

The the Ministry of the Saints--dying to Self

by Aaron Hurst

The sermon emphasizes the importance of self-denial and humility in the ministry of serving one another as saints of God.

Duration: 1:26:46

Scripture: Isaiah 35:8, Matthew 18:15, Acts 20:35

Topics: "Death To Self"

Description

In this sermon, Brother Denny begins by expressing his desire for the listeners' lives to be blessed and changed by the message. He emphasizes that the sermon is not copyrighted and encourages the audience to share it freely. The sermon focuses on the topic of judgment and how the church should function in areas of grace and liberty. Brother Denny references the book of Romans and highlights the importance of not judging one another, but rather focusing on not causing others to stumble. The sermon concludes with a reflection on personal struggles and the need to lay down one's rights and avoid speaking negatively about others.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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These messages are offered to all without charge by the free will offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Amen, Lord.

Father, lead us to Christ, the living way, Father. Nor let us from Thy pasture stray, O Lord our God. Father, lead us to holiness, the road that we must take to dwell with God.

Isaiah described it as a highway of holiness. O God, lead us to the highway of holiness. Cast up the stones, Lord.

O God, make straight paths, Lord, for the feet of Your saints today, Lord. O God. And then, Lord, lead us to heaven, its bliss to share, fullness of joy forever there.

Hallelujah, Lord. O God. Lord, we do thank You.

We thank You and praise You for the life that is in Christ Jesus. It's an abundant life. It's a full life.

O God, today we pray that You would just baptize us, Lord, as a congregation here, a little band and lowly. Father, with the Spirit of the living God upon our hearts, Lord, in this service continuing on here today together, thank You, Lord, that where two or three are gathered in Your name, there You are in the midst. And Father, we have the confidence that You're here, Lord.

O God, we pray in Jesus' name, Lord. O come, Thy presence manifesting, Lord. O come and break down every wall or every resistance against the Spirit of the living God.

O Lord, draw with cords of love the hearts that are estranged from You, Lord, those that are not yet saved, Lord. O God, those that are yet wandering out in the hills of sin, Lord. O by Your Spirit, Lord, would You draw them unto Yourself, Father.

O precious Jesus. And Lord, we do pray that You would anoint Your Word to our hearts today, Lord. Father, I'm not worthy, Lord, but I do trust You, God.

And I do pray in Jesus' name, O Father, please come and help me, Lord. Who's fit, who's sufficient for these things, Lord? But God, through Christ Jesus, You make us able ministers. So Father, we look away from ourselves and we look unto Jesus.

And Lord, I just do pray, I dare not trust my own. I dare not trust my own, Lord. Father, please set a watch upon my heart and just order this message as it pleases You, Lord.

And Father, give grace to the congregation to receive. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

You may be seated. God bless you all today. I can agree with Brother Mel.

There's a joy in my heart to come to the house of the Lord and meet with the saints of God. The redeemed, the blood washed. Hallelujah.

What for hearts did you bring this morning? An upturned, open heart. I trust you have. God bless you visitors as well today.

We're glad you have come to share with us. You're dropping in on the middle of some things that God is doing in our midst. And the message just keeps growing in my heart.

And so I trust the Lord, do not weary of my continuing to preach the theme of the ministry of the saints. The ministry of the saints. This title is found out in the verses in 1 Corinthians 16 and verse 15.

He says, I beseech you brethren, you know the house of Stephanus, that is the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints. They have consecrated themselves to this ministry. They have devoted themselves.

They have made this a priority in their life. This ministry to the saints. They have given themselves to the attendance as a servant.

As a bond servant. As a slave to the saints. To the ministry.

To the relief and the service of the Christian family. The saints of the household of God. We looked at a number of different aspects of this ministry.

And I suppose if I could give it a title today. The ministry of the saints. Dying to self.

Or it could be titled, laying down my rights. Open your Bibles with me to John chapter 13. As we look at the example of our Lord Jesus Christ.

John chapter 13. Oh, He loved His own. He loved them with a sacrificial love.

And He loved them unto the end. It tells us. And then He gives us this beautiful example.

John 13 verse 3. Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands. And that He was come from God and went to God. He rises from supper.

And laid aside His garments and took a towel. And girded Himself. After that He poured water into a basin.

And began to wash the disciples feet. And to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded. Then cometh He to Simon Peter.

And Peter saith unto Him. Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him. What I do thou knowest not now.

But thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto Him. Thou shalt never wash my feet.

Jesus answered him. If I wash thee not. Thou has no part with me.

Simon Peter saith unto Him. Lord, not my feet only. But also my hands and my head.

Jesus saith unto him. He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet. But is clean every wit.

And ye are clean but not all. For He knew who should betray Him. Therefore said He.

Ye are not all clean. So after He had washed their feet. And had taken His garments.

And was set down again. He said unto them. Know ye what I have done to you.

Ye call me Master and Lord. And ye say well. For so I am.

