



LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

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Sermon Title

Joseph Greets His Father

Preacher

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02/01/26

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♪ Nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee!
E'en though it be a cross that raiseth me,
still all my song shall be,
nearer, my God, to thee;
nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee!

♪ Though like the wanderer, the sun gone down,
darkness be over me, my rest a stone;
Yet in my prayers I'll be
nearer, my God, to thee;
nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee!

♪ Then, with my waking thoughts bright with thy praise,
out of my stony griefs my song I'll raise;
So by my woes to be
nearer, my God, to thee;
nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee!

♪ Or if, on joyful wing breaking the sky,
sun, moon, and stars forgot, upward I fly,
Still all my song shall be,
nearer, my God, to thee;
nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee!

This is the Word of God. Heavenly Father, we bless you for giving us a reliable, a trustworthy, an ancient, a historic record of your people in a foreign land. And we thank you for giving us the opportunity to examine it today, that we may apply it and that we may learn in this narrative of the book of Genesis. And that our work

today would be increased because of our understanding of the history of your people. In Jesus name we pray, amen. Amen.

As you're being seated, what we have, obviously, there's a lot going on here. We have a long list of names. And listen, my encouragement, at one point this week I thought, you know what, I could just say, when I get to around verse 8, I could just say, here's the names of all the sons of Israel, now jump over here now with me to verse 27 or 28 and move along, and save you a lot of misery. And we would not have done any harm. to the history, but then as the week progressed, it was my conviction that we want the hearing of the word of God. Every word of it is for our good. And so where we do put emphasis upon the actual reading out loud, the text that we're going to examine in the day. Maybe you're not going to sit here and go, oh boy. I mean, some of you may be picking out new names for new children. I don't know. Here's a whole list of them. And I guarantee you, you'll never meet somebody with these names. Well, I shouldn't guarantee that, because it's possible there are two families in here who pick out the same name.

But what we can know here, the benefit of this, Yeah, I'm not going to read it again because, as I've already told you, you won't recognize half the names I read the second time because they'll be pronounced differently. But what it is, it is the work of the Holy Spirit doing this in our minds, through our ears, our eyes as they land on all of this. This is reliable text. We can trust it.

Now, I'll be the first to acknowledge to you Sometimes we come across pieces in this text that seem to have contradictions in it. At some points we see numbers of armies that go out in the Kings and then we read the Chronicles and it's a different number or it's a different name. Those things are not problematic for us, but we need to know going in that there are these ways of calculating and the ways the historians recorded things. It's to our good.

For example, Out of this text, you remember, whenever you're reading through the book of Acts, that Stephen, just before he's stoned, he gives a retelling of the ancestors of Jacob. Now, I don't think that's why they stoned him, because he took the time to tell them the names and the numerical countings of them all. But Stephen is doing something, even there, that's observable for our good. These things are important. There's nothing to miss here. And now it may not show up in your deep devotional readings, but it will stand here as a work of the Holy Spirit to fortify our souls in the confidence of God.

Now, whenever you read that account of Stephen in the book of Acts, Stephen's number is 75. instead of 70. So I'm just bearing, I'm showing out. Here's one of those places where the naysayers like to come along and say, aha, we got you here. The Old Testament mentions 70, and Stephen's sermon says 75. Well, it's really not a problem, at least logically, because we actually even hear a couple of times in this reading that this number does not include these children. It doesn't make them insignificant or unimportant. It's just a notation of the narrative.

And so then whenever we read Stephen's sermon and we see that his number comes to 75, we can come to some logical conclusions. His numbering is with and the insertment of those who would be missing as well as we have language changes from Hebrew to Greek. We have a Septuagint. You and I have Latin in between all of these. And then we have an English. So there's a lot of translational work that goes on. And say, blessed be the name of the Lord. This is extraordinarily reliable. The records, the copies of these that we have, they show And one of the best things about this is that the scribes or the translators don't try to fix what they think is a problem. They leave them there. And it's actually really important for us to note this, because whenever we're making

defense of the reliability of Scripture, we can say, no, this did not come to me with fixed numbers. This comes to us with an understanding of the ways in which certain people's count and translations or languages receive. So we can just come there with a greater confidence.

