

Hebrews 12 (Conrad Bowman) (April 24, 2005)

Turn to Hebrews 12. Let's start at verse 1 again, and take a running start at that, 12:1. "Therefore," it says. On the basis of all that list in chapter 11, seeing that we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, and you should have a note in there that that great cloud of witnesses refers to two things: One is the great cloud that was listed in chapter 11. But also the cloud of angelic watchers who surround us on a daily basis. There are angels who desire to look into the affairs of men. Because through looking into the affairs of men, and God's dealing with men, they learn aspects of God that they never had a chance to learn before they were judged for the fall that they went through back in Genesis. And if that's mystic, and doesn't make a lot of sense to you, we'll go back to Genesis one day and cover that, over four or five weeks or so.

Betijean Kennerly. And also the people that are – had a belief. They're witnesses.

Conrad Bowman. That's right. That's right. The one's that surround us. Unbelievers as well as believers. So, with a view toward that, doesn't that call to mind our complete orientation as believers to the service of other people. We live at the behest of the needs of others. We, above all people. We alone, of all people on earth, have lives that are expendable in service to God. His Son's life was expendable for all of mankind's salvation. Our lives are expendable in service to Him. To minister the Gospel of Reconciliation. And what does the Gospel of Reconciliation mean to you? What is the definition of that to you? What comes to mind when we talk about – we've been given the Ministry of Reconciliation? What does that mean to you?

Evelyn Wamble. That we were not friends of God and needed to be reconciled.

Conrad Bowman. The Gospel and Reconciliation. What do those two things when they come together mean to you?

Lady. Bridge the gap between God and His judgment and man and his sin.

Conrad Bowman. All men. Right. **Reconciliation and the Gospel, when you take them together, means that no man goes to hell and perdition because of sin.** Let that settle in. No man goes to hell because of sin. The issue of sin has been resolved. It was resolved by the price Christ paid. Man dies and goes to hell because of his rejection of the price that was paid. **And his insistence on paying his own price.** That's grace by its very definition. That there's nothing in

the world you can do but accept what has already been done. When Christ said on the cross, **it is finished**, that encompasses the whole concept. There was nothing left to be done for man's redemption. The total price had been paid. That's what we've been given the ministry of. The ministry that God is at hand for every man, if you would but accept it. Okay.

Now, lay aside the sin. The great cloud of witnesses are those who are around us and should be our motivation. We should also lay aside the "Sin," not sins of the world, but sin, in the singular. Sin in the singular always refers to the old sin nature of sin. The Adamic nature that we deal with. It's connected with the flesh. That sin nature has been resolved as well. Because we who are reborn, are reborn with a nature of Christ within us. It's that new creation that has no relationship to the old Adamic nature. The new creation walks in flesh. The flesh has a relationship to the old sin nature. Adamic nature is limited to fleshly work and movement and desires. When we walk out of the new creation within us, we walk apart from the sin nature, and it has no effect on us. Okay. When we walk according to flesh – boy that's tricky, isn't it. When we walk according to flesh, that old sin nature grabs us by the throat, or by the tail, and throws us around, in horrible fashion. And what comes out of us is not the life of Christ, but the life of Adam, the first. Okay.

Lady. [Comment. Inaudible].

Conrad Bowman. That's right. In 1st John you say, when we walk in light, as He is light, we walk in light because God is light, which means walking in Him. When we walk in Him, our new creation nature produces the life of Christ, by the Spirit within us.

Gentleman. [Comment. Inaudible].

Conrad Bowman. Is that it this morning? Ah, I'll have to get that one. I missed it. I didn't get here early enough to hear it.

Alright. When we then give way to the flesh that we occupy, because as long as we're here we're skin and bones – we've got skin and bone to deal with. When we walk according to skin and bone, and the way skin and bone has been trained, what comes out of us is the old Adamic nature that lives there. But if we don't declare ourselves to be dead to that, it will win the battle every time. The solution in Romans is,

Reckon yourselves, therefore, to be dead to sin.