If I then. Your Lord and Master. Had washed your feet.

Ye also ought to wash. One another's feet. For I have given you an example.

That ye should do. As I have done to you. Verily.

Verily I say unto you. The servant is not greater than his Lord. Neither he that is sent.

Greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things. Happy are ye if you do them.

Jesus. Lord. And Master.

Gave an example to the disciples that day. When He took a towel. And He girded Himself.

And He washed their feet. How do you wash someone else's feet? You get right down like this. And you take their feet.

In your hands. And you wash their feet. Jesus said.

Do you know what I did to you? They didn't answer Him. I believe they were speechless. Jesus.

Just finished washing their feet. And then He said. Do you know what I have done? You see a little earlier.

They were striding about who's going to be the greatest in the kingdom. Who's going to sit at His right hand. And here's their Lord and Master.

Humbling Himself. And washing their feet. He said.

I have given you an example. That is I have done to you. So ye shall also do.

To one another. Ye ought to wash one another's feet. Now I believe it's very possible.

To go through the motions of a foot washing service. But Jesus was going far deeper than that. He said.

If I am your Lord. And ye say well. Because I am your Lord.

If I have washed your feet. Ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example.

That you should do as I have done to you. The servant is not greater than his Lord. Neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

True greatness in the kingdom of God. Is humility. And servanthood.

And ministry. And humbleness. And abasing ourselves.

And exalting our brothers. And washing their feet. When I was in a certain fellowship.

With some brethren. We had a brothers meeting. And there was some strife in the meeting.

And the Spirit of God came down upon an individual. After the meeting. And spoke to his heart.

And the next day. It was not that very night. But the next day.

He was deeply convicted and humbled. And we met together to reconcile. And at the end of the reconciliation.

He said. Does anyone have a basin? And a towel? And the brother. Who was stirred up in flesh.

The night before in the brothers meeting. Took a towel. Said please my brother.

I want to wash your feet. And he took a towel. And they went together.

And he washed his feet. Oh it was beautiful. How do we wash one another's feet? In the book of Acts.

In chapter 20 verse 35. Don't need to turn there. We have the example.

Of the apostles. And he said there. As he met with the elders.
He said I have showed you all things. How that so laboring. Ye ought to support the weak.
And remember the words of the Lord Jesus. How he said. It is more blessed to give.
Than to receive. You know a servant's heart. Is always looking.
For opportunities. To wash the saints feet. I believe.
There is a. There is a heart. That just. Is waiting.
For opportunity to serve. And is sensitive. To the needs.
Around them. And washing feet. Oh it can be.
Changing a flat tire. It can be. Fixing a faucet.
It can be. Cooking a meal. It can be.
Cleaning the house. It can be. Helping in the shop.
It can also be. Giving a listening ear. To someone who is burdened.
And just need someone to talk to. With skin on. Maybe you don't even have to give him counsel.
Just listen. With an understanding. Gracious heart.
Not judging. Not despising. But just listening.
And caring. So laboring. You ought to support the weak.
How shall we do this? Brethren. Ye have been called unto liberty. Only use not liberty.
For an occasion to the flesh. But by love. Serve one another.
By the love of Christ. The life of Christ within. The love of Christ.
Constraining us. By love. Wash one another's feet.
Be kindly affection one to another. With brotherly love. In honor.
Preferring one another. Let it be your rule for life. Let brotherly love continue.
And continue. Aaron, you said that last time. Yes, I did.
It's still true today. Let brotherly love continue. Love for your fellow believers.
Let it be a fixed practice in your heart. Never let it fail. How do we do this? Oh.
To wash one another's feet. It's not always convenient, is it? It takes dying to self. It takes laying down my
life.
In other words, it takes sacrifice. To do good. And to communicate.

Forget not. For with such sacrifices. God is well pleased.

Don't neglect. This ministry. It's vital.

To the life. And health. Of the body.

How shall we do this? We then that are strong. Ought to bear the infirmities. Of the weak.

And not to please ourselves. There it is again. It's self-denial.

It's laying down my life. The ministry of the saints. Laying down my rights.

I think I'll just go through these scriptures. If you will allow me to. Rather than have you turn to them.

Let's just listen. To the word of God. I'll give you the reference.

1 Corinthians 10.24 Let no man seek his own. But every man another's wealth. Let no man seek his own rights.

His own pleasure. Pleasing himself. His own advantage.

Let no man seek his own. Honor. But let every man.

Seek another's wealth. Another's blessing. Another's prosperity.

Now the context of this. Is given in light of eating meat. Offered to idols.

And he goes on to say. For whatever is sold in shambles that eat. Asking no question for conscience sakes.

For the earth is the Lord and the fullness thereof. So that which is sold in the shambles. Or in the meat market.

Where they sell meat that was perhaps. Offered unto idols. You go in there.

And you buy your meat. And you have the knowledge and conscience. That is exercised by reason of knowing the truth.

