

Romans 16 (Conrad Bowman) (October 8, 2008)

Let's have a word of prayer.

Thank You, Father, for the time and the opportunity we have just to gather under the Word. We pray Father for our enlightenment by encouragement by the things which You've hidden in the Word for us. Just give us an understanding that surpasses our own abilities; but – but that lets us see into the heart of the Lord we serve, and just feed us with His adoration of You, and His glorification of everything You do; and help us to follow in His footsteps and to do the same thing with the mind of Christ that He's given us. Thank You for tonight. We pray You lead us now as we study these things together, in Christ's name, who paid for it. Amen.

And Barbara breaking the door. I can't believe she did that. [Laughter]. Brand new door.

[Class chatter back and forth].

Conrad Bowman. I'm Conrad.

Lady. I'm Jane [inaudible]. I came 23 years.

Conrad Bowman. You did? Did you know we were coming, and that's the reason you left? [Laughter].

Lady. No. I left with my husband.

Conrad Bowman. Norma?

Norma Bowman. We have another new lady from ...

Conrad Bowman. Oops. You're hiding behind there. I didn't see ...

Gentleman. [Inaudible] ... mother.

Conrad Bowman. Okay.

Gentleman. This is her first time tonight.

Conrad Bowman. Well I'm so glad to have you. Thank you very much. Come in here.

We are in Romans, and this is our – should be our last or next to last study in this Book. We should wrap it up – but there're a lot of things we should do. And, we often get started in here and just make a dent, and have to come back and finish. So, we're in chapter 16 of Romans; and this is a commendation chapter. Paul has taken us all the way through his entire span of doctrinal information. It's a – it's a gorgeous treatise on systematic theology. This Book of Romans; and I just wish I could take you deep enough in it to where you could appreciate it from a – from a teacher's perspective, looking at the – looking at the Greek that supports the text, and the history that supports the text that just opens up like a gorgeous flower; and there's no end to appreciating it. We could start over next week in Romans 1 and go back through it again, and – and never reach what we've studied; and it would still take us – you know – thirty weeks to go through it again.

Lady. And learn something new.

Conrad Bowman. And learn something new every time. Ah, but we're not going to do that. As soon as we finish this last chapter, we're going to Titus. So if you want to know where to be studying ...

Mary Chambliss. You said Matthew? You told me Matthew.

Conrad Bowman. No. I lied.

Mary Chambliss. I was looking forward to it.

Conrad Bowman. I got my – well, you come on Sunday morning, don't you?

Mary Chambliss. Not to you. [Laughter].

Conrad Bowman. Well ...

Lady. We can only take it once a week. [Laughter].

Conrad Bowman. God bless you. I got confused. I got confused; and I did say Matthew last week, and I apologize for that, but it's the Revelation class that's going to Matthew, because it ties perfectly with what we've been studying in

Revelation. And Paul's – Paul's study of – of Romans, and the – and the theological foundation of the New Testament Church is added to by going to Titus and 1st and 2nd Timothy. The Pastoral Epistles; because its instructions to Church leaders; and – so – reasons just said, that's where we need to go after Romans; and then Betijean talked to me about doing Philippians, with the – with the practical aspects of the love of God that binds us together; this glue that joins us all together. So somewhere in the middle of that Pastoral Epistles I want to drop over Philippians and just take a nice long drink out of that water. But that's – that's kind of what's going on in my head. If you have a different way you'd like to go, let Phil know. [Laughter]. Let me or Phil know – one – because we're – we're getting together and talking about this in terms of what makes the most sense for our collective growth. And to be perfectly honest about it, I'm very selfish about this, I pick the next Book based on where I itch at the time. You know, I'm feeding my own self in this stuff; and – and if I'm drawn to a particular place, I want – I want to go there, and I'll just throw your ideas right out the window [laughter]; and – except Betijean comes by the house in the middle of my coffee and ...

Lady. And you never know when that's going to happen.

Conrad Bowman. You never know when that's coming. On chapter 16. We've gone through the doctrinal aspects of this Book, and now Paul gets around to his commendations and his personal relationships; and in chapter 16 he starts out this way.

