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Father, we thank you for this day. We thank you for your goodness and your blessings and all things that you have given us. Father, we thank you that we can be here today, that we can worship you, that we can be in your word. And, Father, we thank you for those of us who can do so safely today. And, Father, we lift up all of those around our nation today who are affected by the hurricane that came through.

We pray, Father, for their safety. We pray for the restoration of their homes and communities. We pray, Father, that you will comfort those who are experiencing loss. And, Father, I pray that in any way your people can be used, that you will use us in this catastrophe and to glorify your name. I pray, Father, as we go to your word, that you will teach us through your spirit that you will conform us to the image of your Son and that you will be glorified in doing so.

In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

All right, so welcome back to church. The only announcement really for today is just to be mindful of those who experienced the hurricane that came through this week. I've seen it in the news and media and it looks like it was a pretty devastating hurricane. So keep them in your minds, lift them up in prayer, and just be aware of that. We're going to continue our series today through Second Corinthians.

Just a reminder of what this book is about. Second Corinthians is actually the fourth letter written to the church in Corinth, and it takes place after the events of First Corinthians and a letter that we no longer have that occurred between 1st and 2nd Corinthians and then remember the occasion for writing. Paul made a visit to Corinth, and during his time in Corinth there were his short term there were issues, and these issues actually caused Paul to separate and break his promise to come back to them, at least for the time in this letter. During that time there was a lot of issues going on regarding whether or not Paul actually was an apostle, whether or not his gospel was a gospel, questions about his integrity and reliability, but that also raised questions to the reliability of the gospel that he preached. So this letter is to address that.

And so we're going to pick up where we left off. We are in chapter two today, starting in verse five, he says we're going to go through verse 13. He says, if anyone has caused pain, he has caused pain not so much to me, but to some degree. Not to exaggerate to all of you, this punishment by the majority is sufficient for that person. As a result, you should instead forgive and comfort him, otherwise he may be overwhelmed by excessive grief.

Therefore, I urge you to reaffirm your love to him. I wrote for this purpose to test your character, to see if you are obedient in everything. Anyone you forgive, I do too. For what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, is for your benefit in the presence of Christ, so that we may not be taken advantage of by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes. When I came to Troas to preach the Gospel of Christ, even though the Lord opened a door for me, I had no rest in my spirit because I did not find my brother Titus.

Instead, I said goodbye to them and left for Macedonia. Those last two verses are a different section, but I included them merely for the fact that they were such a short section without much to comment on. So if anyone has caused pain, he is not caused to me, he says, but to you.

This verse here is open to much speculation, much a lot unknown about who this person is. There are theories that this person is simply an unidentified person who caught, who did something grievous and was punished by the church. There's also speculation that this is somebody who specifically did harm to Paul and Paul, the church got upset, and Paul is now instructing them to forgive him. However, I don't find that argument very

likely, very probable. And then there is a lot of evidence, just as I've gone through commentaries and studied other people's work, that this guy is actually the guy from second.

Sorry, First Corinthians, chapter four. Four or five now I can't remember. So to refresh your memory, in First Corinthians, I believe it was four. There was a guy charged with sleeping with his father's wife. Right?

This guy is condemned by Paul. And Paul says to the church to put him out of their presence, right? To no longer fellowship with him, to no longer be in communion with him. This is a process that we know today as excommunication. So what we call it today, when a church formally dismembers a party, someone part of the church, and no longer has anything to do with them.

However, the purpose of excommunication in that context is not to write somebody off forever, but the purpose of excommunication in that context is actually to bring them to repentance. That's the purpose all church discipline, whether it involves removing someone from the congregation or not, it's designed to bring to repentance. Repentance, right. This also would explain why Paul says that this guy has not caused pain to Paul, but to all of you. He's right into Corinth.

Right? And this guy's sin in Corinth would have done damage to everyone. It would have damaged them in the sense of disappointment, right? We can't. We can't believe a brother of ours has done this.

