

How the Gospel Makes Us One

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Date: 09 February 2020

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[0 : 0 0] The scripture reading comes from Philemon. Please follow along in your bulletin or on the screen. Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus, and Timothy, our brother.

To Philemon, our beloved fellow worker, and Aphia, our sister, and Archippus, our fellow soldier, and the church in your house. Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I thank my God always when I remember you in my prayers, because I hear of your love and of the faith that you have toward the Lord Jesus and for all the saints.

And I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective for the full knowledge of every good thing that is in us for the sake of Christ. For I have derived much joy and comfort from your love, my brother, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you.

Accordingly, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do what is required, yet, for love's sake, I prefer to appeal to you. I, Paul, an old man, and now a prisoner, also for Christ Jesus, I appeal to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I became in my imprisonment.

[1 : 2 4] Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful to you and to me. I am sending him back to you, sending my very heart.

I would have been glad to keep him with me, in order that he might serve me on your behalf during my imprisonment for the gospel. But I prefer to do nothing without your consent, in order that your goodness might not be by compulsion, but of your own accord.

For this, perhaps, is why he was parted from you for a while, that you might have him back forever, no longer as a bondservant, but more than a bondservant, as a beloved brother, especially to me.

But how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord. So if you consider me your partner, receive him as you would receive me.

If he has wronged you at all, or owes you anything, charge that to my account. I, Paul, write this with my own hand.

[2 : 3 2] I will repay it, to say nothing of your only me, even your own self. Yes, brother, I want some benefit from you and the Lord. Refresh my heart in Christ.

Confident of your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say. At the same time, prepare a guest room for me, for I am hoping that, through your prayers, I will be graciously given to you.

Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends greetings to you. And so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

This is the word of God. Great, thanks, Joanne and Annabelle, reading the entire book of the Bible in one sitting. There we go. Paul, do you want to come on up and let me introduce Paul to us.

Paul is going to be bringing God's word to us this morning, preaching. And Chris actually is the one that introduced us to Paul. And Chris has preached. So Paul is a pastor at Holy Light Church in Yuen Long.

[3 : 42] Is that right? Yes. And I don't actually know how you guys met about a year ago or so. Two years. Two years ago? Okay. Yeah. And I know Chris has come and preached at your church once or twice.

And the first time he came back, he said, you've got to meet this guy, Paul. He's an amazing gospel man. So humble and yet really sure of God's love and the gospel.

And Chris just spoke so highly of you. And Paul came to our staff meeting probably a year ago, a little bit less, and spoke to our staff. Yes. And back then, we decided on this date, almost nine months ago, we decided, okay, February 2020, come and bring God's word.

And then we've actually seen each other twice this week, on Tuesday night and on Thursday afternoon. Yes. And Paul, it's really great to have you. We're so grateful for you coming down this morning and being with us.

So thank you for bringing God's word. Thank you for your all. And we're so thrilled that you're with us. Thank you. Can I pray for you and just for us this morning? Yes. Great. Let's pray briefly. Lord Jesus, thank you so much for Paul, for his life and his ministry.

[4 : 45] Thank you for his devotion to you, God, how you saved him as a young man, God. And you've called him to help others discover the hope of Jesus in the gospel.

Lord, I pray that as he brings your word to us this morning, that you will anoint him and empower him. I pray, God, that it won't just be his words, but it'll be you speaking through him. We want to hear from you this morning. We want to encounter you in your word.

And so we pray for him. We pray for his church, for Holy Life Church, God. Fill us and fill him and fill them with your spirit, we pray. We pray these things in your wonderful name.

Amen. Amen. Paul, over to you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you for Kelvin's. Actually, I'm humble because I know I'm not good.

I have nothing to be proud of, so I have to be humble because I'm not very strong or anything. Let me introduce myself.

[5 : 43] I come from a local family and local church. And my father is just a construction site worker, painter. And my mother worked in a factory as a plastic toy worker.

So I'm born in a very poor house. I'm born in a broken house. My grandfather was a drug addict. And also my uncle was a drug addict.