1. I commend unto you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea;
2. that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well.

Do you feel the same way that Paul says we should feel about your brothers and sisters in Christ here? Is there purpose for your being here in their lives? Now this is very important. You're not here as a – a little island in the sun just soaking up stuff. You're here as one member of the Body of Christ – the Bride of the Son of God. That's what you're here for. And if you recall in Galatians chapter 6 – and I keep going back to that over and over again. What does he say there?

If a brother is overtaken in a fall, he which is spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of meekness, considering yourselves lest you likewise be tempted. For each should bear his own cargo, but let everyone of you bear the other's overload.

No wiggle room. It's not there. When my brother is down, and he needs support, whether it's prayer support or whether it's physical support – it's just like Phil asked me tonight – he's – he was aware that I'm not feeling a hundred percent tonight, so he says, I need to sit right here in case your knees get weak and you start to buckle; and he's genuine about that. I mean that's a brother – that's a brother who's willing to pull alongside, and catch me – Adam does it all the time. Adam sits right here – but he can't get here tonight. So – so I'm sensing a bit of loss by not having him up on the front row. You see the way that works. My confidence in standing up here and delivering these lessons is based on the assurance that those guys give me; that if I start to falter, I'll never hit the floor. Now that's a very, very simple, but important thing to have happen. You see by the same token, I try to listen to every word you say; and when I hear something that has a back door that opens into a doctrinal area, my job is to make sure that you hear the truth full face; front to front; so that you have an opportunity to alter your course, and not follow something that's going to leave you in a bad place out there somewhere. You see, it doesn't matter whether we're talking about spiritual truth or whether we're talking about physical strength or whatever, we are uniquely bound together; and that's what he's – that's the point he's making here. In Galatians 6, he lays it down so plainly, it's just beautifully done, that if you read – just mark Galatians 6 right here with these first verses; because you're going to need to read through that at some time when you get some time – when you get a little time to think about it – you read Galatians 6 and have a marginal note right there – right here by this first verse – and just connect the dots between what he says to the Galatians and what he's saying right here to the Romans. Your sister Phoebe,

2. ... receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well.

3. Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus,

4. who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches [or assemblies] of the Gentiles;

5. also greet the church that is in their house. Greet Epaenetus, my beloved, who is the first convert to Christ from Asia.

Now, when you win somebody to the Lord, or bring them from a place where they are, into a place of growth and knowledge, you've taken on a task. It wasn't something you did for the benefit of the Church. You linked yourself to another brother or sister, and you brought him or her along, and you introduced them to the Word, and you took them on as a responsibility. You don't drop them at that point. You don't drop them at all. They become a primary responsibility of yours. For growth; for instruction; for reproof. Okay? For the righteousness that's discovered in the Word; and then for the means by which to apply that righteousness to their life, just as you apply it to your own. Well, that raises several things, doesn't it? First, it means, when you take somebody on, you take them on with your own life displayed before them. You willing to do that? Okay?

Mike Donaldson. Works and all.

Conrad Bowman. That's it. That's it. Can't get around it. Don't tell me how many people you told about, you need to come to BridgePoint. You need to come study with us. That's – that's an opening gambit to a conversation, that's going to become a contract between you and them and the Lord you serve. Okay? The job's not over by just passing out invitations. Okay? That's – that's not the way it works. The job is over when the person you make the connection to opens their eyes and sees the Lord full face in your life; displayed and busy; working as the Evangelist in the world by the Spirit that's within him; and the Spirit that's within him is the Holy Spirit Himself – the third person of the Trinity; who is also in you, which means, you have the same Evangelist inside your life that Christ Himself had in His life when He was ministering for thirty-three years on this earth. It's not diminished one bit. Boy, it's tough, isn't it? Where's your excuse? There's not any room in there for excuses, is it? If – if God the Father deigned to put God the Spirit inside of you, and then put the mind of Christ inside of you, and then put the heart of the Lord Jesus Christ inside of you, why should He not make the same demands on you to live glorifying Him that He does on His Son? He does. He does make those demands; and we just don't want to even recognize it, much less pick that load up and attempt to carry it. But – but it's true. It's true. That's what the Lord – that's what the Lord has in store for us for all eternity when we step out of this veil of tears – we're going to step into an eternity doing one thing over, and over, and over, and over, and over again. Glorifying the Father and praising Him. And it will never, ever, ever get boring.