It can cause pain to them in the sense of we feel pain for our loved ones who are doing wrong things. We do. We feel pain for those people. It could cause pain in the sense of hurt in the ministry in Corinth. Right.

If a member in our local church, our churches, especially in our Utah context, are tiny, right. They're small. And if someone in our small church causes a problem, whether it's adultery or a division or any other form of issue, it actually stains the ministry in that area, it makes it very difficult to go out and to share the gospel, to tell people we follow Christ as a whole church because. Because the way the world works, right, if someone in the church does something wrong, it gets affiliated back to the church. So in various different ways and meanings, this guy, whoever he is, has caused pain to everyone in Corinth.

We don't know for sure that it's the guy from 2nd Corinthians 1 Corinthians 4, but it's probable, it's likely. I do want to point out something though. This passage, we talk about forgiveness, and I pointed this out last week as well. Notice Paul does not name who the guy is. Paul assumes that the church knows who this guy is.

Second, Paul does not rehash what this guy has done, right? Forgiveness is not about rehashing things. Forgiveness is not about sitting down and saying, this is my perspective, this is your perspective. And hash it out and come to a conclusion. Forgiveness is about putting the past in the past, letting it go and no longer holding on to it, right?

Either in your own heart or against the person, when you forgive, you are just moving forward. So he says this. He says the punishment by the majority is sufficient for that person. So what he's telling us is this person had been punished by the majority. And there are two ways to interpret this.

Just due to. We've seen, as we've been going through first and second Corinthians, Greek to English, sometimes caused issues. Two ways we can interpret this. Either the fact that the majority punished him, right, excommunicated him, no longer fellowshiped with him, means that there were a minority in the church who did not agree with the punishment or the majority here can also be used to describe the body, right? The punishment by the body is sufficient for that person.

In other words, the punishment did what it was intended to do. Excommunicating the guy, no longer having fellowship with him, bringing him into gatherings, eating meals with him, pushing him out, did its intended thing

and brought him to repentance church. After someone's come to repentance, it is no longer in our purview to continue to discipline them. Discipline from a church viewpoint, stops at repentance. So Paul says, as a result, you should now forgive and comfort this person.

Forgiveness needs to happen on a church level when things done affect the church. An issue between me and another private person will not always involve the church and does not need forgiveness on a church that. However, issues of adultery, incest, like in the case of the guy from first Corinthians or any other major issue, to the extent that the church gets involved, also requires forgiveness from the church. Not just that I forgive the person, but that the church forgives the person collectively, that we welcome that person back. And then it says, comfort him.

Remember, we've been talking about the word comfort starting last week. And comfort is not the feeling that we associate with comfort today, but it's to encourage, right? It says, so to comfort him is to encourage him. We need to encourage those people to look to Christ, to press on, to stay away from the sins that got them removed from the Presence in the first place. Encourage them.

And not just for that stuff, but also so that they do not become overwhelmed with excessive grief. They've repented, they've turned from their sin. And we can cause more pain by continuing to discipline such a person, right? Not just more pain, but more problems than the forgiveness. Therefore, Paul says to love that person.

Now, there's a reason Paul is writing this. And he tells us in verse nine, he wrote this to see if they would be obedient, right? They were not obedient initially in excommunicating the guy. This guy is sleeping with his mother or his stepmother, in any case, an issue. And he's coming to church, and he's engaging at the church.

And Paul had to specifically tell them, hey, put a stop to that. Get rid of him. Now Paul says, I will test to see if you are obedient in everything. Will they be obedient in forgiving him back into the church? Obedience is not just in one thing, but in all things.

We must be obedient to practice discipline within the church, but we also must be obedient to forgiving the church. God is a God of forgiveness, a God of grace and mercy. And we need to be obedient and within his will. And it is not God's will that we indefinitely discipline people. It is in God's will that those people are brought to repentance and brought back into the body of Christ.