So let me encourage you, you don't need to, when you get to the book of Acts, you don't need to correct Stephen's speech there to read 70 instead of 75, nor do you need to make note here that this 70 should have been 75. You should just go ahead and note, blessed be the name of the Lord. Matter of fact, if you have a study Bible, There's probably a footnote that's listed there. It's already taken you there, and you can see that. But it's important that as we examine our way and navigate through the reading, the hearing, and then the examination of this, we do have this kind of a reliable text.

Now, let's get to that, and that's important. So I almost said, now let me get to the important thing. Let me get to additional important things. And that is, okay, so we also have in this larger block of text, we see Joseph instructing his brothers, hey, whenever I introduce you to Pharaoh, he's gonna ask you some questions, and let me give you the cheat sheet, here's how you should answer him. So we have that in the reading, and then it's followed by the meeting, and sure enough, Pharaoh asks, and the brothers answer, and so we have almost a retelling of the same block of text. But one is an instructive and the other is an application. I would say even in that is to our good, that when we read what would be clear instructions in the Word of God, that whenever we come to actually doing and living out, that we do what we're instructed to do. And that's actually a pattern. It's a discipline. So it's somewhat of a a stand-alone or stand-aside kind of a moment for us to observe it, acknowledge it, and say, you know what, there's value in that we were led in on the conversation between Joseph and his brothers, and now we're in the conversation between Pharaoh and Joseph's brothers. And we just see instruction followed by application.

This would be one of the ways in which I want to encourage you parents of how important it is to be teaching your children these catechisms. Now, if you would like the larger list of those, I usually draw from about three different catechisms. I usually publish a list of those in advance. And I think right now I have these ready all the way through the month of May, or at least into May of 2026. If you'd like that list, I'd be happy to give you that so you know what's coming. Also, if you're not on our church email list if you'll just email me this week I'll make sure you get it on on it and there will be this week this next week's catechism question Dads moms you can then be teaching these things to your children.

So you're instructing So here's the purpose of this there's instructing Here's what you should do whenever this situation comes up when this thought comes into your mind. Here's how you should defend it and then Whenever your children, as they grow in the fear and the admonition of the Lord, by the grace of God, they'll begin to recall these instructions that you've given to them, and they will enact accordingly and appropriately.

So now, let's see. There's two primary things that I think are worth, really almost, this could have been a part one and a part two out of this block of text, and to some degree, That is exactly what this is. It's going to be my attempt in the next 15 to 20 minutes to get through both sections or both main points that are here in this text. I think there's more here, but there's at least these two main things.

One is I want to see how verses 1 through 6 help us see Jacob in light of how the narrator uses and exchanges the name Israel and Jacob. And so why does he do that? We've already kind of noted this along the way, that sometimes the narrator will call Jacob Israel, and sometimes the narration will call Jacob Jacob. And so there's a

reason for this. We want to see what this is. And we want to see, especially in these first six verses, what is this that the Holy Spirit wants us to see in this text, that it's just not simply part of the migration of God's people from Canaan to Egypt. It is that. But remember, we have decided that when we read the Word of God, that the primary work of the Word of God is to teach us about God. The secondary aid of the Scripture is to show us who we are in relationship to God. And then tertiary, or fourth or fifth down the road, is that we would know the history. And those are all important things. But primarily, what does this text tell us about God? And what does it show us about ourselves?

So look again there in those first six verses. Notice in verse 1 and 2, and this is, by the way, we've already seen this at the close of chapter 45 in verse 27 and 28. So let me even take you one step backwards. into the 45th chapter. Let me read verse 27 and 28 and notice how the narrator will use both Israel and Jacob. And then he continues this pattern in chapter 46. Alright, chapter 45 verse 27. Then he told him all the words of Joseph, this is the brothers speaking to their father, all the words of Joseph that he had spoken to them. And when he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of their father Jacob revived. Then Israel said, it is enough. My son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.