And you know the earth is the Lord. And the fullness thereof. So you can go buy that meat.

And you can eat it with a clear conscience. However. He's not finished yet.

If any of them. That believe not bid you to a feast. And ye be disposed to go.

Whatsoever is said before you eat. Asking no question for conscience sake. So he gives liberty.

To go to one. That is an unbeliever. And come to his dinner table.

And eat the food. That he has prepared. And he says.

Eat whatsoever is said before you. Eat. Asking no question for conscience sake.

Because you know. That an idol is nothing. And you know.

The earth is the Lord. And the fullness thereof. So with that conscience.

Illuminated and enlightened. Eat. But.

Verse 28. If any man say unto you. This is offering sacrifice to idols.

Eat not. For his sake that showed it. And for conscience sake.

For. The earth is the Lord's. And the fullness thereof.

That weak brother. Who for weak conscience. Cannot eat that meat.

He belongs to God. So don't you eat. For conscience sake.

Not your own. You are free to eat. If there is no one else there.

With weak conscience. Who will be defiled by your eating this meat. So he says.

Now. Conscience I say. Not thine own.

But of the other. Well now listen. Why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience? Now we are getting right down to practical things.

I know the idol is nothing. That's a good steak. And I'm hungry.

And I have all sorts of reasons. It would please me well. I need strength.

I need energy for the journey. I like. This meat.

And there is nothing wrong with it. Oh but. At what expense.

Can I flaunt my liberties? Why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience? For if I by grace be a partaker. Why am I evil spoken of. For that which I give thanks.

How so? First Corinthians 8 verse 9. Take heed. Lest by any means this liberty of yours. Become a stumbling block.

To them that are weak. And again he is addressing the same issue. In first Corinthians 8. If any man see thee.

Which have knowledge. Sit at meat in the idol's temple. Now this about.

Is hard for me to grasp. Sitting in the idolatrous temple. What he is saying.

If any man see thee which have knowledge. Sit at meat in the idol's temple. So not the conscience of him that is weak be emboldened.

To eat those things which are offered to idols. And through thy knowledge. That the earth is the Lord's.

And the fullness are of. And the idol is nothing. And there is nothing unclean of itself.

I as a Christian. Can go get a meal. In the idol's temple.

Is that what he is saying? It almost seems like that. He says. You are sitting at meat.
In the idol's temple. And then one who is weak. Says.
Because you are doing it. I can do it too. But.
His conscience being weak. And through. Thy knowledge.
That the idol is nothing. That the meat offered to idols is nothing. Through thy knowledge.
Shall the weak brother perish. For whom Christ died. But when he sins so against the brethren.
And wound their weak conscience. Ye sin against Christ. Laying down.
My life. For the ministry. Of the saints.
I wonder. How many. Weak consciences have been emboldened.
To do something that they could not do in faith. Because their heart was not enlightened. And understanding.
And so therefore. They do it not in faith. And it's sin.
To them. So Paul says. In Romans 14 verse 15.
If thy brother be grieved with thy meat. Now walkest thou not charitably. Or in love.
Now these are hard words to hear. In American Christendom. Where everybody does right in their own eyes.
And I'm free to do what I want. I'm free to eat what I want. I'm free to drive what I want.
I'm free to wear what I want. I'm free to go where I want. And I don't have to answer to any man.
It's just between me and Jesus. Is that sound doctrine? No. And many weak conscience are emboldened.
And enter into sin. Because they see another Christian doing it. Well maybe.
She can. Maybe he can. But you cannot.
Maybe he can. But you cannot. But brethren.
If thy brother be grieved with thy meat. Now walkest thou not in love. Isn't the principle.
Of ministering to the saints. Rooted and grounded. In love.
And in love for my brother. In love for my sister. In wanting to see them prosper.
In wanting to see them grow. Wanting to see them abound. He says, let not.
Then your good be evil spoken of. For the kingdom of God. Is not in meat and drink.
Don't make such a big issue. Over that steak. I mean.

What am I willing to lay down. For the spiritual wherefore. Of my brother.
And my sister. A piece of meat. Put in there.
Whatever you wish. The kingdom of God. Is not in meat and drink.
But. Righteousness. Peace.
And joy. In the Holy Ghost. Righteousness.
Peace. Follow after those things. Which make for peace.
You know you can be right. Sitting at that. Idol's temple.
Eating your steak. But if your brother. With weakened conscience.
Sees you sitting there. And he says. He can do it.
I can too. Destroy not him with thy meat. For whom Christ died.
Destroy not him with thy liberty. My rights. The ministry of the saints.
Means. Laying down my rights. Let us therefore follow after the things.
Which make for peace. And things wherewith one may edify another. For meat.
Destroy not the work of God. Indeed. All things indeed are pure.
But it is evil for that man. Who eateth with offence. Evil for that man.
So what shall we conclude. Good brethren. It is good.
It is righteous. Neither to eat flesh. Nor to drink wine.
Nor anything whereby thy brother. Stumbleth. Or is offended.
Or is made weak. All things are lawful. For me.
Says Paul. But all things are not expedient. Just because they are lawful.
Doesn't mean it is expedient. All things are lawful for me. But all things edify not.
1 Corinthians 10.23 Wherefore. Paul concludes. If meat make my brother to offend.
I will eat no flesh. While the world standeth. Lest I make my brother to offend.
Paul you are pretty radical. You mean you will give up. Those good stakes.
For the rest of your life. What is. That little bit of meat.
Compared to the soul of a brother. The bible says. Destroy not him with thy meat.
And that word. Destroy. In it's context means.