And the gospel comes through my grandmother. My father, she led my uncle to believe in Jesus and quit drug taking. And after a while, my cousin was also become a drug addict.

And God saved me and I bring the gospel to my brother and he quit taking drugs. So I come from a very broken family. I have nothing to be proud of.

But it is all the grace of God who saved our family. And I'm not very academic people. So I'm not very good at theology or any exegesis, something like that.

[6 : 53] I used to minister serving in prison. I've been serving in the prison for 11 years. And I still keep going to the prison. So I used to talk to people face by face individually.

So actually, that's why I ask all of you to pray for me. Because I'm not used to preach to a bunch of people. It would make me nervous. And especially, I'm a local Hong Konger.

So my mother tongue was Cantonese. It is the third time I preach in English. So I'm so nervous. So please pray for me. And thank you.

Thank you.

All right. I'll send you one. Make yourself at home. Okay. All right. Thank you. Sorry about that. Hello. Hello. It's okay. So that's why I used the scripture today.

[8 : 13] I will try to use some life story I met in the prison, as well as some story in our family. Try to demonstrate how the gospel changed people.

And not just individually, but in a community. So did you ever ask a question like, why you are brought to this world?

What is the meaning of life? Especially when you are suffering, being despised, neglected, or left alone? Actually, I tell you, I asked this question when I was three years old.

I told you, my father is a painter. My mother is a factory worker. So in my memory, I was brought up by my grandmother.

My parents didn't work a whole day. And after they come back home, they eat their dinner, and then they will sleep. And very early in the morning, they will go out to work again.

[9 : 18] So I have very little time to meet with my parents. And, you know, when you're kissed, you would like your parents to hug you, to be with you.

I may try to ask them, come, play with me. Come, spend some time with me. But they would say, I'm so tired. Go away, go away.

Find your grandmom. And if I, you know, I'm naughty, they may even beat me. So that's why I will, in the year of three, I ask myself, if you don't love me, why did you bring me to this world?

Today, we also talk about a slave. I think this slave, he may probably ask this question a thousand times in his life.

Why am I a slave? What is the meaning of my life? Was it a mistake I came to this world? Actually, I heard this question a lot in prison, especially some prisoners who come from Africa.

[10 : 29] They were cheated to bring some drug to Hong Kong. And the people who cheated him said, oh, it's very, it's no big deal to bring drugs to Hong Kong.

The penalty is very small. You just need to stay a few months in Hong Kong and then you come back. But after they were arrested in Hong Kong, they find the penalties several decades, two decades or several years in Hong Kong.

They were collapsed. They just wanted to earn a few money for their family. So they worry about their family and they ask about what is the meaning of life?

Why this happened to me? And we don't know the reason, but this slave, Omnisimus, left his master, probably stolen some money when he left.

And eventually, he went to Rome, arrived Rome. In there, he met Paul. And in there, he heard the gospel. And in there, the gospel transformed his whole life.

[11 : 41] I met some people from overseas, from Africa, from South America, from Vietnam, from Southeast Asia or India, Southern Asia.

They said they have heard about Jesus, but they don't think Jesus did matter to him until he was in prison.

And when he asked the meaning of life, and when they heard about the gospel, their life was transformed. And some even said their sentence was very short, just a few months.

And some said, oh, this few months sentence for me is not a curse, a blessing. Because, not because of this, my life will never change. I will still living in a lie, living under illusion.

I'm chasing something that is not worthy. But because of Christ, my life was changed. And also, Omnisimus, when he arrived in Rome, he met Paul.