So Paul says that anyone you forgive, I do too, right? He says, for what I have forgiven, if there's anything to forgive. In other words, Paul's saying, look, this guy did not hurt me, but I forgive the guy. I forgive him as well. And it's for the benefit of the church in Corinth that Paul forgives them.

To lead by example. But here is one of the biggest reasons to forgive people collectively as a church within the church, so that we may not be taken advantage of by Satan.

Satan has never changed his ways. Right. He's the same.

He uses the same tactics today as he did a thousand years ago. And isn't it in his benefit if we are fighting each other?

That doesn't benefit Christ. It does not benefit God. It benefits Satan. And Satan can take advantage of our internal issues. He could take advantage of an argument between you and me or you and someone else.

He could take advantage of any situation. And by forgiving and bringing back in and encouraging and loving and pointing back to God, we can prevent Satan from taking advantage. There's several ways in which Satan can take advantage. He can take advantage in the sense that that guy is becoming discouraged, right. With

excessive grief because he's repented, but he's not being welcomed back in.

And in that situation, he can actually turn the guy back to sin. But he can also take advantage in the community. Right. And cause people to believe what? This church isn't really a godly church.

This church doesn't practice forgiveness. This church doesn't love this church. Right. Both sides of this issue are detrimental to Christianity. So we forgive because God forgives, we forgive because it's his will.

And we forgive to prevent Satan from taking advantage of the situations. Now, in 12 and 13, Paul had told us that a door opened for him to go to Troas to preach the Gospel of Christ, but he was unable to because of the conflict between him and Corinth. Right. When he went to Troas, he expected to see Titus, expected to receive good news that Corinth had forgiven him, that they are reconciling, and he was unable to rest until that happened. And this actually affected his ministry.

Right. This disturbed him so much that he was unable to preach the Gospel. I actually find that very interesting. This is Paul we're talking about about.

And Paul needs to turn down an opportunity to preach because he is troubled. That also goes to show, though, and I want us to be aware as a result of that, God does not need us. And by that I mean if something happens that prevents me from being able to minister, God can use someone else. God can bring in another person. He can use someone from a different background.

He can. We are not needed in the sense that the kingdom of God either rises or falls in our hands. Let's read our next passage. I believe, because I left my notes on my desk with my. I believe we're going to go through verse three of chapter three says, but thanks be to God, who always leads us in Christ's triumphal procession and through us spreads the aroma of the knowledge of him in Every place.

For to God, we are the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. To some, we are an aroma of death leading to death, but to others, an aroma of life leading to life. Who is adequate for these things? We're actually going to stop right there. So Paul turns from.

From forgiveness to. From his ministry and his missed opportunity to praising God, right? Even though I've been troubled, even though I missed this opportunity. Thanks. Praise be to God.

Look how he sees this. Even in his missed opportunity, he says that God is leading him, right? God always leads us. Now, I stopped before the end of that sentence, but I want to focus real quick on Paul's outreach. Look, even in.

He wanted to go back to Corinth, and he's not in Corinth. He wanted to preach in Troas, and he's not preaching in Troas. He longed, we read in Acts and Romans to be in Rome, and it took him years to get to Rome. And he says, even in my shortcomings, even in my troubles, my distress and my missed opportunities, God is leading me, right? So he recognizes, though I have plans and I have ambitions and I may even make promises that I don't keep.

Like he didn't get back to Corinth. He says, thanks, right? Praise be to God who is leading me. He recognizes that God's still in control. Now, let's look specifically at what he says about God leading us.

God always leads us in Christ's triumphal procession and through us spreads the aroma of knowledge of him in every place. So to understand what this is talking about, we must understand the culture to whom Paul is preaching. He's preaching to a heathen culture with Greco Roman principles and practices. And in their practices, generals after a war or emperors, when they entered a region, would lead a procession, right? There

would be.

There would be music. There would be. It talks about aroma here, right there. They actually had people who would go and spread perfumes and aromas ahead of the coming of the person and then behind them. Particularly if this was a victory in a war or a battle, they would drag bound and chained prisoners of war in this procession of victory to show off what they had captured.

