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SPEAKERS

Pastor Jason Webb



Pastor Jason Webb 00:00

Take your Bibles and turn to the New Testament book of Second Corinthians. Second Corinthians chapter four. We're going to begin reading in verse one and then read into chapter five and to verse 10. Paul is defending his ministry and explaining Himself in this passage. There are people in Corinth who didn't think Paul really was an apostle, or really was that much of a as important as others, and he saw that as a threat to the gospel and to his ministry. And so here he is defending the gospel and himself to them. Second Corinthians chapter four, verse one, "Therefore, since through God's mercy, we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways. We do not use deception, nor do we distort the Word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth, plainly, we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. And even if our gospel is veiled, and is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as Your servants for Jesus sake. For God, who said, Let light shine out of darkness, made his light shine in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed, perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted, but not abandoned, struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body, the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive. are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body. So then death is at work in us. But life is at work in you. It is written, I believed, therefore I have spoken. With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak, because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in His presence. All this is for your benefit so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God. Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day, for our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. Meanwhile, we groan longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, because when

we are clothed, we will not be found naked. For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened because we do not wish to be unclothed, but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we're at home in the body, we are away from the Lord. We live by faith, not by sight. We are confident I say and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So we make it our goal to please Him. Whether we are at home in the body or away from it. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad."

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Pastor Jason Webb 04:58

Well, that is reading of God's word. Right now there is no shortage of people talking about and planning and thinking about what to do in 2022 - financial goals and physical goals and personal goals and spiritual goals and business goals and corporate goals. If we want to hear something, you can hear it. If you want to hear something about making goals or making plans in 2022, you can hear it. But my question is, is what does God have to say to us? What does God have to say to me, I'm realizing that my time is short, and isn't forever, and I don't want to waste my life. I've wasted too much time already. And so what does God have to say to me? What does God have to say to me, that's what I want to know. Here's, here's the answer. Here's at least some of it. Second Corinthians chapter five, verse nine, we just read it, I want you to look there Second Corinthians five, nine. "So we make it our goal, to please Him", that is the Lord, "we make it our goal to please the Lord, whether we are at home in the body or away from it."

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Pastor Jason Webb 06:21

So I have a few A's three A's this evening. And the first is the ambition, the ambition. So the podcasts and the blogs are telling you how to do all sorts of things: how to lose weight, how to achieve some financial goal, how to reach some goal in your business, how to do something to develop some sort of habit in your personal life. Maybe the Christian blogs are telling you how to begin to read your Bible, or how to pray better. And I want to say all of that is perfectly fine, in and of itself. But we can do all of those things. And we can achieve all of those goals, even those Christian things and not do what Paul says his ambition is. His ambition is to please the Lord - he set his mind, his ambition, on something that is bigger than life. It's something even bigger than life and death. He says whether we're at home in the body, that's a euphemism in that culture for being alive, or away from the body. That's another euphemism for being dead. So whether we're alive or whether we're dead, here is my ambition. I want to please the Lord. Can your goals survive Death? Can your ambitions survive death? That really is the great test to say whether it's really truly worth it. So think of it right now. I don't know exactly what the Apostle Paul is doing. But I can tell you this. Right now, the perfect spirits in heaven are still pursuing this ambition to please the Lord. The apostle Paul right now has not had to change his ultimate goal at all. He is seeking to please the Lord. Now there are lots of differences between the saints in heaven and the saints on Earth. Lots of differences, probably lots of similarities too - maybe you have a loved one in Heaven that you miss him or her dearly. Here is.. and you can't do very much with them. Maybe you'd say I can't do anything with them, they're gone. Well, here's something that you can do alongside of them. Here's some, here's a rope that you