- [12 : 48] He heard the gospel, and the gospel transformed his life. Omnisimus, his name means profitable or good to you.
- But to him, he may not think so. Maybe he was someone's assets, which means profitable to his master, because at least he worth some money.
- But to himself, he might think his life was worthless, meaningless, or even a burden. What was the point doing all the housework, but you never know when will you have your own family or your own house?
- I think the youngster in Hong Kong may probably understand this feeling. Why should I study so hard? Why should I get into the university?
- How many years I need to work and didn't spend a penny in order to save enough money to get an apartment? What's the point to working so hard?
- [13 : 56] What is the meaning of life? And I think Omnisimus might be thinking about why I have this fate.
- So he ran away from his master. Maybe his living from his master was to find freedom or to start a new life.
- But what future could happen to a fugitive? I did meet some prisoner who has been a fugitive running away to mainland China.
- He stayed several years in mainland China until all his money was spent. And after that, he turned himself in back to Hong Kong. And I met him in Lai Chi Kho.
- And he said to me, even though I have money, even though I feel secure in mainland China, but I have no peace.
- [14 : 53] Every night I was afraid someone would break in and take me to the police. Or even someone I get against, probably some gangster from the opposite side, may come to take me and beat me.
- So even though he has a lot of money, he was worried about many, many things. Until he came to Hong Kong and turned himself in and he took up his responsibility to confess his sin or his guilty, he finally relieved.
- He said he finally can shake off the guilt and the worry he used to have in mainland China.
- So we don't know whether Onesimus knew Paul was in Rome, but eventually he met Paul there. From Paul, Onesimus heard that the problem of his life as well as this world were the consequences of our sin.
- Actually, it is sin who divides us or separates us from God. And the consequences, we're not only separated from God, we're also, we're called alienated or separated from ourselves.
- [16 : 16] We don't know who we are. We don't know our true identity. We rely on many, many other things to define am I a worthy people. For example, I listen to a lot of gangsters in youth institutions.
- He was very young, just 16 years old. But he just have a grade 9 education. And he said to me, if I have money, if I can earn enough money to have a company or have a shop, I will be somebody.
- So he tried to do some drug trafficking. And you know, drug trafficking is really, really very profitable in Hong Kong.
- He said to me, one month he can earn 200,000 by drug trafficking. So he just want to do one year and earn several million dollars and then he can set up a company.
- And then he can no longer deal with drugs and he will be somebody. So that's the problem. We all define our value, our identity with something outside ourselves, something outside God.

- [17 : 30] So that's the problem. We create a lot of problem. We just care about ourselves and didn't care about other people's well-being. So, and also the sin also bring other consequences.
- We don't know how to treat the nature properly. We don't know how to enjoy but not exploit the nature, the natural resources.
- So we see a lot of pollution, a lot of environmental problem. It's all the consequences of sin. After that, after Omnisimus knows that the problem is our sin.
- And not only that, he heard from Paul that the creator of this world has become flesh and died for our sin, who is Jesus.
- He died instead of us. He substituted us to bear the price of sin on the cross. By receiving Jesus, Omnisimus received a new identity.
- [18 : 38] He became God's favorite son. He was no longer belong to this world, even though he's still living in this world. But he knew he belonged to a heavenly family, a kingdom of eternity.
- So even though our life on this earth is very short, but our life story didn't end after we died. We belong to an eternity kingdom.
- So now Omnisimus knew the meaning of his life, why he was a slave. He become an ambassador of God using his role as a slave.
- He's not just a slave, but also an ambassador of God. Now, before he's doing all the housework, he don't know what's the meaning. But at that time, Paul was in prison in Rome.
- He couldn't leave the house freely. He needed to stay in the house until his case was trialed. So he needs someone to take care of his daily life.
- [19 : 46] And he opened his house. People can visit him and listen to the gospel. At that moment, Omnisimus finds his purpose. He can serve Paul.
- He can participate in the mission of preaching the gospel. His life is not useless. His life is meaningful and useful. I met a man.
- I called him Mr. Chow several years ago. At that time, he was 60 years old. And he told me he was discharged from prison when he was 58 years old.
58. He has been in prison for 17 times in all his life. 17 times in prison. The first time he was in prison was 17 years old.
- He was very young. And because he took drugs, he was a drug addict. So he went in and went out to prison many, many times. 17 times.
- [20 : 50] All his life is to cheat money for drugs. And because he used needles to inject the drug, his left leg, the blood vessel of his last leg was blocked.
- And so his left leg was swollen and difficult to walk. He was so afraid his left leg would be needed to cut off. And in his last imprisonment, he met a friend who used to take drugs with him.
- But this time, his friend looked healthier and fatter than before. So he was so curious as, what happened to you? So his friend told him, well, I quit taking drugs by the gospel.
- But this time, I was in prison because I was fighting with others. So it doesn't matter with the drug. So Mr. Chow was very curious.
- Oh, I used to look down on this guy. Even though we are all drug addicts, but I looked down on him because I think he's not worthy or not better than me.
- [22 : 01] But how come he can become so healthier and look better than me? I must quit the drug also. So after he was discharged, he immediately joined St. Stephen's Society to treat the drug.