So we need to understand that Paul is using this imagery here. And he says, God is always leading us in Christ's triumph procession, right? Christ is triumphal. He is victorious. But Paul pictures himself as the captured slave being led in the procession of Christ.

Now, this aroma here, as Christ leads us on this procession, we spread the aroma of knowledge of him. So we spread knowledge of Christ as we are traveling, as we are going through life, as we are being led by Christ. But this knowledge of Christ is actually twofold, right? He says, we are the fragrance of Christ among those being saved and among those who are perishing, right? It's twofold.

It says to some we are an aroma of death leading to death, and some an aroma of life leading to life. Life, right? To the people who are perishing, we are an aroma of death. For we preach unto them their impending death. We expose to them their sin right through God's spirit, through his Word.

And as they reject Jesus, they there are to those perishing, they are dying, and we bring to them knowledge of death. And then to those who are on the path to life, to those who know Christ, who accept him, we bring an aroma of life leading to life. Our message is not a message of death, it's a message of life. It's a message that God has loved you and died for you and risen again for you, and that in his death we can pass from death into life. That's our message.

And for those who receive it, we bring to them an aroma of life.

From here, Paul talks about the message that he brings and he's going to go back on the defense. Remember, this is written in response to opposition regarding his apostleship. So he is going to go back on the defense here. But he ends, we ended right there. He says, who is adequate for these things?

Right? Who is adequate to preach these things, to receive these things? Look what he says in verse 17. For we do not market the word of God for profit like so many. On the contrary, we speak with sincerity in Christ as from God and before God.

Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, like some letters of recommendation to you or from you? You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone. You show that you are Christ's letter delivered by us, not written with ink, but with the spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts.

So the first thing that he says here to defend himself is, he says, we do not market the word of God for profit. And he clarifies this as so many do. There are people out there who use the word of God to make a profit, right? In today's day and age, it's very easy to spot them. They're often on TV, right?

If you send in \$5, we will pray for you and your issue will go away. For a gift of a hundred Dollars, all of your dreams will come true at. And they use the word of God and they dump that Bible as a way to prompt you into giving them money. But Paul says we don't do that. Right.

If there is something, anything to show that his question as a church leader should not be questioned, he says, we don't do this for a prophet. We're not marketing the word of God, but we are speaking and traveling and

preaching a sincerity in Christ. He says, our message comes from God and we preach it to you before God, and we do so out of love and concern for you. We often have seen that Paul refuses money. We've seen, we saw in, in First Corinthians when Paul demonstrated how to sacrifice to love others.

He said, I will preach for free. I will offer it for free. That's my sacrifice. And then he gets into what we would call today ordination. Ordination did not.

It wasn't called the same thing back then. He says, do we need letters of recommendation to you or from you? Back in the first century, the way someone was ordained is a church would often send with that person a letter from the church or to another church authenticating the person that they sent, saying, as a church, we approved this guy to go and preach or to go and do a missionary trip or to go and do this. It was a way of giving them recognized authority from the church. Paul's question is, do we need that?

That's an important question because it comes up today, right? For a lot of pastors, they're asked by prospective churchgoers who come into their church, are you ordained? Where were you ordained? Who ordained you? Right?

For a pastor's looking to go on a mission trip, trip and preach in other churches and encourage, they might be asked, are you ordained? Where were you ordained? Who ordained you? What denomination ordained you? For pastors asking for support, they may be asked that.

Or for prospective pastors or pastors applying to pastor in another church, the question of ordination can come up to answer the question. If anyone wants to know, yes, I'm ordained. But let's look at Paul's question, do we need letters of recommendation? Here's what he says. You yourself are our letter.

What Paul says here is, I don't need a letter of recommendation either to you or from you, because you yourself are the letter. The fact that they have come to know Christ, the fact that they have turned so far from their gentile ways, the fact that the gospel is spreading through his ministry, his own character is proof enough that God has sent him and God has Ordained him. Ordination as we know it is a man made construct. The only true ordination that is required is a call from God to go into ministry. And that ordination can be verified through the person's preaching, through the person's character and through their ministry, right?