By your own conduct. Cause another to lose eternal salvation. That's what it says.

That's strong. Paul. Why is my conscience.

Judged. My liberty is judged by another brother. He says destroy not him.

And he also says for meat. Destroy not the work of God. Pretty strong words here.

For us this morning. I won't eat any meat. I won't drink any wine.

Nor anything where by my brother. Stumbleth or is offended. Or is made weak.

So what is the conclusion. Brethren. Romans 14.

This will be a whole message in itself. So please bear with me. I will not have time.

To give it all that it needs. But let's listen to the conclusion. From Romans 14.

Verse 1. Him that is weak in the faith receive ye. Not to doubtful disputation. For one believeth that he may eat all things.

Another who is weak. Eateth herbs. Okay.

So what shall we do about this. In the church of Jesus Christ. One says.

I won't eat any meat. I mean with this business. Of it having an appearance of evil.

Connected to idolatrous worship. I am not going to eat meat. I am taking a stand against that thing.

One believeth he may eat all things. Says brother. You are taking it too far.

In my conscience. I am free to eat meat. What is the conclusion.

What is the right way. What shall we do with this issue in the church. Some will eat meat.

Some won't. Shall we make an agreement. And everyone agree to it.

Decide which way is right. And make an agreement. And settle this meat issue.

For once and for all. Shall we. Is that what we shall do.

And bring every man's conscience to bear. Into our conclusion and decision. Shall we do that.

Romans 14.3 Let not him that eateth. Despise him that eateth not. And let not him which eateth not.

Judge him that eateth. Why. Because.

God has received him. What if I judge my brother. And I say you are sinning.

By what you are doing. You are eating meat. Is wrong.

We got to settle this matter. And decide on this thing. And we got to make a judgment here.

Brethren I think we do err. If we carry some of these things too far. Beyond what the scriptures teach.

Let not him that eateth. Despise him that eateth not. And say well I am strong.

In my conscience I can eat. You baby Christian. When are you going to grow up.

Or the one who eateth not. Say I am strong. I don't have to eat that meat.

I like steaks too. But I gave them up. And you ought to too.

If you are going to be spiritual. And despise him. Why do you judge.

Your brethren in these matters. For God has received him. Who art thou that judges another man's servant.

To his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea he shall be holden up. For God is able to make him stand.

And it is not just meat we are talking about. One man esteemeth one day above another. Another esteemeth every day alike.

Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. Why? Because he that regardeth the day. Regardeth it unto the Lord.

And he that regardeth not the day unto the Lord. He does not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord.

For he giveth God thanks. And he that eateth not to the Lord. He eateth not and giveth God thanks.

Do we understand that? They both have right hearts. Don't they? They are both giving thanks unto God. They are both persuaded.

In their own mind. Knowing that they are doing the right thing for the glory of God. And are they both doing it for the glory of God? Are they? Yes.

None of us lives to himself. No man dies to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord.

Whether we die, we die unto the Lord. Whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died and rose.

And revived he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. Why dost thou judge thy brother? And why dost thou set at naught thy brother? And people do this. This is very sad.

When we set at naught a brother, that means putting him aside. Belittling him. Counting him as less than a new creation in Christ.

Brother Jeff. Counting him as less of a saint of God. Because he has not arrived yet at my persuasion and my conviction on this matter of meat or of feasts and new moons and Sabbath.

And so therefore we set him at naught. This is sin. This is not right.

Why dost thou judge thy brother? Or set him at naught? And he says, set at naught thy brother. For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. As it is written, as I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me and every tongue shall confess to God.

So every one of us then shall give account of himself to God. You know, this almost seems contradictory to what I was saying earlier. But it's not.

Just hear it out. So what's the conclusion? Paul, please tell us. How shall the church at Rome function? We have these that are set in their mind and fully persuaded in their conscience and they have conviction about these things.

We're not eating meat. And we have others who say, I'm persuaded, I give thanks to God and I eat meat. What is the answer? Well, let us remember.

Brethren, no man liveth or dieth to himself and every man shall give an account to God. And, he says, let's conclude this. With this let us not therefore judge one another anymore.

Let us not judge one another anymore in areas of grace and liberty to individual conscience before God. Let us not judge one another anymore. But judge this rather.

Now here, be hard on yourself and judge this. That no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. See, now it all goes right back to where we started.