So two years later, he kept living in St. Stephen's Society. He quit taking drugs. And not only he quit drugs, but also he became a volunteer.

He went to Guangzhou station. You know, there's a back street of Guangzhou railway station. Many drug addicts used to inject drugs in there.

He joined other volunteers to go to Guangzhou and spread the leaflet and told them about the gospel, how you can quit taking drugs by the gospel.

He became useful. He said he didn't think he can be useful even when he was 60 years old.

[23 : 08] He think his life was over. He was rubbish. He couldn't bring any good to this world. But by God's grace, he can bring some good to this world.

After knowing Omnisimus was escaped from his master Philemon, Paul wrote this letter to ask Philemon to forgive and receive Omnisimus again.

Paul knew Philemon because it is Paul who brings the gospel to Philemon, and Paul has been visiting the church in Philemon's house. Paul and Philemon has a very close relationship.

So, Paul praised Philemon for his love and his faith towards Jesus and all the saints. And Philemon did live out the gospel transformed life because his good doing, his good deed was not just because the law requests me to do or because other people expect me to do so, so I do the good thing.

No, he do all the good thing because it is all out of the love and faith of him towards Jesus. Paul also quoted other saints' testimony.

[24 : 23] Paul said, Philemon, many people report to me, you had refreshed their heart. So, Paul appealed to Philemon. Paul warned Philemon to keep showing his kindness, especially to an old man and a prisoner for Christ, which is Paul.

Paul appealed to Philemon for his child Omnisimus. He warned Philemon could forgive and receive Omnisimus. True forgiveness and acceptance cannot be requested by compulsion or by force.

Because this must come from a willing heart. And it also means willing to give up the right to revenge. I think it's very hard for us to ask for forgiveness.

And I also think it's very hard to forgive someone truly hurt you. Without the grace of God, I don't think it would be possible.

Mr. Chow, the 60-year-old brother I mentioned, he told me one day he prayed to God.

[25 : 39] He said, God, I have brought a lot of hurt to my family. My father, my sister, moved to other places. They changed their telephone number because they want to avoid me.

I cheat them a lot and I let them disappoint a lot. And my wife and daughter, she has a wife when he was very young.

And his wife gave birth a daughter for him. But also, his wife, his daughter forsake him. And he said, And I couldn't contact them.

I don't have their telephone number. And I am also too ashamed to try to search them by myself. Please help me. So after this prayer, a few days, he joined a volunteer activity of his church.

He helped to clean an elder person's home in Chinhwan. He arrived early in Chinhwan MTR station.

[26 : 46] So arriving in the MTR station, he checked his mobile to see where other church members were. And when he was checking his mobile, a woman come to him and asked him, Are you Sam Go?

Are you the third brother? Are you Sam Go? I am Sam Go? I am the third brother's wife. How are you? You look better. You look healthier. What happened to you?

And Mr. Chow told her sister-in-law about he was receiving gospel drug rehabilitation service. He was living with other brother in the rehab center.

He was going to the church, and now he was going to do some cleansing work for an elder person. And one week later, one week later, his two elder sister, his younger brother and his sister-in-law, come out to have lunch with him.

And one month later, another younger brother, fly to Hong Kong from Europe to have dinner with him. And a few weeks later, her sister-in-law find her daughter.

[27 : 59] Her daughter forgave him and accept him as father again. So, Mr. Chow said, drug has taken everything from me.