So the narrator's using Jacob and Israel. It's Charles Spurgeon that was most helpful for me on this, that he makes this observation that Jacob is the name of his weakness. And so when the narration, after Jacob receives his new name of Israel, that the narrator is doing something important for us. That when he uses the name Jacob, he's referring to his flesh or his weakness. And when he uses the name Israel, there's multiple things that will happen here.

Back to Jacob, he's also speaking many times that when the word Jacob is used, he's speaking to about him specifically. Now that'll be a bit complicated because it'll work the same when he uses the name Israel. He's speaking to him specifically, but it's also applicable to the whole household or to the whole nation. So Jacob, When the name Jacob is being used here, it is for weakness. It's to describe his weakness. And when Israel is being used, it's a tip of the hat to the strength that Jacob has. So it's in his weakness that God makes him strong.

You'll begin to almost immediately begin to cross-reference moments in your mind where you hear about how God brings us in weak and broken, unable, completely unable to be righteous altogether. And what does God do? But He brings righteousness to us. He strengthens us. He fortifies us. It's not that It's not that we had enough strength to believe part of the way, and so God comes along and helps bring you the rest of the way. It's that we were completely weak altogether, unable to even lift our heads. So what does God do? He comes along and He lifts our heads for us. Even though He will instruct us, this will be in a redeemed position to lift your heads. Look, for where does my salvation come? It comes from the Lord.

So when the name Jacob is being used here, it's to speak to his weakness. When the name Israel is being used here, it is to speak of him with the title of strength. So where does Jacob get his strength? I think chapter 46, verses one through six, is extraordinarily helpful for us. So verse one. Israel, so this would be Jacob who now has strength. Israel set out with all that he had and he came to Beersheba and he offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. God spoke to Israel in visions of the night and he said, notice this, Jacob, Jacob. So he speaks to him in his weakness God spoke to Israel, the one whom God is filling with His strength, filling with His glory, filling with His Spirit. He speaks to him and He addresses him from his position of weakness.

He's old, isn't He? We learn in chapter 47, Jacob is 130 years old. That's old. That's old even in Jacob's day. And that's, I dare say, you probably don't know anybody who's 120 years old. I've met some 80-year-olds who think, I just don't know why I keep living. Can you imagine putting another 50 years to that? Well, Jacob is definitely, there would even be a place in which you could speak to more of his weakness. He's physically grown frail. He's so frail that the narrative here, when Joseph sends the wagons back to Canaan to get Jacob and his family, he sends wagons because somewhere along the way, he's been made aware of the physical condition of his father. His father's not going to be able to make this physical trip. He's not going to be able to walk this journey. He's not going to be able to ride on a donkey or a camel. He's going to need to have a wagon. So Pharaoh specifically instructs Joseph, send a wagon for your father. Send wagons, plural, for the women and the children. It's a long journey. It's a hard journey. So in their weakness, God is actually supplying them everything that's needed to make the journey.

Well, in verse 1, we learn of this well at Beersheba. this well, if you'll remember all the way back into Abraham, the first patriarch of the nation of God. It's at Beersheba that Abraham and Abimelech sign a treaty or an oath together. This is where the Philistines and Abraham, or what would later be known as the Philistines, who we know to be an arch nemesis of the nation of Israel, But Abraham cuts an oath with Abimelech, the king of the Philistines, and he names this place Beersheba.

The well of the oath is what that name means. Beersheba, the well of the oath. Or you might even see it sometimes with a footnoted reference to the well of the seven. And that seven is just a reference to how many lambs Abraham sacrificed to cut this oath between him and Abimelech. So it's the well of the oath or the well of the seven. So this is the place where Abraham and Abimelech make this agreement. We're not going to invade you. You don't invade us so long as we two are alive. And it does appear that at least up until Abraham's death that the Philistines followed this.

I should back that off. It's until Abimelech dies that the Philistines keep that side of the oath. It's after Abimelech. that the Philistines come along and they actually, remember this, they plug up all the wells of Abraham. And this one in particular, the well at Beersheba. The Philistines come and they plug it up. They throw rocks back in it. They throw garbage in it. They use it as kind of a way to poison the water system of Abraham's capacity to feed and for his family, his household, to feed and water their livestock.