If people are getting saved and coming to God, praising God, worshiping Christ, that is verification of the ministry, right? There. Paul says it in verse three. He says, you show that you are Christ letter. And he says, deliver not with writing, in ink, but the Spirit of the living God, right?

Not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts. In other words, he's saying, he gives two statements here. They show it because of what's in their heart, the way they are now living, the God they are now serving. The Spirit of God working in them is evidence, right? Not.

Not ink written on a scroll saying, we in Corinth authorized Paul to go to Troas and preach the Gospel, but the fact that they have been delivered and they follow Christ. And then he says, not on tablets of stone, but tablets of human hearts. This goes back to Ezekiel, where God had promised, right, the law which we're going to talk about in depth here in just a moment or in a way in depth. The law was given to Moses on tablets of stone, and the law brings with it death. But in Ezekiel, God promised to write his law on our hearts and to remove our heart of stone and give us a living heart.

When God writes on our hearts his law, we live righteously and obediently. Not because we have to, not because we're scared. If we don't do this, we will face eternal judgment. But we do so because God changed the nature of our character, right? So what Paul is saying is God had fulfilled his promise in Ezekiel to give

them his law written upon their hearts.

As we continue Paul, we're going to go to verses four through six. Paul is going to describe to us from here through the end of this chapter the differences between the Old and New Testaments. He says, such is the confidence we have through Christ before God. It is not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God. He has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit.

For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. So he says this. He says, we have confidence through Christ before God, and the confidence that they have is not from themselves, right? They do not claim that their message comes from them, but their message comes from God. And the adequacy to fill the role of apostle or pastor or missionary evangelist comes from God.

And he says this about it. It does not come from the letter, but from the Spirit. And there is a difference between the letter and the Spirit. Christ showed us examples of that difference in a Sermon on the Mount. He says, the law says, thou shalt not commit adultery.

But I say, if you look at a woman with lust in your eyes, you've committed adultery. He says, the law says, thou shalt not kill or murder. He says, but I say, if you've had hatred in your heart, you are already guilty of murder, right? So we see these things. And that's where the tenth commandment, thou shall not covet, comes into play.

There's the letter of the law. But the letter of the law is not the issue. It's the Spirit that is the issue. Christ demonstrated clearly the difference between obeying the letter and having a spirit opposed to the letter. I can physically not commit adultery to obey God's word, but if I have it in my heart to commit adultery, it doesn't matter, right?

The letter. It says, the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. Here is the thing with the law of God. The law of God is a great blueprint to demonstrate to us the moral capacity in which God desires us to live. We know how God wants us to live.

Why? Because of the law. The fact that we shall not murder, shall not steal, shall not bear false witness, shall not commit adultery. All of these things, they are God's law that tells us how to live. It's his expectation.

But that cannot change you to live that way. While the law tells us how we ought to live, the law cannot produce in us the change required to obey it. So it brings death. It shows us what to do, condemns us for not doing it. And a law requires a penalty for violating it.

So the law brings death, but the Spirit gives life. The Spirit of God can change us, can change our heart, can change our nature and prompt us into obedience, right? So the Spirit gives life. The Spirit not only brings a message of how God wants us to live, but brings the power to convert us to live that way. He says this now, verse seven.

Now at the ministry that brought death, chiseled in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites were not able to gaze steadily at Moses face because of its glory which was set aside. How would the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious? For if the ministry that brought condemnation had glory, the ministry that brings righteousness overflows with even more glory in fact, what had been glorious is not glorious now by comparison, because of the glory that surpasses it. For if what was set aside was glorious or endures, will be even more glorious. Since then we have such a hope.