I have never dreamed of having my family accept me again. People used to look me as a worm, as a rubbish, or invisible.

People will not respect me. But now, God gave me a new identity. God gave me dignity. And God break back my family. Not just a heavenly family, but also my blood family.

So, having my family forgive and accept me again is the grace of God. So, it is not by the grace of God, I don't think Mr. Chow can reconsole with his family.

Forgive is very difficult, especially if someone hurts you deep and very long time. And ask to forgive is also very difficult, because we are afraid, we don't like the feeling of shame.

[29 : 04] We don't like the feeling to plead guilty before man. But, Paul warned, or Paul appealed to Philemon, remember the grace of God.

Remember the love of Jesus Christ. And, let the love of Jesus Christ be your energy, be your strength and power to forgive.

So, Paul reminds Philemon that he might not just have received, he might have not just received Omnisimus as a born servant, but more than a born servant.

Although, Omnisimus was still a slave. But, slave is not his primary identity anymore. He was a son of God. Slave or master, these identities couldn't divide the relationship we have in Christ because of Christ.

We can put down the hatred because of Christ. We can put down all the debt before. We can reconcile with each other. In Shapik prison, every Wednesday, I will have, we will have religious class in Shapik prison.

[30 : 17] People from South America, people from Africa, people from Asia will come to our religious class. We all worship together using different languages.

religious, we try to learn the Bible. Sometimes I will speak in Cantonese, someone will translate it into English, and someone will translate it from English to Spanish because I'm from South America.

So, you know, Cantonese, Mandarin, English, Spanish, we all speak in the same religious class. Language didn't become a barrier.

Our nationality, our color, it doesn't matter because we know we are all sinners. We all need the grace and salvation from Christ.

Some of them, they are well educated. Some of them are accountants. Some of them are lawyers. Some of them are teachers. And some of them are not very well educated.

[31 : 19] They may have a grade six or grade seven education. they were a gangster. Some from America, they didn't, Africa, they didn't receive any much well education.

But, they knew education, our intelligence, couldn't help us overcome the dark side of our humanity. Even though you are a lawyer, even though you are a professional just like a teacher, when the temptation comes, you will still fail.

They commit crime because of money, because of sex, some maybe because they couldn't control their anger. So, they hurt people and they were in prison.

So, they understand all, we all need the salvation, the grace of God. God. So, in this little room, we truly share what is grace, no matter what social status, or how many money you have, or where you come from.

We are all in a family, a heavenly family. We are all brothers and sisters of a family. I don't know how you feel about this teaching.

[32 : 43] teaching. Maybe you understand this teaching very much in your head a long time ago. But I should remind you, it is very hard to put what we learn in our head to our heart to live it out.

Because the world is, we are living in a world used to judge or compare people by many things outside of ourselves.

We use education to compare people. We use where do they live to compare people. And because I live in Taiwan, I live in a public estate, and I was very poor.

So every time I went to Central, I was so afraid, anxious, because I felt I'm not worthy walking in Central. I'm lower than the people living in Central.

They are well-educated, more educated than me. They have more money than me. I dare not to speak to them.

[33 : 54] That's what when I was young, I was like that. The world teach me like that. We judge people by many our things rather than in God.

people. But in this religious class in Sepik prison, we truly experience, not in our head, but in our heart, because many people, Christian volunteer, they are professors, they are musicians, they are, many come from different social classes, come to the prison and worship together with them, and love them, show their care to them, but not as a role of I'm a rescuer, I try to rescue you.

No, they really come to, I want to make friends with you, I want to be your brother, I want to be your sister, I want to walk with you through a journey, especially in a low time of your life.

So they truly experience the grace of God in their heart. So I think maybe it is a very blessed place, somehow maybe more blessed than in this place, because we are all sitting here with a proper dressing, we have air condition, and we all look like very civilized, you know, so people will respect you, people will love you, probably because of your dressing, because you are speaking very nice to me, but in the prison, they're dressing prisoner's clothes, they got their uniform, and they strip off all their social titles, even though they're a lawyer, they're accountant, no, they become a number, three, five, six, so one, come, someone visit you.