can pull on with them. Their ambition is to please the Lord. Right now. Their ambition is to please the Lord so you can join them in it. So here's an ambition that counts. Here's an ambition, a goal that lasts. Here's a goal that will take you right through this life right into the next life. Here's an ambition that you will never have to say, "That was a waste of time. That was for no purpose. I mean, it lasted for a little while and then it was gone." Here's an ambition with a sure reward. Verse 10, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat." You notice that little word "for"? He's telling you why this is his ambition. Here's the reason I make it my ambition whether I'm alive or dead, for this reason, For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that "each one", no exceptions, "may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad." In Paul's mind, there is a reward, a sure reward, a reward that's not going to disappoint him a reward from Christ's own hand. You make pleasing Christ, you make pleasing the Lord, your aim, and he'll make rewarding you his aim. You set your goal on making him happy. And he'll set his target his goal, his ambition, on doing, making you happy. Hebrews, chapter six, God is not unjust. God is not unjust, he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him. He's remembering, and he's not going to forget your work. And the love that you've shown him. You notice that your work is correlated is equated with this, this love that you've shown him. And so here's an ambition that will pay off. Here's an ambition that will take you through your whole Christian life. Here, here's an ambition that when it gets a hold of you, it really does get a hold of you. Now, I'm sure you can look back over your past, and all your ambitions, your goals and your resolutions. And some of them have come and gone. Some of them have just you've seen them for the small things that they are you've given them up or whatever happened. But this ambition isn't like that. The NIV uses the word goal, and I'm using the word ambition and I'm using it on purpose, because that word goal in our language in our context has been so watered down. Everyone has goals. And it's not that big of a deal if you hit them or not. But that word goal in our culture, it's missing Paul's intensity. When he's saying we make it our goal, he's saying we earnestly aspire to this. There's earnestness in this. It's a strong ambition. He's talking about something that you just don't get pushed off of. It's like you're driving down the road, you kind of want to go to a place and then you get a flat tire and they're like, Well, I guess nevermind, we'll fix the tire and we'll go home. You don't get a flat tire and you go home. No, you want it. And this ambition is burning inside of you. And so it survives. I want you to consider what did Paul's ambition survive? What did Paul's ambition survive? You remember what Jesus told Ananais who he sent to meet Paul? He said he must learn how, how much is going to suffer for me. Paul used to have this ambition. And then he met the Lord Jesus and then he got a whole new ambition. What did Paul's new ambition survive? Five times I received from the Jews the 40 lashes minus one. This is from later and Second Corinthians. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked. I spent a night in the open sea. I had been constantly on the move. I've been in danger from rivers. I'm gonna abbreviate a lot of this. I've been in danger from rivers and bandits, from my own countrymen, from Gentiles, in the city, in the country, at sea. I've often gone without sleep. I have known hunger and thirst and I have often gone without food. I have been cold and naked. Paul found something or someone that was worth suffering everything for and I think there is something in all of us that wants to have something that is worth it all. There is something in us that wants to have what Paul had. That's that's worth going all out for. That's where suffering for and so Paul, why go through all that? Why all the shipwrecks? Why all the danger? I want to please Him. I want to please them. Brothers and sisters, how small our goals appear, and how weakly we want the things that are really lasting. Paul has this one holy ambition. This world is empty pale and poor, compared to knowing you, my Lord, lead me on and I will run after you. I haven't talked directly about what this ambition is yet. But but look at it, we make it our ambition to please Him. To please him, to delight him, to make him happy, to give him joy, to bring him pleasure to delight his heart, to increase his joy, to make him happy with me. That's what Paul wanted. Now, that's ambition. That is ambitious ambition. He wants

to reach into the very heart of the Lord and stir up pleasure and delight in his heart. He wants to ascend like that well pleasing aroma, that the Old Testament is always talking about. ascending to the Lord's nostrils in the Lord smells in and out of the Lord's heart comes out, well done. Well done. That's ambition. It's nothing less than to thrill the heart of the one who thrilled Paul's heart. He wasn't settling for anything less than something heavenly, something eternal. something so amazing that I'm going to go into the very heart of the Lord Jesus, and I want to bring delight there. I want to bring joy there. Did he live and die for me? Does he pray for me? Does the Son of God stoop to call me friend does the Son of God stoop to look at me with the eyes of love? And he notices me, then what can I do to make him happy? What can I do to make him happy? Did like what we saw this morning? Did he lower himself to become the son of Mary? Did he live among us? Did he come? And was he despised and rejected by men? For me? Did he stand silent, while the Sanhedrin accused him of blasphemy? The Son of God, God Himself accused of blasphemy. And Roman soldier stripped him and dressed him like a king and spit on him and hit him and plucked his beard out. And did he do that for me? Did he do that for you? Did he forever become a man for me? Did his love forever alter him? Does he still carry those scars for me? Then what can I do to make him happy? Revelation Five - Is he worthy of all blessing, honor and glory? The angels think so. The four living creatures think so. The 24 Elders think so. Is he worthy to open the scroll? Is he worthy to sit on the throne of heaven? Is he worthy? He is. And so he demands his - he demands my loyalty. He demands me asking the question, Okay, Lord, what can I do to please you to delight you? You know, David looked down at - remember that picture? - David looking down on Bethlehem - and it's garrisoned by enemy troops. And he's discouraged. And he's home sick, and he's miserable. And he sighs, "Oh, that I could have a drink from the well in Bethlehem." And that was all it took for those three mighty men. For him, we go. For him, we will get that water or we will die trying to get that water for him, to lift his spirits - to please him. I wonder Are there any mighty men here? Any mighty women here? Who will say with Paul, from here on out my ambition is to please the Lord. He has so many enemies. He has so many retractors detractors, so many traitors, the world hates him, the world ignores him. But Is he worthy? - he's worthy of it all. He is worthy of everything this poor world could offer him and more. And so for him, from that well, I will get water or I will die trying. If I have no gifts to bring - no gifts fit for a king if all I have is my little drum. Then I will play my drum for him. And I will play my best for him and if he smiles then that's enough. That's more than enough. That was Paul's passion. That was Paul's ambition. And that has to be, that has to be the ambition of every blood-bought, Father-loved, Spirit-filled Child of God, Christian here. That's our first "A" - the ambition - to please Him.