We act with great boldness. We are not like Moses, who used to put a veil over his face to prevent the Israelites from gazing steadily until the end of the glory of what was being set aside. But their minds were

hardened. For to this day, at the reading of the old covenant, the same veil remains. It is not lifted because it is set aside only in Christ.

Yet still today, wherever Moses is read, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their hearts. But whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. Now the Lord is the Spirit. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. We all with unveiled faces are looking as in a mirror at the glory of the Lord and being transformed into the same image.

From glory to glory. This is from the Lord, who is the Spirit. Okay, so this passage has a lot of themes in it, a lot of different components in it, but it's pretty straightforward here. So first he tells us this. The law, the law of Moses, and what Moses brought had glory, while Paul tells us that the law brings with it death.

Paul has in no case condemned the law or thought the law was bad. Being the holy and righteous law of God, it brings with it a glory. And then Moses brought with it a glory, as it were in the Old Testament, in the covenant between God and Israel. But he says this about that covenant. That covenant was not everlasting.

That covenant was meant to show them what Christ would do, what he would do to replace it, what he would do to take care of the problem forever. And he says, so it was to be set aside. It was always intended to be set aside, and its glory ended. Not only did its glory end, but it faded. So he says, if this law had so much glory and was intended to be set aside, how much more glory would the new covenant have that was intended to last forever?

And then he gives another comparison between the old and New covenants. He says, because we have such a hope, we act with great boldness. In other words, he says, because of the hope we have in Christ, we can preach boldly. We can proclaim that there is forgiveness of sins. We can proclaim that there is everlasting life.

We can proclaim the Gospel of Christ, and we can do so without fear, for we have a hope of eternal life and a resurrection in Jesus. He says, we are not like Moses. It says that Moses used to put a veil over his face. So we have to go all the way back to the book of Exodus to understand what's going on. And after the second time that Moses went up on the mountain to see God, you'll remember when he came down, it said that his face shone, shined, shone with great brilliance, right?

Moses was physically changed every time he went into the presence of God. So much so that light came off of his face. And so he would cover himself to prevent the Israelites from staring. And then it says that his pattern was in front of the Israelites. He became.

And then when he went before God, when he went into the temple, the tabernacle, he would have removed the covering from his face before God. Now it tells us this. We know two things about this. We know that the glory of the old covenant faded with the coming of the new covenant. But also we know the glory of Moses face faded every time he went back before God.

The glory on his face, the brilliance would return. But then, as the days and weeks and months went by in between his visits, that glory would fade away, right? It was a fading glory, which is part of why he covered his face.

But it says that the Israelites hearts were hardened, right? They are not open to the forgiveness of sins through the sacrificial lamb of Christ. They are not open to the new covenant, and they are not open to the Lord Jesus Christ. Right? There is a veil that lies over their hearts.

But here's what it says. It says whenever a person turns to the Lord, that veil is removed.

The veil is removed when you turn to God, when you turn to him, and you not only acknowledge him, but give your life to Him. The veil that prevents you from knowing God, that prevents you from understanding his will and His Word, that prevents you from having direct communion with God, it's removed from you. But here's what's cool. Moses is the one who removed his veil when he went in the tabernacle. But God is the one who removes your veil.

It is removed to never go back on.

Now it says this. The Lord is the Spirit.

It says this two times. It says it here and in the last verse says, this is from the Lord, who is the Spirit. And this is a rather confusing statement because when we hear the Lord, who do we think? We think Jesus Christ. And when we hear the Spirit, who do we think we think?

The Holy Spirit. We also are taught in Christianity, the Trinitary, we are taught that the Father is God and the Son is God, and the Spirit is God, but the Father is not the Son or the Spirit. And the Son is not the Father of the Spirit, and the Spirit is not the Father of the Son. So now we have a statement here that is confusing. It says the Lord is the Spirit.

We are seeing two things here. We are seeing first, the close relationship between Jesus and the Spirit. And there is a very close relationship. In the book of Romans, Paul calls the Holy Spirit the Spirit of Christ, right? So they are very, very closely tied together in their.