So when he experiences this and someone didn't care about how he dressed, what people call him, they experience someone truly accept them, love them, and share God's love to them, they experience the power of the gospel, it breaks all the dividing wall, we become a body, we become a family, no matter what language you're speaking, no matter what color you are, and I saw that is the power of the gospel, so I think I can only share my experience, I want you to understand and try to learn in this place, we shouldn't and we need not to learn it in the prison, I don't want you all to go to prison to experience this experience, but I truly want you to experience the power of the gospel in here, we can love each other no matter what social status you are, what language you are speaking, what color you are, where you live, in Christ we are all one family, so Paul knew that Omnismos takes some value thing from Philemon, maybe money, maybe anything, but Paul knew it might bring some hurt to Philemon,

[37 : 21] Paul was willing to take the debt of Omnismos or Philemon into his account, he was imitating Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ bear our sin and pay the debt of our sin on the cross, Paul was willing to take the debt of Omnismos as his own, is there anyone hurt you, that you find it very difficult to forgive, what do you think if Jesus Christ was not only die for you, but also the one who hurt you?

My sister was adopted to my family when I was born, at that time she was just two years old, her birth father abandoned her when she was two, and she knew this truth when she was five.

Her birth father will occasionally visit her a few times a year, but every time her birth father visits her, he will ask my sister, take her homework, take her test paper to let him have a look, and her birth father will ask her, kneel down, ask about how come you got so low score in the school, and her birth father will beat her.

So she suffered a lot in her childhood, and she wasn't getting very well with my family, especially to my parents also, so she left our family, live by herself when she was 16 years old, and she just got grade 9 education.

So for her, it's very difficult to make a living with a grade 9 education, 16 years old girl, she need to take care all by herself.

[39 : 24] but eventually, she settled down with a stable income, and he met a boyfriend, living with her boyfriend.

But happy days were very short. At her early 30, I couldn't remember, it's 31 years old, or 32 years old, my sister was diagnosed with phase 4 cancer, and at the same time, she found her boyfriend was in love with another woman.

So she was so shocked and so heart broken. Her boyfriend don't want to be with her anymore, so my sister come back to my family, live with us.

Suffer and heart broken and exhausted, exhausted, she started to go to church with us. And in the church, he heard the gospel, he heard Jesus.

She told me, she think about all his life, he suffered a lot, and she also did many mistakes. She was so self-centered, sometimes she was so pried, so he asked Jesus to forgive her sin, and also he asked Jesus to heal the hurt in her heart.

[40 : 58] She said she wanted to find love from her father, but her father didn't love her. She wanted to find love from her boyfriend, but the love from her boyfriend was very short, very temporal, but finally he found the love in Jesus, and this love never failed her, so she received Jesus and baptized, and thanks God, by the grace of God, her cancer was under control, and her health eventually restored.

In the meantime, her boyfriend come back, want to make up with her and live with her again, so they tried to work it out again, but they enjoyed a few years of happiness, but ten years later, in my sister, 42 years old, the cancer came back, and this time, he died at 43 years old.

The day she died, every family member came to farewell her, and when she breathed out her last breath, it is her birth father and her husband, the two who hurt her deepest in her life, accompanied her, and when my sister, before she died, she said to her birth father, I forgive you.

She knew that Jesus Christ not just died for her sin, but also those who hurt her. Jesus has already paid the price.

She no longer hates them. She needs no revenge, and she left the world without hatred, without regret. I saw a beautiful picture.

[42 : 58] Two men hurt my sister most in her life, but it is day, it is them accompanying her to walk to the end, to live this world.

And what a wonderful picture is, when my sister died, he reconsolates with her father, and also he affirmed her love and her husband's love.

It's by the power of the gospel. It is Jesus healed the wound, the hurt in my sister's heart, that she can have the love to forgive and to put down all the debt.

He didn't ask anyone to pay back the debt they own her. I witnessed, I experienced how Jesus became our peace. I'm not an academic people.