So when Isaac comes along in that particular segment, it's one of my favorite pictures of the gospel here in the book of Genesis. There's so many. It's unfair for me to say it's my favorite. I like using it. Because you can almost physically see Isaac out there with a gospel shovel digging out the wells that the Philistines had plugged up. And what happens when he does this is he restores the refreshing water in the desert. This is a gospel. This is a serious location.

Abraham has a significant moment with God where Abraham calls upon God here in Genesis 21. And as well, Isaac calls upon God as he asks God for strength to dig up the wells that the Philistines had plugged up. That they broke the oath. That they did not follow through into the next generation of the people. He understands, here's a second part of this in the text when we get to chapter 47. There's actually the language of the doctrine of work at play throughout all of this as well.

But Isaac is not afraid to get calluses on his hands for the sake of digging up the wells. Where the enemy comes along over seasons of times, and this happens everywhere that the Gospel reaches, the enemy of the Gospel

loves to come along and plug it up Pollute it. Cause generations of people to fall into non-gospel understandings. So the church's duty is to perpetually find herself with men and women, but especially men here who have calloused hands digging up the wells of living water so that the people may live.

This is a glorious reminder to us

So Jacob has now come to this place where his father and his grandfather have met with God. Jacob is there, and he's going to cry out to God. He's going to appeal to God, and God will speak to him concerning the journey in which he's on.

Now, it's very interesting to look at this. It's helpful for us to know the recording of the names of the sons and their children Proceeding verses that follow out of this. We can conclude, we can make this conclusion without this text here, without the narrative of the lineage of the households of Jacob. We already know this, that this family of Jacob is a mess of a family.

And these guys, we've had a moment where these brothers of Joseph, who once threw their brother into a well and ripped his clothing and put animal blood on it and convinced their father he was dead. We get a little moment where it appears as though sanity has come upon them whenever they discover their brother that they left for dead is actually alive. So death and resurrection, just to remind you, it's all over the pages of Scripture.

But now they're in this renewed, reconciled relationship. But the narration moving beyond this of the years and the days that will come after Jacob dies, which will come beyond this, there will be hundreds of years in which God's people will... some will live faithfully while in the land of Egypt, but they will eventually begin to adopt the idolatry of the Egyptians.

And so, one can almost Really appreciate what Jacob is doing here when he comes to the well of Beersheba, the well of the oath. When he's there, he's praying for his family. And he's praying there with a knowledge of what a messy lot these guys are. They have taken justice into their own hands. They have ignored the justice systems of the land in which they are sojourning in. They are a messy, messy family.

And Jacob himself, you remember his pursuit of a wife, he ends up with not just one wife, not just two wives. Technically, he ends up with four wives who are the mothers of these children. Can you imagine a household? We must always read this kind of stuff really importantly here. This kind of narration is not permission for a man to have more than one wife. Not at all. I will just always point you back to the first three chapters of Genesis to settle the matter. God instructs that a man shall leave the home of his father and his mother and he shall cleave to his wife in the two, not the three or the four or the five or the dozen or the hundreds, but the two shall become one flesh. From the very beginning of creation order, God is saying man and woman, husband and wife shall be one.

Here's another thing that ought to give you confidence that you're reading a reliable word that's been preserved for you. All kingdoms of the world clean up all the messiness of their patriarchal families. They clean them up, they spit shine them, they polish them up to make it look like these people are, they are really a righteous lot of people. But not with the preservation of the Bible. It puts all the messiness up front. So you're not reading something that's been an attempt to correct the messiness. And so we can say, well, bless the Lord. And don't you know, your life, your life comes out in the same similar kinds of messy ways. And you think, well,

preacher, no, no, I've only got one wife. Well, some of you, maybe that's true. But then you've got other sins that you're successfully, or at least you think you're successfully hiding and harboring and out of the sight of others. But listen, all things come to light with the truth. We don't lie our way out of our messy, messy lives.

But what can we do? We can come honestly before the king of the universe and appeal to him. What shall we do? How now shall we live? Francis Schaeffer asks.

