bad perspective. I am your fellow servant. I am your fellow servant.

I am also a servant of your brethren, the prophets, as you, and I am a fellow servant of those who keep the words of this book. My function in explaining and displaying and introducing these things for you is service. You have a same calling.

You have a similar function. We are soon duloi, dulas, slave, soon with. We are co-servants.

Our job is to help our brethren, those who keep the words of this book, understand the program and worship God. Don't get your eyes on the messenger. We are serving.

This is service. I almost wish we could re-translate every place you find servant in the New Testament. If we could say one who serves.

Servant has a lot of slavery overtones in our language. I am one who serves as you do is what soon dulas means. I serve like you serve.

We serve God and we serve one another. The prophets were servants. Those who had the testimony of Jesus back in chapter 19 are servants.

We all serve God. We want to be of service now and in the ages to come. A lot more to say about that when we meet next.

Let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the tremendous symmetry and beauty and consistency of your word, whether we look in the Old Testament, whether we look at the Paul, whether we look at the vision that was given to John in the revelation, the words of the Lord Jesus, your own words throughout scripture, there is a consistent witness and a consistent call to us to remember the deliverance that you have granted to us by your grace and in your mercy, the

example of the Lord Jesus and the opportunity to serve now and in the ages to come. We pray that our study this morning will contribute to that goal.

May the Holy Spirit illuminate and enlighten the message and overcome the limitations of the presentation because your word is alive and powerful. It cannot be contained and it cannot be limited. We pray that it will have its full effect and function in each one of our hearts.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.