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Pastor Jason Webb 20:23

Now here's the second A, the assumption, the assumption, Paul is making an assumption in this verse about us. He's making an assumption about Jesus, he, he's assuming that we can please Him - that God is a God who can experience pleasure that we can evoke in him - that Jesus can experience joy from what we do that we can bring to him. Now, again, if you look at verse nine, chapter five, verse nine, so we make it our goal, we make it our ambition to please them, whether we're at home in the body or away from it, you can look on the surface of that text. And you're not going to see that assumption, because like every assumption is hidden underneath the surface. It's in the reality of what Paul is talking about. It's not in the words of what Paul is talking about. But but it's there in the reality. Paul is assuming that God - that the Lord Jesus can experience pleasure that you and I can bring to him. If that is not true, then this verse is pointless. Now, not all assumptions are true. I'm sure you have found that out. I'm sure you and I know I have I've gotten into all sorts of trouble because I assumed something was true. I assumed my wife was going to do that. Not all assumptions are true. Is this assumption

true? I just want to - let's look at the evidence. And you tell me. Genesis one, God looks at everything that He had made. And he said, "It's very good. It's good. It's very good." Now, out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks. What is inside comes out in our words, God's saw that all he had made, God saw that what he and his son by the Spirit made in this beautiful, glorious world, that the the triune God's heart when he looked at it all, burned with delight responded with, "That is very good!" Jesus came up out of the water, and a voice thunders through the heavens, and it's rippling through the air, "This is my son whom I love, with him I am well pleased." So there's God the Father's heart, bursting out with delight at his son's love and his son's humility, and his son's obedience. A prouder Papa there never was than when he saw his son coming out and taking on - truly and finally - fully identifying with his people in baptism. Proverbs 15:8, "The prayers of the upright pleases Him." Now this one's different, because this is not something that he has done. This is not his creation. This is not his son. This is not something that we do. When the prayers of the upright they please him. Let's keep going. Zephaniah 3, "The Lord your God is in your midst. A warrior who gives victory. He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will exult over you with loud singing." Psalm 147, "The Lord takes pleasure in those who fear him who hope in His steadfast love." God rejoices with loud singing over the people that run into his arms for protection. They're in danger. And they see him as a mighty warrior. And they run to him and he holds them in his arms and like David singing over his sheep, he begins singing gladly over his people. He takes pleasure in those who take refuge in Him - who trust Him. Now isn't that good. I just want to pause there, call timeout. We're gonna get to the question of how do we please the Lord? How can I do this in the next part, but isn't this good? This is something I can do. I can run to him. I can pray to Him. And it brings him pleasure. Luke chapter 10. "Jesus at that very time rejoiced greatly in the Holy Spirit and said, 'I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and revealed them to infants. Yes, Father, for this was well pleasing in your sight.'" Jesus rejoices when the foolish things of this world, when the nobodies of this world, when the disciples, His own disciples, come to see His glory, when they see the Lord's glory, and the so-called wise people don't see it. Jesus is thrilled for his lowly disciples that by faith there I see the glory of God, the glory of His kingdom. And so he says, Blessed are you, prophets and kings wanted to see what you see. Prophets and kings wanted to see what you see. And now you see it. And Jesus is thrilled when his disciples behold His glory. It's delicious to him. It's wonderful to him. He enjoys the irony of it, the proud go away blind, and yet the foolish - his little poor fisherman disciples, they see glory, and Jesus is thrilled. There's more joy in heaven when one sinner repents. Come, we must celebrate my lost son has returned. We just went through a whole series on delighting in the Trinity. What did we see? God is a God of overflowing love and delight, he creates in order to include us in this love, in this joy, and so is Paul's assumption true? Praise God. Little, nothing, me. So unworthy me, can do this wonderful thing. I can repent, I can trust, I can run to him, I can enter into His joyful love and God begins to sing. Now, I only have the audacity to say that because that's what the Bible says. That Paul's ambition - I want to go into the very heart of the Lord Jesus and stir up delight and pleasure there. The audacity of that is true, because that's what the Bible says, And this isn't a pointless try. This isn't Paul or God setting us up for failure. We aren't wasting our time trying to do something that just can't be done. We aren't wasting our time now doing something that we can only do later. Remember the the other part of this verse, so we make it our goal to please Him, whether we are at home in the body, whether we are alive, or whether we're away from it. This is something that we can do here. Now. In the situation in the condition that we are in. And it's glorious, and it's doable.