Your brother's greed with your meat? Don't eat it. Lay down your life. Lay down your rights.

Even though you have liberty. Use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh but by love serve one another. What am I willing to give up? What am I willing to lay down for my brother? Or my sister? Brethren, ye that are spiritual, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye that are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

It takes real spirituality and Christian maturity. And I don't confess to have arrived. I have not arrived.

But I wonder if I could share some things this morning and just encourage us. He that is spiritual, when one is overtaken in a fault, restore that one. With Matthew 18.

Matthew 18 speaks of relationships in the church, in the brotherhood. Teaches us how to deal with sin. Teaches us how to deal with erring brethren.

It tells us that if your brother sins against you, go tell him his fault between thee and him. With how many others along? None. Go tell him his fault between thee and him alone.

Is this a command of Jesus? Is this one we can just push off and disobey? Can we push that one off any more and disobey it than we can? Let the woman be veiled. Let her be covered. If thy brother sinned against thee, go and tell.

Go and tell him his fault. If he neglect to hear thee, then share it with the other brethren in the congregation as a prayer request and let them know out of your concern for this brother. No, no, he doesn't say that.

If he neglect to hear thee, then take with thee one or two more that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established and entreat your brother. Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Oh, if he will hear thee at the first, thou gain'd your brother.

And nobody else knew about it. Now, how about that for church relationships? How about that for ministry of the saints in the body of Christ? If he will hear thee at the second admonition, thou has gain'd thy brother. And only three at the most know about it.

Isn't that beautiful? Isn't that wonderful? Didn't our Lord Jesus give us some very clear commandments and directions on how to function in a brotherhood? You know, as I was meditating on this for a long time, I don't come here this morning and just say these things. I trembled. I said, Lord, am I at a place where I can say these things? So, look at the other wicked, evil scenario.

Hellish, devilish scenario. My brother has sinned. Against me.

And I go tell someone else. And now they tell someone else. Do you think Jesus way is best? Or is our wisdom better? Is our way better? They caught her that day with evil motives in their heart.

Yes, she's a sinner. They say they caught her in the act. They say.

But their wicked, evil hearts are giving themselves away. Because it takes two to commit the sin. That they bring her before Jesus concerning.

But they bring just the woman. Jesus sees through their hypocrisy. He sees through their wickedness of their hearts.

And he stoops down and begins to ride on the ground. Doesn't tell us what he wrote. But one by one from the eldest to the youngest, they all left.

All the accusers left. As Jesus said, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone. They left being convicted one by one.

Are we somehow like that also? I don't know, but just don't see it. If we use the methods of telling others about the sin that is only known between two people. Are we not picking up stones and the gossip starts going? You know, I just like to make an application here this morning.

He that is without sin. The sin of neglecting to tell your brother between thee and him alone. And taking another witness.

And then finally bringing it to the church. And even if you hear the church after the whole congregation is aware of it. You still have gained your brother.

But if you will not hear then. Then let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican and not once before. Not once before.

Is that right? See, I just want to bring this home to my own heart as well. He that is without the sin of omitting to tell the fault between thee and him alone. You know, and I just plead with us.

We have people standing up here Sunday by Sunday. Different times giving testimony and saying, if you see anything in my life that is not Christ like, please come and tell me. But we excuse ourselves.

We say, well I don't have a relationship with that person. Matthew 18 doesn't say anything like that at all. It says if your brother sins or if he offends you go tell him this fault between thee and him alone.

This is very this is the deep burden of my heart in this message. You know, it takes a self-denial. It takes a spiritual love to go and treat one that is erring.

It's a lot easier to go and tell. How many found that out already? It's a lot easier to go and tell someone else as a prayer concern and as a burden. But have you talked to them? If you haven't talked to them, I believe it's like picking up stones.

Lord help us that those among us who are wrestling with issues and sin will know that they are loved and they'll know that they are cherished because our love puts shoes on it and finds its way to their door after having prayed. He says if you see a man sinning, 1 John, that is a sin that is not unto death, ye shall pray for it. Ye shall pray for it and then ye shall go share with them.

Or do we have the mentality we just want to get rid of them? They're not walking in all of the fullness of Christian maturity that I am. They should have gotten it long already. I can eat strong meat.

I'm a mature man. What's wrong with this other person? And so we're ready to stone them and just get them out of the way. They're a blot to our church.

There is a time for excommunication. There's a time to root out leaven. There is.

But it's the right time. There's issues that are serious and to defer would be sin. But there's issues where there's grace to be given one to another.

And to demand unity of consensus in the area would be sin. Oh Lord, help us. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification.

Let us seek to build one another up. Let us seek to edify in the body of Christ. You know, I know this is a heavy message.

And I'd like to bring more of a positive closure here. How shall we do this? How shall we lay down our life? How shall we minister to the saints in the body of Christ? In 2nd Corinthians 9:6 he says, This I say, he which soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly. And he which soweth bountifully shall also reap bountifully.