On the basis of our union with Christ in His death. That's Romans 6. We've been joined to Christ in His death. In His death, He put to death the old nature of Adam, and gave us a new nature. So the old nature that's there associated with flesh has no relationship to the [new creation us](#) that's patterned and lives after Christ. The choice we make is whether to declare, on a moment by moment basis, our freedom from that old nature based on the death of Christ and our union with Him in His death. So, like as He was raised from the dead, so are we raised, it says, in newness of life. That's Romans 6, the first 6 verses. Okay. So there's the key. [Reckoning yourself to be dead](#). That's a declaration that we make over, and over, and over again. You see that old nature coming up, and it just comes up so fast sometimes. A guy cuts you off on the freeway, and there it is. The old man's driving my car. Okay. That's it. Norma contradicts me on something I said, there's that old nature. See. There's that old nature. Not hers. It's mine. Responses to that, does not like that. Doesn't like it. Okay. Just flares up. Temper. Temper. Temper. Things that happen that you don't expect. Temper. Flares up. That old nature grabs you right here. What's the answer? Declare yourself, reckon yourself to be dead to that. I'm above that. Doesn't change, does it? No ma'am. No ma'am.

Lady. Can we get on another verse?

Conrad Bowman. Yes ma'am. [Laughter].

Gentleman. Conrad, what does it mean to lay aside every weight? What are the weights?

Gentleman. Lust and riches.

Conrad Bowman. Worry. Anxiety. Graft. Lust. Kenneth Marvin Shepherd said it. Lust is anything that makes you breath hard. There it is. It could be anything. It could be somebody that makes you mad. It can be a fast car going by. You know. Ferraris. That'll do it.

Lady. [Comment. Inaudible].

Conrad Bowman. Oh, that's good, isn't it. In my Notes, with regard to lay aside every weight, I've gotten the burdens of worry and anxiety that drag on every decision. Because that's what comes most readily to mind to me today. You face

decisions that you have to make, and you decide you're going to worry about them. That's a decision you make. I'm going to worry about this. I've got a decision to make. Well the decision is whether you're going to trust God with the answer. No, I'm going to worry about this for a while. I think I'm going to take it out, put it on the table, make me a list of bad things that could happen, and good things that might happen, and just sit there and just focus on them for a while. Especially the bad things that might happen. I'm going to choose to worry about this. Well, what follows then, is I choose to be anxious about it. Yeah. I'm going to worry about this, and these things are likely to happen. So, I'm going to be really anxious about it. You know, and concerned about it, and I'm going to focus on that for a while. And then my prayer life begins to change, because I'm really worried about this. And I'm concerned about it. So my prayer changes from thankfulness that I know that God has the solution to it, and has an answer that's ready, and I'm going to choose – well. What I'm going to do, is do all I can do about it. You know. How many ways I can attack this problem. Now my flesh is in control because my flesh loves to go back to human strengths and weaknesses and start formulating a plan based on what I'm good at. And the next thing you know is – I've got it. Boy, I've got it. I got it. Let me try these three things here, and see if they don't work and solve this thing. And if they don't, I'll get back to you.

Lady. In my flesh grows no good thing.

Conrad Bowman. In my flesh grows no good thing. Grows no good thing, especially in my strength in the flesh.

Yvonne Pirtle. [Comment. Inaudible].

Conrad Bowman. Oh, what's even worse than is to decide you do deserve something good to happen.

Lady. [Comment. Inaudible].

Conrad Bowman. No. No. No. No. I would never do that. She said she sends one to the other. No. As a matter of fact, on that next page I've got a box that I put up there on these next two pages over, that said: Galatians teaches us, Galatians 6, doesn't teach us to share one another's sins. Nor does it teach us to bare one another's sins. B-A-R-E. It teaches us to bear – B-E-A-R – pick them up and carry them. Not share them or uncover them, but pick them up and carry them. Yes ma'am?

Lady. [Comment. Inaudible. End – do you think the personalities had something to do with it?].

Conrad Bowman. Absolutely. Absolutely. Otherwise Jay Adams would have written three books in vain. You know. Dealing with personalities.

Lady. [Question. Inaudible].