A second thing we can be confident is happening here at the well of Beersheba is Jacob is offering a sacrifice of thanksgiving. Know this. He's on his way to see what he believed to be his dead son. He's offering up sacrifices of thanksgiving. We can see that it seemed as though it took a little bit of persuading from the brothers. But notice immediately what happens The convoy of wagons show up. There's no more convincing. Joseph gets in the wagon and he begins to migrate to the south. But he stops at this significant place. The place where he's probably visited many times before. The place where he knows his father met with God. The place where he knows his grandfather met with God. The beauty here of these multi-generational, early patriarchal days of God's people are very tender. There's thanksgiving being made unto God. Joseph is soon to be reunited with his father, Jacob. And this will be because of the strength that God has given him.

A third thing we can observe here is that Jacob is seeking counsel from God. This is really, this will be as though you're reading the book of Hebrews in another place. You're even hearing the Lord Jesus himself in the gospels whenever we read and are reminded of the way in which God instructs Jacob to go. So in verse three, God says, I am, so let me back up, verse two. God has spoken to Israel in visions of the night, and He has said, Jacob, Jacob. And Jacob says, here I am. Verse 3, God says, I am God. Specifically, so that you know that I'm the God of your father. I'm the God that always, in this kind of a context, means not just your father. It also includes your grandfather. I'm the God of your father. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt. For I will make you a great nation there. Verse 4, I will go down with you to Egypt. And I will also surely bring you up again. And Joseph will close your eyes.

Now there's poetic beauty in this, but understand It's my prayer that your mind immediately begins to cross-reference the Gospel again. You begin to hear the language of Jesus promising the disciples, all authority has been given to Me. Now go and make disciples. You can hear the author of the book of Hebrews where you have this list of the great in chapter 11, of all the saints, including Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, including Joseph, and all of the patriarchs, even some of the matriarchs of the household of God's people. And eventually the author of Hebrews gets to this and he starts to speak about those whose lives the world is not counted, the world is not worthy of these saints, who we don't have names of. who were faithful and obedient and following all of God's instructions. And we get into chapter 12 and the author of Hebrews says, for I will never leave you nor forsake you. No matter where you are, no matter where you go, I will never leave you nor forsake you. Now there's a lot to take in on that. We cannot just willy-nilly say, well okay, God promised it, I guess I can go wherever I want to go. I guess I can do whatever I want to do because the Word promised me that God will never leave me or forsake me.

Well trust me, you go places where you shouldn't be going, and you're believing that God will never leave you or forsake you, you will find demise, you will find heartache, you will find trouble and discipline from a Father who loves you. Because He will not leave you or forsake you. And then it's true as well that God may lead you into risky roads and risky ventures and Gospel dangerous places. And what a confidence to know that God will never leave you or forsake you.

And this is what God is saying to Jacob here. We know that of the patriarchs, Jacob traveled the least until this trip to Egypt. There's even places where Jacob is convinced of God that he shouldn't go to Egypt. So now you can understand when he stops by at the well of the oath and he's listening to God, should I go to the place where you've instructed me before I shouldn't go? And what does God do? But he comes along with confidence. You should go. All of your household should go. I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will surely bring you up again, and Joseph will close your eyes."

Now there's things for us to observe. Jacob will die in Egypt. In just a couple of chapters, we're going to hear that Jacob is going to instruct his sons that when he dies, they should carry his bones back to Canaan. so he can be buried with his father, Abraham and Isaac. That's down the road. It will happen. We'll hear Jacob himself instruct his brothers on this. Jacob will return to Canaan. And then in verse number four where he says, Joseph will close your eyes. This is God assuring Jacob, you will see your son Joseph again. Of course, the narrative very soon will open it up and he will see Joseph.

Matter of fact, whenever we see that reunion take place in chapter 47, that there is long weeping, it's at the end of chapter 46, Verse 29, Joseph prepared his chariot and he went up to Joshua to meet his father Israel, because he's been strengthened and fortified. As soon as he appears before him, he fell on his neck and he wept on his neck. Don't you love the specificity here of the narrator? For a long time. So, awkward moments sometimes last for a few seconds. But I'm not saying this is an awkward moment. I'm saying this is a beautiful moment. And it lasts for a long time. Obviously, this kind of reunion would be met with great rejoicing and great celebrating.