As every man has purposed in his heart, so let him give. Not scrudgingly or in necessity. For God loveth a cheerful giver.

You know, when I think of the ministry of the saints and I think of the house of Stephanus and how they had addicted themselves to the ministry. I believe they saw. I believe they saw the value in the saints and in the body of Christ.

And of giving themselves to that ministry. And laying down their lives. I believe they saw what fruit it would bring.

What glory to God it would bring. Ministry to the saints is very practical. It is a very practical outworking.

We do it on purpose. It's a ministry that desires and reaches out to bridge the gaps. And to bring those along.

It's a very practical ministry. It's hospitable. You get together on purpose to hear another brother's heart on a Sunday afternoon hospitality.

You get together to get to know each other and to share hearts about real issues. It has so many outworkings. I did feel like I differentiated more than I should have in the last time I shared in outer court ministry and inner court ministry.

And I described outer court ministry as ministry in physical things. And those which are ministering to the person, to the personal, physical needs and then verses the spiritual needs. But I want to say here today that I do believe they flow together.

And as ministry is shared in the outward physical needs it opens the door to heart ministry in needs of the heart. And I know that without ministry of hospitality especially to you sisters it requires a lot of sacrifice. You are already homeschooling.

You are already a busy mom keeping home home making and to take a meal to another sister or to go help her clean house or to send your daughter away to go help a young mother with a baby it is sacrifice. And I do not mean in the other message to minimize that or lower it that it's not an important ministry. It is very important.

When I think of all that you sisters do and the extra work that it brings to you when we have hospitality and we men can invite people home just like that. You know and we expect you to have the meal ready. And I know that you sisters are concerned about the state of the house.

You know for us men we can say, oh well it doesn't matter. Let's just quick pick up a little bit when we get home and we invite people home. But you know that's your that's your home.

That's your place of rest and comfort and working environment. And that's the place where often you feel judged by how well you are doing at home. And so we men need to be considerate when we just invite people home.

But I have to think of the different areas of hospitality like leadership seminars, youth bible schools and all the extra labor that you do. The extra laundries, the extra cleaning, the extra cooking, the extra dishes and all of those things. And that is a very worthwhile ministry.

It is not second rate at all. And I just wanted to balance that today. And it opens up the door.

It paves the way. It's not second rate to go help a brother who has a broken down vehicle or who has a need of a refrigerator or whatever it may be. Those are not second rate ministries.

They flow together into bridging of a relationship and a gap into a beautiful ministry that often goes deeper than into the spiritual and the emotional and the blessing of one another in that way. How shall we do this? Oh, let's do it bountifully. In 2nd Corinthians 9.60 says he that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly.

He which soweth bountifully shall also reap bountifully. As every man is purposed in his heart, so let him give. The ministry of the saints, it has a real practical outworking.

How many times sitting together in a Sunday afternoon in your living room, you have touched hearts with another family and you have shared together visions, dreams, you have shared together struggles, burdens and prayed together. This ministry is a very worthwhile ministry. It bringeth forth a beautiful fruit.

Paul shared concerning this in Philippians 4.16. He said ye sent once and again unto my necessity not because I desire a gift but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all and abound. I am full and have received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you.

Oh, they are an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God. Over in 2 Corinthians 9.12 he says for the administration of this service, not only supplyeth the want of the saints, but it is also, it is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God. You know, when a person's need is ministered to and is met, it causes thanksgiving to God to well up.

And he says, whilst by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them and unto all men, and by their prayers for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you. Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift. You know, there are so many ways of this ministry of the saints, that it produces such a beautiful fruit.

It lifts up prayers of thanksgiving to God, and prayers for you. You know, often we hear those in third world countries, those in persecuted Christian countries, where there is a channel of grace opened up for ministry from the saints here in America or other nations that are able to help. How that that flows in as such a beautiful ministration.

And those saints over there in Romania, or in Africa, or wherever they are, they get on their knees and they thank God for that ministration. They thank God for that food parcel they got through Christian Aid Ministries. They thank God for that Bible and those Bible stories, books they got, and they get on their knees and they pray for their sponsors and for their supporters.

This is a beautiful ministry. It brings about a beautiful fruit in the lives of God's people. In Philemon he says, Hearing of thy love and faith that thou has toward the Lord Jesus and toward all saints, that the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing, which is in you in Christ Jesus.

For we have great joy and consolation in thy love because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother. Oh, it's a refreshing ministry. It refreshes the saints.

And the Scriptures say in Proverbs, He that watereth shall be watered himself. You know, if we can just come to that place where we are able to share and minister the things that are the hardest and the most difficult. If we will go to our brother and tell him his fault between thee and him alone, I want to share something with you.

A gained brother is a tremendous blessing. A gained brother is a joy, and it just knits hearts together. Somebody loved me enough to come and share with me about my need.