Now we can't imagine that, can we? Because all of our patterns are men. All of our patterns are human beings; and we look at the best of them and say, sooner or later I'm going to get tired of that sucker. But that's not the way it will be under God's rule; because His perfection in front of us; and perfection that has surrounded us; and perfection that has filled us with living water – so we boil over with this living water of praise – forever. Now I don't have a better description of that. Anybody want to try? Huh? Tough, isn't it? You've seen a good artesian well. It just comes up out of the ground and just keeps coming

[17:08 Recorder; 3:47 p.m. Office – Wednesday] [Proofed]

... and keeps coming; keeps coming. It's even more amazing to me than – than ah, Old Faithful, or some of the geysers in the park; because a geyser flows every once in a while, but an artesian well – it just keeps on coming; clean and cold, and it just flows and flows and flows; and I know some in my home town that were flowing when I was five years old; six years old. I can go back there now and there're still there; still there, and still running just as strong as they ever were. See? That's the closest thing I know of to living water; and that's what Christ promised when He addressed His brethren in the Courtyard of the Temple. Now, he's commanding His brethren. Prisca and Aquila who are asked to _____. In verse 5. Also greet the church that is in their house – the assembly. Verse 6.

6. Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you.

And there she is. Mary the servant.

7. Greet Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners, who are outstanding among the apostles, who also were in Christ before I was.

He gives honor where honor is due, doesn't he? Calling the names out of those people that found Christ before he did.

8. Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord.

9. Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys my beloved.

10. Greet Apelles, the approved in Christ. Greet those who are of the household of Aristobulus.

Doesn't leave any of them out.

11. Greet Herodion, my kinsman. Greet those of the household of Narcissus, who are in the Lord.

All of these people who found their relationship to Christ, and then found their relationship to him through that relationship with Christ. He mentions them all.

12. Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa, workers in the Lord. Greet Persis the beloved, who has worked hard in the Lord.

And notice how many times he calls them beloved, because that's their relationship to him. It's a relationship of the love of God shared. That's what that term beloved means. It means God loves me; God loves you; and we love one another because of our common bond in Christ; and that's true with every one of us. Every one of us. And none of us are left out of that. And that's so important. Okay? We've gone through some fairly easy times, but there are tough times ahead of us I'm afraid. We're staring some really rough things in the face, I believe. Because I believe the clock is ticking, and it's way over toward midnight; and you know how that big clock on the mantle just before it started striking – you can hear those flangs winding up. Okay. Keep your ears open, and just watch for what's coming.

13. Greet Rufus, a choice man in the Lord, also his mother and mine.

14. Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas and the brethren with them.

15. Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them.

So he works down the list. Now, have you ever done a study of the meaning of each of these names? No? Well, that would be interesting. I'll have to carry that over to next week.

Lady. Conrad?

Conrad Bowman. Yes ma'am?

Joyce Wood. Which Mary is this?

Conrad Bowman. Yeah. That's not – that's not ...

Joyce Wood.

Conrad Bowman. That's Mary of Mary and Martha ____.

Joyce Wood.

Conrad Bowman. Yeah.

Joyce Wood.

Conrad Bowman. Well, I assume _____. I don't know. [Laughter].

Joyce Wood.