So God does this. God accomplishes it. He convinces Jacob, you must go and know this. I'm going with you, and I will bring you back, and you will see your son who you thought was dead. Now, it's as though we're going to come to a hard close and pick up a second doctrinal examination. But because I think it's here, I don't want us to miss this. And that is in chapter 47, where we see the actual locating of where Joseph's brothers are going to set up their homes in the land of Goshen. Also, you'll notice the word Ramses, the town of Ramses, is mentioned as well in verse 11. Ramses is in Goshen, and so these are not different locations, they're one and the same. You're in Idaho, you're in the county of Twin Falls, you're currently in the city of Twin Falls, but you're still in Idaho, you're still in the United States. They are in Goshen, and this is all fulfillment of what God is doing through preserving Joseph's life. When his brothers wanted to kill him, God was doing this for their good.

So what we see in chapter 47 is really a doctrine of work. And I won't really take the time to elaborate and dig out all of the really beautiful parts that are here. Because some of these move into, and I'm not afraid to dabble into the political conversations of the region. I never want to get lost in them or distracted by them. But when they appear in the text, I think, what? Listen, apparently the Holy Spirit wants us to think about a few things.

And you know, we're in the middle of a great political unrest day again. And here we come across something that is actually quite the opposite. Isn't it interesting of why the opposites are at play here? One, we have a nation has decided in recent years that borders mean very little. And we're reading a piece of text of a godless nation, an idyllic nation, Egypt, who respects and understands borders. Notice, Joseph's family doesn't just show up as squatters. in Goshen, they're actually assigned by the ruler of the land to live there.

And also notice a couple of other things. This is not cruel and unusual placement of this household, the entourage, the nation of Israel, by giving them bad land, wasteland. The text here and everything we know historically of this region This is an extraordinarily fertile land, good land. So there's at least something there. We don't want to get too tangled up in this, that this nation, this idyllic nation behaved better than other nations who would like to think of themselves as being righteous. But we'll certainly come here, we'll observe this, and we'll say, well, isn't there something for us to learn here and observe here and look at?

But even more than that, dear church, I want us to get an increasing understanding of the doctrine of work from Scripture. Now, this doctrine of work is a creation order. So in other words, this fits for all people, whether you're a believer or not. The doctrine of work is a creation order mandate. God instructs Adam and Eve in the garden. What are they to do? They're to work. They're not in the garden sitting back, wasting the day away. They're working.

Now their work changes after they sin, and now their work is laborsome and toilsome and difficult and sweaty and sticky and pokey. Everything about the work is different, but the doctrine of work transcends. It was given to them in their perfect estate, and it transcends over into their fallen estate. So then we pick up the doctrine of work from the creation order on this side of the fall. We have a doctrine of work. We're seeing it in play in Genesis 47. There's the dialogue and the discussion.

Hey, when Pharaoh comes and he asks you about what kind of work you do, isn't it interesting? So one of the first things we start conversating with each other about when we meet new people is, what do you do? Where do you live? And whether we say it out loud or not, we're soon to be looking, what kind of car do you drive? And where is this? And how many children do you have? But a common denominator is, what is your business? Where do you work? I think this is a reflection of the doctrine of work. typically known. Matter of fact, some last names come from the kind of work or the labor that their patriarchs of their household do. Bakers and, well, I don't know, there's many more, but bakers are my favorite people to meet. They, they are, they are, they're a standing order reflection of the order of the doctrine of work. We're known by the work and the labor of our hands.

What does the New Testament begin to do? The Apostle Paul says that you ought to honor God with your work. Whatever your hands find to do, do for the glory of God. We see that once they begin to describe the work that they do, what does Pharaoh do? But instructs them to go and live in this land of Goshen, which he's already assigned for them. And what does he do? He gives them work to do. And they work. and they do this. They're not living off the government. They are living where they were instructed to live, yes, but they are actually contributing.