Somebody cared enough and risked their own reputation because, you know, if the person is not in a place to receive it, they might be the one talking and say things about us or about you when you went to share. You know, hurting people often hurt other people and they are pretty hard to get close to and to minister to. But all I would to God that the Lord would cause us and help us to see this valuable ministry and even in the most difficult aspect that we would rise up in humble prayerful beseeching of one another.

Admonishing one another. I believe I said it this way once. We love our brother too much to let him be lame.

We love our sister too much to let him be lame. And we love our Lord Jesus Christ too much to go talk about them and their faults and sins. We believe the commandment of the Lord Jesus of how to resolve these conflicts.

It's a beautiful ministry. It refreshes the saints. And the watering one also gets watered.

Isaiah 58 says this. We'll close with this. Says, If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul.

And here we see them both. We see the hungry which I would believe could be in the physical sense and then satisfy the afflicted soul. The hurting.

The wounded one. Then shall thy light rise in obscurity and thy darkness be as the noon day and the Lord shall guide thee continually and satisfy thy soul in drought and make fat thy bones and thou shall be like a watered garden. Like a spring of water whose waters fail not.

Let's kneel together in prayer. Oh Father please have mercy upon us. Mercy upon me Lord.

Please baptize us with your love that constrains us. That love of Jesus who went about doing good. Father we just do pray.

Please take these words here today and just have your way God. Father who am I? Lord please take us on. Teach us to love one another.

Teach us to care one for another. Teach us this ministry in the body of Christ. Father I pray that if there's anything I shared that was of the flesh that was not of you.

Oh God please forgive and please let it fall by the way or please let my brethren come and share with me. Let us love one another. Let us grow in grace the knowledge of our Savior into a beautiful body with every joint ministering grace to the other joints, the other members in the body.

Father I confess I don't know how to do all of these things. I have not arrived. I need my brethren.

Father show us how much we need each other and how you just want to bless and bind us together in your purposes in your will for a beautiful testimony of the body of Christ here upon the earth. We commit ourselves unto you in Jesus name. We certainly want to open it up here for anyone to share.

Did you have something to share? Did you want to come? Okay. Thank you brother. I had to think of Romans 13.

It says here that love worketh no ill to his neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. I remember years ago that brother Denny had a message and he drew on the board here a picture of a cable bridge and the two pillars.

We all know how those cable bridges look. There is one pillar on this side of the river basically and one pillar on the other side of the river. And he drew those pillars and he made the analogy of one pillar being thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind, soul and strength.

And the other pillar being thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. And on all that on that cable and those cables that come down to hold up that roadway he made the analogy of them being the particulars in our

lives with our brethren and with the particulars of the Christian life that need to be worked out. But the predominant pillar is always love.

Love for the Lord our God and love for our neighbor. And the Bible says on all these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. Okay, I'd just like to open it up.

Is there someone who would like to share a confession or a testimony or a word of knowledge or wisdom with us as a congregation here? We'll get the mics around. Feel free to raise your hand if you desire a mic. Fr.

Robert. Amen. I was grateful for the message this morning.

Referring back to Matthew 18 as Jesus was teaching us the proper way to go into our brothers in a personal and private and corporate manner. As I begin to read on, we see just as Jesus concludes that Peter speaks up and says, Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Till seven times? Probably feeling a little righteous there allowing seven times to his brother to sin against him and he forgives him seven times but Jesus said, I say not unto thee until seven times but until seventy times seven. You know, Peter was saying, Lord, how often shall I go to him personally or how often shall I go to him privately? How often shall even I bring him to the church? How often shall I forgive him? Seven times Lord, is that sufficient? Is that enough? And he says, no, Peter, but seventy times seven, an innumerable amount.

And then he continues as he gives Peter that thought and he gives the parable there of the certain king which take account of his servants and we know how the one servant went before the king and owed him a small amount and the king forgave him and forgiven his debt and then that servant went out and he owed, or his servant owed him an amount and he told his servant came to him and begging him and asking him to forgive the debt or to have patience with him I believe and that same servant that was forgiven cast his servant into prison. And we know the outcome of that and when the king heard of that he grabbed his servant and all of his debt or all of his sin was required back to him. And 35 says, so likewise shall my heavenly father do also unto you if ye from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses.

And Jesus just ties that whole Matthew 18 15 through 17 I believe ties it in right there and concludes it there in verse 35 that if we fail on a continual basis to forgive our brothers and sisters, not only from our lips, but Jesus says in verse 35 from your hearts then also those trespasses that have been forgiven us will be brought back before us. I've noticed in dealing with people and counseling people if there is a root of bitterness they often cannot get through there may be other areas of their lives that need to be dealt with but until that root of bitterness is dealt with there is often a complete blockage there that you just can't and even you know Jesus mentions there that in that parable it says he handed him over to the tormentors till he paid all his due. I believe you know that's something to consider it's a matter of bitterness.

Others? Feel free to get your hand up. Sisters? Sisters want to share? I guess this is real Christianity.