I don't know how to explain the scripture very reachfully to you. I can only use this life story example to tell them what I witnessed, what I experienced in my life, how Jesus has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, how he created in himself one new man in a place of the two.

[44 : 24] Did you also experience this? I want you to think about I want to share my experience not to earn your like or earn your clap hand.

I just want to share with you is God is true. The power of the gospel is very true. It changed my whole life. It changed my family's life.

It changed the history of my whole family. So I want you also to experience it. not just stay in our head. Do you think you are most related to Omnisimus or to Philemon?

Did you hurt someone that you dare not to ask forgiveness from him or from her? Or does anyone hurt you before that you find it very difficult to forgive him or forgive her?

Or do you find the social status, slave or master, educated or uneducated? It becomes a barrier for you to connect to people, to love the people, or be united together in Christ?

[45 : 34] We all need to face the dark side of our humanity. We are very fragile. We are just broken human. But there's hope.

We should just look in ourselves and don't look to God. We should look to ourselves, but also we should look to Jesus Christ, what he did for us.

It is Jesus who helped us or saved us. It is Jesus who delivered us from the guilty, from shame.

It is also Jesus who gave us power, strength to forgive or to ask for forgiveness. Don't let yourself trapped in hatred or trapped in guilt or shame.

It is Jesus who promised us to have a joyful life through a freedom. I can freely love people. I am not a slave of sin.

[46 : 32] I am not a slave of my shame. I am not a slave of my pride. I can freely love people just as Jesus loved me. So I just want you to enjoy the love of Jesus.

And let the love of Jesus help you to ask for forgiveness or to forgive or to love someone very different from you. And let the grace and the love of God flow through you to the people around you.

And if every one of us can truly experience this, we may truly transform this community, this city.

people will no longer pointing their finger to other people, blaming other people's responsibility, or just care about themselves, don't love each other, don't want to connect with each other.

It is God's grace who divides this wall of hostility. It is God's grace, it is Jesus' love bringing us together. We can humbly confess to each other, ask forgiveness from each other.

[47 : 47] We can love and walk with each other by the grace of God. I truly, truly want to share my experience so that you may also experience this.

If it is your situation today, no matter you are ashamed to ask forgiveness, or you are hard to forgive some people, or you are hard to love someone very different from you, I ask God here, his Holy Spirit, pour the love of God, the love of Jesus into our heart, that we may have the strength, have the love from God truly to forgive, to ask for forgiveness, to truly love, not by our judgment or by our standard.

I truly hope God may do that. Let us pray. Let us pray. Amen. Lord Jesus, we are all broken people.

We cannot boast anything in front of you. We are so fragile.

We have our limit, and also we have our dark side. We cannot save by ourselves, and also we hurt each other.

[49 : 14] We hurt people, people hurt us, and this hurt divided us. But Jesus, thank you. You died for our sin.

You've already paid the debt. You've already canceled our punishment on the cross. because we receive in you our sin transferred to you, and your righteousness transferred to us.

We become children of God. We join your family. We need not any other outside thing to judge who we are.

In Jesus Christ, in you, we are all beloved. We are all your children, and we can love each other sincerely, not by our standard to judge who is deserved, who is not deserved.

Everyone in Christ is our family member, is our body. So we thank you for your love. If today we still angry with some people, we find it very difficult to forgive, please help us.

[50 : 28] Heal our wound in our heart, heal our sorrow or hurt, and fill our heart with your love.

That we forgive not because you requested me, or someone requested me, that we forgive because we truly experience your love, and we're truly willing to forgive.

Lord, help us. Help us to let your gospel not just stay in our head, but go to our heart, melt our heart, transform our heart, take away all the bitterness, take away all the pride or shame out of our heart.

Let us freely, joyfully, enjoy your love, enjoy your grace, and we can share willingly, share your love, your grace willingly to the people around us.

Change our family, change our city, and may your glory shine to the city through us, and may your love show to the people in this city through us.

[51 : 53] Hear our prayer in Jesus' name. Amen.