So then, how do I enter into this? How do I do this? How do I enter into this Niagara Falls of the Lord delight? How can I delight him? In this is where I want to end. So we've had the ambition. We've had the assumption. And now third, I had to come up with a third "A" and this is it - the Avenues. The Avenues of how we can do this. How did Paul, and this is what he is saying, in my ministry, this is what I do. And we read it. He's like, I am not like them. I'm not like those other men. I am doing this to please the Lord. And so what we're seeing in Paul's ministry is a paradigm is this is how you do it, at least in part. So what do we see in chapters four and five? It's going to be our paradigm and our pattern. What avenues did Paul pursue this ambition? So he had the ambition, and it just begs the question, and maybe you're saying the very same thing? Okay, I love that ambition. I see that I can do it. But now how do I do it? Find out what pleases the Lord. Here's a part of the answer. This is not the whole answer, but this is part of the answer. You see it in chapters four and five. What did Paul do? Three things here. I want to show you. One. He didn't make life or his ministry about him. He didn't make life about him. Christians active in ministry in the church or whatever ministry are no different than anyone else. We tend to like to make things about us. So even that while we're doing the right things, some people are not doing it for Jesus, but for themselves. So you can look over at chapter four, verse two, chapter four, verse two, we've renounced secret and shameful ways. We do not use deception. Remember, this is Paul saying, I'm not like them. Their goal is different than my goal. My goal is to please the Lord. Their goal is what? Well, they use holy things to accomplish their goals and their aims. So they hide their true ambition behind this cloak of secrecy, underneath this, this cloak of darkness, they don't want anyone to see what they're really about. They don't want to see what they're up to. So while preaching Christ, they're doing it for themselves. Remember, the book of Philippians talks about that? Men preaching Christ from wrong motives. Well, here's some more. They're doing it for themselves. But they really hide what they're really after. They hide what they're really after. That might be the praise of men. It doesn't say, it might be the praise of men, it might be power, it might be influence. It might be wealth, it might be women, it might be whatever they like, they just like being called pastor. They like the center to be the center of attention. They like being called pastor teacher, it's about them. And so they look good on the outside, but they're really just trying to please themselves. Jude says they're shepherds who feed themselves, clouds without rain, trees without fruit. You notice what all three of those things have in common. You would expect those things to give to other people. But they don't. It's about them. Not about what they can give, but what they can get. And here's where this intersects with all of us. Pleasing the Lord means it's not about me. So chapter four, verse five. For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ. We don't preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ. What did Paul want to do? What was his goal? I mean, yeah, his goal was to please the Lord. What did he want to see happen in other people's lives, you can read it, he wants the glory of God shining out of the face of Christ Jesus to come, he wanted people to appreciate and see the glory of God. And so he he's this open, honest man, this wasn't about him. He wanted others to see the glory that he had seen. He wanted others to make a big deal about Jesus Christ. That was it. He wanted others to see and appreciate and enjoy who Jesus was. And so in a way, he's another John the Baptist. Remember John the Baptist? "Behold, there's the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." And his disciples are saying, well, now they're baptizing more than you are John. And John says, "I must become less, he must become more. I am the friend. He's the bridegroom." This isn't about me. This is about him. Well, that's how you please the Lord. Quit making it about you. Make it about him. Quit trying to get life for you. And he goes so far as to say that you die, that Christ might live in others. He talks about that. We're always being given over to death. Death is at work in us that life might be at work in you. Now chapter four, verse 12. And so moms and dads and husbands and wives and whatever you are - in order to please the Lord, you have to die to yourself. And you have to die to yourself that others might taste and enjoy and see Jesus. What do your kids need? What is your husband or your wife need? What are your fellow church