This is where the rubber meets the road and to make it very personal thinking about how we as brotherhood make these things more difficult on our ministry I'd like to share a personal failure from many years ago families no longer in the congregation several sisters had come to me on an issue of modesty in another sister's life I learned a very painful lesson and I try now to say you go you go yourself but with the strength of several people's opinion I went to this sister and I said several have come to me the only words

that got out of my mouth before she was so stricken with pain I flattened her to the ground because no one had come to her so now as a minister's wife I was the bad guy and I was the one bringing down something to her whereas if I had come and I could say dear sister I'm

concerned and she would have had a witness in her heart yes so and so came so and so came there must be something to this that I'm not seeing and I guess from my own failure and how I hurt her from trying to add strength to what I said it's my heart's desire to endeavor in purity to always encourage each of us to go no one wants to go it's not fun to go it's very purifying to go because first we have to look at ourselves is our heart to help are we burdened or are we just judging so I offer that as a plea for ministry wives and ministers if relationships that we're talking so much about we can help the ministers have better relationships if we as a brotherhood will help lift those burdens by going individually amen thanks Jackie thank you you know I know that everyone is responsible for

his own his or her own sin you know a weaker brother let's consider like Aaron was sharing you know a weaker brother he may with a hurt like that be much more tempted to bitterness and all of those things than we who are stronger and you know more mature in the faith so let's consider that you know as we minister to one another to understand you know to understand like brother Aaron said to affect to go to one another so there's not hurts in all these divisions in the body of Christ I really appreciate these this series of messages I feel that it's an area that I have so much to learn in yet but it's where I want to go by showing me in a real way how the deceit deceitfulness of self righteousness can just be so much of an offense to ourselves and to others when we see ourselves in better

light than others or trying to press each other and other people into our box and appreciate the emphasis that Aaron put on just trying to almost demanding unity of conscience in particular areas and feeling that person doesn't come up to a certain level of righteousness unless they are where we are right that's deep and I do believe that there's a lot for me to learn a lot for us to learn just making sure that we're not worse than the one that we're desiring to correct or like was said we don't have a judgmental critical condemning attitude but that we have a true heart of love that people can see the spirit of Jesus flowing from us and that it's not just ourselves flowing that's coming to other people as a stench God bless us all in this I believe if we can get this in our hearts of

what this series of messages are about there will be a greater revival in this brotherhood and flowing out of this brotherhood into the community relationships among us than we've ever seen before I'm convinced it's what God wants for us God bless you brother Aaron Thank you Clair I had to think this morning also as you were sharing Aaron I know that our church in the past has been labeled as somewhat of a critical church and let's even let Aaron's message as we consider his message consider that in light of the community other churches that we're not doing this so that the testimony of our church can truly be that for other churches, for other individuals for the community we don't harbor that better than thou attitude so that's the message that often comes across when we have that

critical, when we have that critical and always talking down on other churches and so forth Go ahead brother Yes I'd like to open my heart because Jesus has put this on my heart that being a Christian, myself or any Christian has no right to talk about anybody in any way even through hurt and pain because I feel in my heart when we're doing that we're giving in to Satan and we don't want to give in to Satan and if we give in to Satan we're giving in to our flesh and I feel we need to pray more about asking and begging God for his grace, his help, his love because he's there for us all the time all we have to do is speak up if we don't speak up we're hurting God because he's there for us and in my life every time I do speak up, God's

there but if I don't speak up God's not there and I want

to I want to be a Christian for Jesus Christ I don't want to be a Christian for Satan I don't want to be a Christian for my flesh I want to shine and walk for Jesus 24 hours a day 7 days a week and it is a struggle it is a struggle to go to another brother and say I have something on my heart just like sister was saying you have to ask God for help we have to ask God for help every day of our life right now I'm asking God for help that I can speak through God not through my flesh, but through God just like when Mel gets up there, Emanuel gets up there Aaron gets up there, they pray for Jesus Christ to help them, and I'm praying for Jesus Christ to help me always, and we all should because he's the only one that's going to help us forever and ever because we can spend an eternity with him

and I'm not sure I understand that but I want to learn to understand an eternity with my creator forever and ever so I thank Jesus Christ that he saves me daily Amen Amen Robert, he saves me daily that's right I just thank the Lord for the message this morning I believe that every one of these things is true and uh I guess as I look at my own life and uh think about what was brought this morning in the ministry of the saints I believe that these things are true but what keeps me from putting them into practice or by putting them into shoe leather what is it that makes it hard for me to lay down my rights what is it that makes it easy for me to talk about my brother what is it and I think about the rulers in Jesus' day they're in the gospel of John it said that there were rulers in Jesus'

day that believed on him but they were not willing to confess him or they were not willing to let it work out in their lives and why was it? it's because they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God it takes inner strength to go to our brother we don't always know his response and his feelings but as we walk through obedience that's where the blessing comes

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