Betijean Kennerly. You know, I think

Conrad Bowman. Sure it is. Sure it is. Do we have a right to believe that the children of believers are in an honored position with God? We do have a right to believe that. We sure do. Do we have the right to believe that our brothers and our sisters – physical – are in a privileged position with God because – because they're our brothers? In my case, just brothers. Yeah. We do have a right to. In other words, those closest to us and have ties to us through our parents – aunts and uncles and what-have-you – we have a special responsibility to them; and the stronger we are in the Lord, the more they ought to be exposed to the Word – through us. They're a primary responsibility. We don't want to ignore them. We don't want to get so busy taking care of the church house, that you reject your own family. Very, very, very important; and he keeps coming back to that over and over again when he says, you know, remember the household. The household, and so and so, you see. I've got – with all my brothers at home, I've got this _____ that I'm – that I'm very concerned with. He lives over at Ruby's house, and you've seen him come sailing through here about seven years old, you know. He just tickles the daylights out of me when he comes busting through that door and grabs me around the knee. You know. I – I love him. I love that baby like he's my own; and – because he's close enough to touch and he's aware enough to listen; and he – and he hangs on those things. Listen, people, we have responsibility. Phil had his grandkids in here last weekend, and – and I'm sure he burned up more energy than he thought he had while they were here, because that's just the way these little guys are. They're moving all the time. Why? That's our blessed privilege in God to serve them. We don't ever want to

lose that. We don't ever want to forget it. Okay? Whether your brother is sixty years old or six years old; it doesn't matter. Okay?

John Young. Six sixty six.

Conrad Bowman. One more six and you'd be in trouble. [Laughter]. So that's where we are. See. God binds us together. He does it on purpose, and we need to be aware of that and take advantage of that; and not let those opportunities and things slip by. And that's what this chapter is all about. It's taking the life of Paul, which we consider to be the blessed Apostle, who has a – is fulfilling a life of dedication to the Church, and it's pulling that circle of friends right down in front of us; so here in this most emphatic and perfect Book of doctrine, God just opens this Book – this little snapshot of Paul's life – and He opens it up and He shows us Paul the man. Not Paul the Apostle, but Paul the man; and He lays down there principles that each one of us could, should, and must follow in our own life. And _____ anything out there. He just goes through here and lists them all – good, bad, and indifferent. Now,

16. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

_____ churches have trouble with that.

16. ... All the churches of Christ greet you.

17. Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them.

There's a golden sign post right there. Now you get ready to go on a ride, and there's a post there. It's got a mark on it, and if you're not tall enough – if you're not taller than the mark, you can't get on the ride. Well, what we have here, right here.

17. ... keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you have learned, and turn away from them.

The teaching – the teaching which you've learned is the standard for your relationships. You are bound by the things you hold in common. Alright. That was important. What's important is not that you come to church services on the same piece of real estate. It's not that you meet with a group of people that you

really enjoy and have fun with. The thing that bind us together are the things that we hold in common. What do we believe that's true? The Lord's Table is a perfect example of that. When you take that bread, and you take it in your hand and you hold it, Tom usually says, we're going to take that all at the same time. So you pass those things out and get the bread, and then all at one time everybody takes that bread and puts it in our mouth and crunches it up a bit; and we have that representation of the Body of Christ broken for us; the sacrifice that He made, all on our tongues and on our palate at the same time. The type of that is right here. We are saying for one another. I believe that the Body of Christ, sacrificed on the cross, and His blood spilled, was done for my redemption and yours; and you take the bread and you say the same thing. I believe that the Body of Christ, the Blood of Christ, shed on the cross for my redemption and yours. Okay? I believe in that; and you take the bread too. You see what we're doing? That taking of that bread, taking it in to yourself, is just like putting your name on a contract. You're signing off on that; and that says to me, Mary, that you are giving me permission to use your testimony wherever I go with the Gospel of the Reconciliation of mankind to God. When I go to a man's house or a woman's house to explain to her the Ministry of Reconciliation, which is our charter; and I've written that stuff down, and they say, well I don't know. This is the first time I've met you. And I start down through the list. You know Mary. You know John. You know Zoe. Know Norma. Know Kent. You know. They will tell you exactly the same thing, because we hold these things in common. That's what it is. It's a tacit agreement between us, when I take that Lord's Table with you, that you can use my testimony wherever you go, and lay it on the line. He believes the same thing I believe. His life is my life. Her life is my life. Her life is my life, and it binds us together, because we've given approval. Just like any company you've worked for, and given somebody else a contract. You say, here it is. You have a contract to represent me and everything I stand for – the company I stand for, wherever you go. And we've all signed off on that contract by virtue of the fact the _____. We took the cup; we drank it; and that ____ little few drops of grape juice they passed out. The Catholics will tell you it becomes the Blood of Christ. I will tell you it's more than that. It becomes the entire contract between us and the God we serve in those few little drops. Boom. And it's a portable contract, because it says, that everybody I sat down and take that supper with is free to use my name and my testimony to support their ministry of the Gospel of Reconciliation. And it means the same thing to _____. We're bound by the things that we hold in common. Is what you believe important? It absolutely is. Is what we teach important? It's not only important, it's essential. It's everything. The whole game is – is involved in what we teach; and if we don't have that straight, we don't have a Gospel message. It's