And, matter of fact, it's at least worth stopping and acknowledging here, there's still five years worth of this seven-year famine in front of them. The land of Goshen will have the blessing of God upon it. It's part because His people, who He promised would never leave them or forsake them, will live there. The rest of the nation of Egypt will suffer severely in this next five years of this great famine. God's blessing will be upon His people.

So work has value to it, and it should be done for the glory of God. Work is essentially a means to honor God and to glorify God. It's not just a means to accumulate wealth. It's not just a means to buy yourself things. It does include those things, but its primary duty is to honor God. This is the Apostle Paul. Whatever your hands find to do. It does include providing for yourself, doesn't it? It does. I mean, if you work and you don't feed your

household, the Bible declares you as worse than an unbeliever. There's emphasis. The Bible is not afraid to speak of the doctrine of work. We should have a growing, intensifying, deeper understanding of the doctrine of work.

We also learn in the New Testament that the doctrine of work includes the capacity of the church to be able to serve its community. So the church is made up of a people who have a good understanding of the doctrine of work that's glorifying God, providing for our households, and serving others, doing for others.

Again, another moment not to intentionally be political, but what a mark against the modern state of our own nation. Where the poor, the first place they go to is not the people of God, They go to the wicked government. The government that's not designed to be compassionate at this level. The church who God designs to be compassionate has been willing to give this work over to the government who has no capacity under the order of God to behave compassionately. The government's duty is really simple in Scripture. It is to reward the righteous and to punish the wicked. Can you imagine a government that entangles herself in things that are not her duty, she will eventually drop her primary duties and not even be able to do them functionally at all. May God save the land. How? By reviving a church who has a work doctrine, who has a doctrine of work, honors God, Provides for their families and serves others.

And then finally is this, the doctrine of work funds the great missionary cause to the ends of the earth. I really probably should have broke this up into two parts, rather than trying to squeeze them both into here. Because there's so much here, I think we'll just do it another time. as we journey along here, but I don't want to miss this. The connection here to the funding of the missionary cause.

You remember the church in Antioch in the New Testament? You know what's most fascinating to me when we learn about this church in Antioch? It's the place where the Christians are first called Christians. The city of Antioch is a labor-intensive city. It's a port city. There's people who are working with their hands. And the Gospel reaches this city, and there's a flourishing of the Gospel in the city of Antioch. And those in the workforce in Antioch, their whole being is converted. And they now have meaning behind the work and the labor that they do. It's to honor God. It's providing for themselves. It's for serving others. And it's for funding the missionary cause. It's the church in Antioch that will fund the Apostle Paul's missionary journeys to the ends of the earth.

What else do we, we don't really know a lot more about this church in Antioch. We say, well, it must, it may not have been the most theologically rich church. I want to push back and say, I think they were theologically rich because they had an understanding of the doctrine of work. God intended to reconcile all things to Himself and what do they do but fund the great missionary cause?

So the work is the opposite of sluggardness. Work is a cure to idleness, laziness. It makes it hard to fall into other sins. And obviously there's other dangers of extremes of becoming what One might call today a workaholic, and a workaholic avoids his family, squanders his resources, and invests himself in such a way that he can never be used for the spread of the gospel. So there's a balance here, isn't there? Jesus shows us this example that he's been doing the work of his Father, which is a final thought of the doctrine of work, we should follow our Savior here. And we should work.

The nation of Israel will do this in these early days. They'll do it all the way through, even into their slavery days. They will have a good understanding of the doctrine of work. The Egyptians will eventually exploit them for it. Dear brothers and sisters, don't peel apart all these doctrines in the Bible and say, well, work is for my secular things The church is for my spiritual things. They cannot be separated. The doctrine of work is at play. It is on the table for us. Not the Lord's table. It's in the negotiation of what we're going to do for the glory of God. Work is in the mix and it is for the glory of God.

So we have the reunion of the father to the son and there's gospel. laden news all over it. Then we come to the work, the early part of chapter 47, and there's a lot of labor here, and there's a lot of gospel attached to it. So for us today, may your soul be strengthened and fortified. May the Lord bless your enduring of a lengthier sermon today.