members need? Can I tell you they don't need more of you? They need more of Jesus. They don't need you to be made more of. They need him to be made more of. And so you please the Lord, when you make it about him and not about you. Now how that actually gets worked out, it gets worked out in a million different ways in your life and every little interaction, to complain or not to complain, to smile or not to smile, to say an encouraging word or not to say an encouraging word, to do something hard to take the servant role, whatever it is, there's going to be 1000 ways that you have to say, I'm going to die to myself, that this person might see something of the glory of Jesus Christ. That's how Paul was doing it. We don't preach ourselves, we preach him. This is not about us. This is about him. So that way, that's how we're going to please the Lord. Second Avenue I pleased them when I live by faith in his strength and not my own. I please him when I live, not in my own strength, but in his. So when I live by faith in his strength, not my own. So are you weak? Paul was weak. Four- seven, we have this treasure and jars of clay. We're hard pressed, we're perplexed, we're persecuted. He was weak. He was a jar of clay. So how do you do it? How do you please the Lord? You depend on his all-surpassing power for you. You're weak. You lean on your strong savior and that pleases him. He's pleased when you say I can't do this. He's pleased when you admit I can't do this. I can't have this conversation. I can't do the right thing. I can't I can't live this life. I'm too blind. I'm too lazy. I'm too weak. I'm too hurt. I'm too sinful. I'm too afraid. I'm all those things. I can't do this. I am all those things. Yes, but he is strong. He is strong. His is the all-surpassing power - the power that surpasses all my weakness. So it pleases Him, Grandma, when you have something to say to your grandchild, and you just don't know how, and you feel a little intimidated, and instead of giving way to fear, you admit your fear and you trust Him and you act you depend on his all-surpassing power. When you don't know how you're going to go another day at this job that you're at this workplace. You turn away from your jar of clay self, and you turn to him who is all-surpassing power. And that's how Paul pleased the Lord. He was not a Superman Christian. He was not a Navy SEAL Christian. He was a limping, hurting, scarred but trusting Christian.

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Pastor Jason Webb 38:21

He learned his power is made perfect in weakness. So now I boast in my weakness that the all surpassing power might rest upon me - is what he said. He didn't transform into some sort of Superman Christian that wasn't ever afraid or concerned about things. No, he wasn't a giant striding through the earth. He was a man limping depending on a mighty Savior. And so praise God, that's something I can do. I can live by faith. I can't be a Superman Christian, I can't be a Navy SEAL Christian, but you know, I can trust and that pleases him. Zephaniah 3:1, Psalm 147. Those are the people the Lord sings over. The Lord takes delight in those who trust in Him. So how do you please Him? You look away from your weakness. And you believe and you depend on his strength. How do you please Him? Here's the Third Avenue and with this we're done. Paul says we do it looking forward to heaven. You please Him when you do the things you do things for heaven and not for Earth. Chapter four verse 16: "Therefore we do not lose heart though outwardly are wasting away yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. Now how's this renewal going on? For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes on not what is seen but on what is unseen for what is seen is temporary but what is unseen is eternal." You please Him, when you put your eyes on what is eternal on him where he is, and then you live for that. He lived for that eternal weight of glory that far outweighs all the pain. So yes, there's pain, there's wasting away. But there's this renewal as we believe as we look forward to heaven. When we say there is One who raises the dead, He raised the Lord Jesus from the dead, he's gonna raise me from the dead too. So, when Heaven and resurrection is in front of us, with that hope burning in us that pleases the Lord. When we are living in that, in sort of the mindset of revelation 22, when

John and the whole church is saying, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. When, when that is our heart, that pleases Him, you know, he's waiting for that day. He's waiting for that day, when he'll take his bride to himself. He's eagerly awaiting his wedding day. And so how it must please them to see his bride eagerly waiting for her wedding day, eagerly waiting for her bridegroom. That's love, isn't it? Finally, isn't that that finally what pleases Him? The love of our hearts. We love him. And so we put him first in our hearts. We love him. So we trust him. We love him. So we live for the day that we'll be with him. You see all three of those avenues what they have in common. They're our love for Him. Our love pleases Him. And so again, I can't be a Superman Christian or a Navy SEAL Christian. But I can be like Mary, who'll pour and break an alabaster jar full of perfume and pour it all over him and love him. I can give him my heart. And so do you want to please them? Your love pleases Him. So my ambition for 2022 is to love Jesus more than I did last year. To love him more than I did last year. He's worthy of all the love I can give him. And so whether I live or die, I'm going to love him. And I'm going to do what I can to please Him. I hope that's your ambition too. Let's pray.

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Pastor Jason Webb 42:47

Heavenly Father, we thank You for this word. Lord Jesus, thank You that You do want the love of our hearts. And I pray that you would stir up within us the desire, the undying desire to love you in return. To make more of you and less of ourselves, to not be paralyzed by our weakness but to rely upon your strength, to not live for this passing world, but to live for heaven and our home and our husband - to live for him. Give us grace for that I pray for your namesake. Amen.