They're two separate beings, but they're still one God and they're tied very closely together. But second, what we are seeing here in verse 17 is we are confirming the deity of the Holy Spirit. We are confirming and saying that the Lord is the Spirit. We are confirming, saying that the Holy Spirit is God.

And then he says, where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. We need to understand the freedom that Paul is using here. He's not using freedom in terms of Christian liberty, right? That's the freedom we tend to think of. But he's using freedom here in terms of the ability to boldly proclaim the gospel, right?

We don't. Moses covered his face, but we do not. We get the context. In verse 18 he says we with unveiled faces, right? We don't put a veil on when we go and preach the gospel like Moses did, but we preach the Gospel boldly.

And he says, with our unveiled faces, we look in a mirror as at the glory of the Lord.

The Lord lives inside of us and everyone who he lives inside has the glory of God inside of him because God physically dwells inside of him, right, in the Spirit and is being transformed into the image of the glory of the Lord. So we have the glory of the Lord right now as we get it, but on a day by day, right? This, this idea of being, it says end, are being transformed, right? This is a passive and present verb. Passive in the sense of we do not transform ourselves.

We cannot make ourselves holy or righteous or better. The Spirit of God does that. It does it to us. We have to allow him to. But God is the One who changes us and makes us better and conforms us into his image.

So it's passive, but it's also present. It's happening right now and it's happening tomorrow in the next week. Until death, until the grave. We are presently being conformed into the glory. As our walk with God increases, as our righteousness and holiness increase, in our obedience to God, we become more and more like Him.

And it says this again, says this is from the Lord who is the Spirit. So today Paul demonstrated a few things. He

demonstrated forgiveness, that we are to forgive our brothers who have repented for their sake and for ours. He has demonstrated why he is qualified to be an apostle. Not because he has letters from the Church, but the Church itself bears witness in the fact that they follow Christ and their new lives.

That Paul is an apostle. And he demonstrates the newness of the new covenant and the greatness of it over the old covenant. Right? Namely that the old covenant brought to us the law which brings death and the new covenant brings to us the Spirit which brings life. And with that said, you may be here today and not have the Spirit of God, but you think, hey, I'm a good person, I follow the law, I do the best that I can.

But you're still a law breaker. And violating the law has a penalty. And the penalty of violating the law of God is death. But the Spirit of God brings to you life. Life.

And he says that this life is based on what Christ did when he died for us and traded his righteousness for our wickedness. And we can have this life by acknowledging that Jesus is the God man who came here and believing that he rose from the dead and confessing him as our Lord, our Savior. Right? But our Lord, right, confessing him as the person who dictates the rest of our lives.

And from there it says he will save you. Right? Not on what you can do or what you will do, but on what he has done. And that is the gift of God, that we can be saved and have such a hope and have life in God. If you are ready for that when we go to our closing prayer, I will help you verbalize those things to God.

But you need to know it's not the prayer that saves you. It is that belief and confession. After a closing prayer, we'll partake of the Lord's communion for those who want to stick around and partake with us. And then I will see everybody else here next, next Wednesday at 6:30 as we continue our study through the book of Luke. Let's pray.

Father, I know that I am a sinner. And I know that I have violated your law. And I know that there's a penalty for that law, which is death. But I'm also told that your spirit brings life. And I believe God that Christ is the God man creators of the heaven and the earth, that he came here and lived and died.

And that he rose again the third day. And I confess you, Lord and King Jesus as the Lord over my life. And I will follow you. And I ask you for this free and precious gift. Father, I pray as we end here tonight, that you will work in us, in our hearts, as individuals and the church, to forgive those who have trespassed us for their sake, for our sake, and for your sake, Father, that you would be glorified.

I pray, Father, that we would prioritize character and change in people's lives over letters written by men. And I pray, Father, as well, that we will seek the glory of your kingdom. That we will seek you, Father. That we will be turned from the letter into the spirit. In Jesus name we pray.

Amen. Okay, I'll.