No. No. Because there's only one answer given for all of the personality guidance. **Reckon yourselves therefore to be dead to sin.** There's only one solution. Three personalities pick three different ways to fail. But there's only one way to succeed, and that's **reckon yourselves therefore to be dead to sin.** And that's to reorient your mind to grace. You know. Norma and I have just seen some absolutely miraculous things come to pass over this past year, over this past month, past two weeks. Just absolutely miraculous things have come to pass that we – there's no way you could have expected it. There's no way you could have planned for it. The only thing you can do, is when it jumps up and slaps you in the face – and that's usually what happens with God's answers, is to hit your knees and say, thank you Lord. There's no way I could have foreseen this, or deserve it. But, nevertheless, we've seen it happen. And you can say the same thing in your life. You can say exactly the same thing in your life. We'll get into some more details on that at a later date. Not right now. But it just happens that way. You know. The answer for the McManns was clear lymph nodes and no further complications. Right? That's what you're praying for. It is not bad news if it comes back that the lymph nodes are involved. It's just different news. I've faced so many decisions this past year. And the answer would come up, and I'd say, boy, that's not a real good answer, is it? Well, it was. It was. Yeah. It was exactly what God intended to bring me to the point where He wanted me and her. Now that's tough to acknowledge. But, on this side of it, that's the reality of it, isn't it? What comes is what God has chosen of His own sovereign will to bring into our life. To bring out His best in us. We don't always see it that way. But that's the way it works. There you go. All things work together for?

Lady. It doesn't say all things work together for the ... [inaudible] ... It says they work together.

Conrad Bowman. They work together for the good. Not for good results, but for the good. What is good? God is good. It works together according to His plan and His perfect reason. That's the way they work together.

Lady. [Comment. Inaudible].

Conrad Bowman. Absolutely. Absolutely.

Lady. [Comment. Inaudible. Something about when everything is going our way].

Conrad Bowman. Not me. Not me. That's the biggest case of deformation you've ever seen. Yes ma'am?

Carol Johnson. [Comment. Inaudible].

Conrad Bowman. All day long.

Carol Johnson. [Comment. Inaudible].

Conrad Bowman. Keep going. Keep on going. And we're back to that expendability of life, aren't we? That's right were we are. Alright.

In chapter 12, verse 3 and 4. Verse 3 and 4. When you start thinking about accomplishments, you start thinking about heroes. And we pick our heroes. We pick our spiritual heroes, those people that we follow as fans. A couple come to mind that capture the mind of man. Joe Lewis. Mohammad Ali. They were – and I was thinking about that because I watched one of Mohammad Ali's prime fights this past week on TV. He was fluid grace when he moved. Self-centered, profane a man there ever dared be, but he was pure grace when he began to move. Torvill and Dean, when they skated as pairs, when Torvill and Dean decided to take to the ice, it was music. It was incredible to watch those two move in concert with one another. Patton and the military. Or, think about the people who designed the military and motivation. They could raise friendship to such a level that men would willingly give their life for their friend. Now on Maslow's hierarchy of motivational factors, that's only the third step. There're four more on top of that that motivate people. I could take you through an exercise at the third level – men will give their life for friendship. L'Oreal sells shampoo at the highest level of motivation. If you think you're not subjected to pressure, they sell it to you because it's the right thing to do and you deserve it. There's no higher motivation known to man. It's the right thing to do and you deserve it. And they're selling shampoo. No wonder that's a French little bitty company that turned into a giant in the industry, in just a few short years. What are we to fix our mind on? In [verses] 12:3 and 4, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the

author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despised the shame, and then sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Of all the heroes among men, our viewpoint should be fixed and focused on the Lord Jesus. Not as He walked on earth to the cross, as He sits now on the throne in heaven. We are to fix our eyes on Him. And the river of living water that starts at that throne, pours down in an unending gush right through you to a dry world. Living waters. Remember when he stood at the temple courtyard and declared that, if any man would come to Me, thirst, let him come to me, and I shall be in him a river of living water. Well that water started to flow the minute He ascended. And the Spirit descended down. And the river carries the Spirit of God into your life where you are reborn and your life is His life flowing out into a lost and dry world. That's the process. Okay. So, that's [verses] 3 and 4. For all the heroes around us, and we all have some, we are to fix

... our eyes on Jesus the author and perfecter of faith.

3. Consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lose heart.

The word "heart" here is not the word *kardia* that we normally see as heart. But it's the word *psuche*, which means soul. You may not lose soul. Okay. Now, man has three things: His spiritual life, which is his orientation to God; his soul life, which is his orientation to man and the world in which he lives; and his physical body which houses his will. This is referencing you will not lose your orientation, *psuche*, soul's orientation, within the world in which you live. Okay. It assumes your spiritual life is alive. Consider Him who has endured such hostility as sinners so that you may not grow weary and lose your orientation in your emotional self to the world around you. You will be stable in the face of the onslaught of the mosquito. You remember last week we talked about it. We endure the onslaught of the elephant because we see it coming. We hear its thundering feet. We get ready. But we don't see the mosquito coming, and that's the one that drives us nuts. It's the little thing that nags us every day. Okay. That thing that just won't let you go. And it keeps plaguing. And it keeps coming back up. And it keeps irritating you. Those are the things that knock us off. What's the answer to that? Fix our eyes on the Lord Jesus as He is on His throne in heaven, from which that flow of living water comes your way. Open your mouth; drink it in; and watch it flood the world around you. Okay.

Gentleman. [Comment. Inaudible].

Conrad Bowman. That's right. Because He in His life is the whole game. That's it. That's the reason we're here.

4. You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin;
5. and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, "my son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reproved by him;
6. for those whom the lord loves he disciplines, and he skins alive with a whip, every son whom he receives to Himself."

Okay. That's it. That's what it says. Takes the hide right off of you, and exposes right what you are. He skins alive with a whip. He scourges every son whom He receives. My dad had seven sons. We learned from him in two ways: One is, by the life he demonstrated – a consistent Christian testimony that he lived before us. And the other one was a healthy fear. You did not want – mom was strong enough. She never threaten us with – well wait until your dad gets home. No. She grabbed the belt and went ahead and took care of business. You know. I remember the last time I got one from her. And when she finished, I turned and asked her if she was through. And that was the biggest mistake of my life. [Hearty Laughter]. Boy she was through with that. I guarantee you she was through with that.

Donna Rankin. Conrad, my mother had a switch over the refrigerator. And a lady friend came in and said, oh, what are you doing with that switch up there? And she said, oh, that's just Donna's hearing aid. [Laughter].

Conrad Bowman. A hearing aid! That was good, that's good, that's good. I remember one time, and I going to use valuable time to tell you this one. I decided as a sophomore in high school that I needed to join the National Guard. Everybody did, that was anybody, joined the National Guard. Besides, we had that whole company of big ole trucks; and Monday night, go out there and just tear around town in those big ole trucks. And that was a lot of fun. So I met with a guy and got their enlistment papers; and since I was a sophomore in high school, it required dad's signature. And I went home with them that night and asked, where's dad? Well, he's down at the service station talking to Ernest Witchen and O.A. Sinefield. They're talking matters of great importance. O.A. Sinefield and Ernest Witchen were both my Sunday school teachers at the First

Baptist Church, at one time or another. And dad is discussing things with them, and he was a deacon. And they're doing deacon business down there. And I went there and here they are hunched over the hood of a Ford. And I said, Dad, I need you to sign this for me. He said, son, I'm talking. Don't interrupt me. Ah, man, it's forty-five minutes to meeting time, and I've got to go. And I stood it as long as I could, and interrupted him again. He said, can't you see, I'm still talking? Get on home. I'm not going to do that. Go on home. Well I got mad. So I went home, and got ready to go, and I signed the paper – signed his name on it. Well, there wasn't any strap after that. There was just this long period of silence that lasted for days. It stretched into weeks. I went home that night after the meeting and hung a uniform and boots and everything in a closet. Dad came in the next day – see in my house, dad sat at the head of the table; and I'm the number one son – I sat right here next to him. And then Gale, and Wayne, and Ronnie, Paul, Steve, and Darrell. Right around the table, in descending order. Dad would tell Gale, would you pass me so-and-so, like I wasn't even there. I was invisible. This built up for two or three weeks. Then I'm in a meeting in the armory, and we're way up at the top. It was like an old gym. We're way up at the top, and I look down at the door, and I saw dad come through the door. He hadn't said a word to me in weeks. And he disappeared in the CO's office. About fifteen minutes later he came out, went out, got in his truck, and went on home. Here comes this guy, "Bowman, the CO wants to see you." I got to the office he said, "son, whose signature is this on this paper?" And I said, "its mine." He said, "I met your dad. He's a nice guy. No. That's his signature on that paper. I've got you for as long as I want you, and it is not going to be fun." Dad never said a word to me about that. He started talking to me the next day, because he had done his thing. I did ten years in the National Guard. [Laughter]. In Mississippi and in Texas. I did ten years. Okay. Unfortunately, dad's first cousin was a company sergeant, and he knew the story, and never let up. Never ever let up. I have not resisted to the point of shedding blood, but I understand the principle of discipline. I thank God I had a dad that was willing to discipline to whatever extent that was necessary. To whatever extent that was necessary. I have not trouble, no trouble whatsoever, understanding a heavenly Father who would discipline His children. None. That was such an easy transfer to make. Easy transfer to make. Shock and awe. And my dad had a prayer he used to offer. Every time. Every time he prayed. "Forgive us where we do wrong, and help us to do good." And as a young man of 17 or 18, I thought it simple and understated. And as a young man of 20 or 22, I became a father myself and started teaching. And the older I got, the deeper that phrase got. It's profound. It's profound, when you think about it. And he just got bigger, and bigger, and bigger as I got older.

Evelyn Wamble. Did you say [inaudible].

Conrad Bowman. Yeah, that' right. That's exactly right. Now,

8. If you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons at all.

9. Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live?

10. For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness.

Same word as set apart. The word for "holy" is the same word for "sanctify," or "saint," or "being set apart." It's the same word. It's not any different. He disciplines us so that we might be set apart in Him and unto Him and set apart from the world.

11. Therefore, all discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness. Hebrews 12:11.

He who knew no sin was made to be sin for us, not just to pay for sin for us, He was made to be sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. [2 Corinthians 5:21](#).

And we are made the righteousness of God in Him by being disciplined by Him to conform – thank you very much – to the image of His Son. See the process? It's a nice tight circle, isn't it? God conforms us to the Son. Because the Son, though He were a Son, learned he obedience – we learned that back in Hebrews chapter 5 – by the things which He suffered, thereby became the author of our salvation and the perfecter of faith. And it's not our faith that saves us. It's His faith that saves us. We tap into that. We don't add to it. We tap into it. Okay. It's His faith that we infuse in our lives through that living water that flows from the throne on high. We don't get it by imitating the walking Jesus on the roads of Jerusalem and Israel. We get it by tapping into and being joined to the living Lord Jesus who's ascended and sits on the throne victorious. That's the difference. That's the difference in living in grace or living according to Law.

12. Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble,

13. and make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.

"Make straight paths for your feet" – it recalls so much of what they were taught in the Old Testament. But think of what you would be if you were a Hebrew listening to this message now, instead of a believer today. This message was pointed for them. It had cutting edges. To us it's suggestive. To them it was not. Remember what they're being called to do. They're being called to forsake of the traditions of their fathers, leave them behind, leave the Law behind, and embark fully on a journey on the basis of grace. These are people who are born under Law. Took on the obligation of Law legitimately. Now find themselves post-Pentecost faced with the choice of leaving what they grew up with and grasping the new ascended Lord Jesus. That's a tough decision for them. You were never born under obligation to Law. No. Couldn't be. Because the Law has done its work, and Christ has paid His price. And the Law was satisfied, and has no more payment to be made. Okay. You were born staring grace in the face. These people were not. When you get the final version of Hebrews, it's going to be attached, okay, to James and 1st and 2nd Peter. And it's coming as a single volume as we finish Hebrews. And it's going to be titled, "God's Pursuit of the Jew into Grace." And you'll understand what that means. Because James, and 1st and 2nd Peter and Hebrews is a complete record of God's patience as He pursues that chosen people into the Age of Grace, and continually puts the Gospel before them. Because they had a special burden. They had to lay down the Law, and you don't.

14. Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.

So when He keeps coming back to set apart in holiness and being sanctified, it has a special meaning to them.

15. See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; and that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled;

16. that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright ...

Now, what he's talking about, immorality or godlessness, and he gives as an example, Esau, because Esau was a man given to his physical needs. He wanted it satisfied. So he sold his birthright for a single meal. He changed his mind afterwards. You know that even afterwards when he desired to inherit the blessing.

17. You know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears.

Now remember what Hebrews 5 and 6 told them? "You desire to take milk with the Word, you need to consume milk with the Word and it's time to move on from the elemental things that are the oracles of God. You used to practice laying on of hands and Levitical washings." And recalled the resurrection from the dead that Isaac and that Abraham believed of Isaac. He said, all those things used to work repentance in your life. They were practices of the Law. But, understand this. If you reject the Son of God and the price He paid, you can not go back to the Law. You were saved under Law. But once you reject the Son of God and the price He paid, you can't go back to just being saved under Law. You lose that position. And now you're lost in the face of grace. That was Esau. Esau had a decision to make. He sold it for a meal. Then, he wanted to go back. He couldn't. He was rejected.

18. You have not come to a mountain that may be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind [that was Moses on the Mount],

19. and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which sound was such that those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them.

20. For they could not bear the command, "IF EVEN A BEAST TOUCHES THE MOUNTAIN, IT WILL BE STONED."

21. And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, "I AM FULL OF FEAR and trembling."

22. But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to [thousands and thousands] myriads of angels ...

Understand that now. Put yourself in the place of that Hebrew. The Hebrew was looking for a Jerusalem that was stable. The Hebrew was looking for a Jerusalem that was stable on earth. And he said, do not come to that. You are now face to face with a heavenly Jerusalem. A city in heaven, and a living God. See the choice they were given? You have to give up that thought of an earthly Jerusalem because your choice was for a heavenly Jerusalem, the city of God.

23. To the general assembly and church of the firstborn ...

The general assembly is the whole assembly of Old Testament saints. The church of the firstborn is the Church that's Pentecost.

... who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous men made perfect,

24. and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel.

So he goes all the way back to Abel, and all the blood that was spilt and sacrificed right on up to Christ and Pentecost. And he said, you've come to a better place than any of them ever knew. A superior place. His whole argument for twelve chapters has been the superiority of the person of Christ over all that has preceded it. And he's coming to his conclusions now. The mediator of a New Covenant, and the sprinkled blood that speaks better than the blood of Abel.

25. See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less shall we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven [because that's where He is].

26. And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, "YET ONCE MORE WILL I SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN."

27. And this expression, "Yet once more," denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, in order that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

And this refers to the heaven and the earth passing away and time was no more, and a new heaven and a new earth descends from God. It's veiled here for them. They haven't seen that yet. But that's what it has reference to.

28. Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe;

29. for our God is a consuming fire.

And the next chapter to come up is 13. Because of that, let love of the brethren continue. There it is. Is there any place where our love should strengthen more than right here. The people we share our life with; the people we share our Lord with. That's where our love should be shared. You guys have showed us this year so much genuine love and affection in so many ways that this verse just rings when I read it. So many ways. It's been remarkable. Absolutely remarkable. We've sailed through this year on the basis of your prayers. Not ours. Yours. And they are deeply, deeply appreciated. Let's pray.

Father, how marvelous You are. You provided us with a Savior and You joined us together in Him; and You give us this life to live together. Give us a sense of Your presence. We know You're here, Father, and we sense that every time we touch one another. We thank You for it. We've offered You our petitions today. We offer You our praise now, for all that You've done. We thank you Father that we were not born with the burden of the Law, as these who heard these words were. Help us Father to live in light of that. Guard every word we say. Discipline us to whatever extent it takes. Guide our steps and our thoughts this week, as we serve You and the Son we love. For it's in His name we pray. Amen.

Any questions? Thank you very much.

[This recording was transcribed on a tape recorder, and transmitted to a digital format. The earlier recordings, of which this is one, were made on a tape recorder. Some are more audible than others].