one sound here; and one sound here; and one sound here; and that's not the way the Gospel message is. Man is reconciled to God by the work of Christ; and my life should be a testimony to that work of Christ. So that's what it's all about. Now, questions? If not, we'll go a little farther. Yes sir?

Gentleman. With respect to

Conrad Bowman. Uh huh.

Gentleman.

Conrad Bowman. Alright.

Gentleman.

Conrad Bowman. Alright. Let me ask you something; and – and I don't want to lay anything bare here, but I just want to ask you something. You're not – you're not there alone asking for forgiveness of sins, because there're forgiven when you get there. So you're not asking for forgiveness. You're acknowledging the fact that they have been forgiven, and that's true of everybody in the room who calls themselves believers. So if you're there asking for forgiveness, you're – you're – you're cornered by – well, my sins are worse than John's. My sins are certainly not as bad as Ed's. [Laughter]. You see, when you put it on the basis of forgiveness of sins that has not been accomplished, now you have a disparity of relationships. You start measuring relationships and worthiness comes into view. Now, take that off the table, and put the – the cup here; and you look at the cup and the blood that's there has already been spilled. It's done. And the bread that comes around – the body's been broken long ago. It's broken and laid down and – and through the grave and taken on to heaven. So, we're not asking for forgiveness. That's not why we're there. We have been forgiven already, and then He came and got us and brought us to Himself where we could discover the extent of that forgiveness as we depend on His love and His provision. Okay? So, the cup that I take in my hand, and the blood that I drink is – is a blood of remembrance. Not a petition, but of remembrance. Now, the reason I think that gets lost is because so often in our prayer, even our prayers when we come to the Lord's Table, we're busy asking for correction for things we're faced with today. You know, Lord the pain's up a little bit today. I sure could use – I sure could use some relief. I've got a sister that's facing – and you know this is allegorical because I only have brothers. I have a sister that's facing a terrible surgical situation. Please give her comfort. Guess what. The God of all – all comfort

already lives within her. So, what am I asking for? What I want is her enlightenment. You go through the prayers of Paul, and he says over and over again, I pray that they be enlightened in the Word of God in what has been done for them already. Well – well that's what – that's what this cup is. It's a cup of enlightenment and celebration for what God has already done; and that puts us all in the same footing. It doesn't matter whether you held up a bank, and I chopped three people up – put them in grocery bags and dropped them along the side of the road. It's besides the point. Okay? It doesn't matter. There is – when the grape was broken, the whole grape was broken. It's not peeling one grape off the bunch, and peeling another grape off the bunch. No sir. All of sin is one grape. One grape. When you crush the skin, you broke the whole Law. The whole Law is right there. The Law and Sin are just opposite sides of the same thing. So, so, there we are. Our Lord's Table should be an act of remembrance; and when you look down the row, and when you look down the pew, and you see me down there, and I may have my head buried in my hands, and I may have tears coming; or I may have a jaw jutted out and – and be sitting in there all in my rebellion. Okay? We're on the same ground. The ground of forgiveness. Doesn't that open up an avenue for you to serve me, because if you see me all hard-headed and bowed up, then you have the perfect opportunity to put your arm around me and say, Conrad, you're really screwed up today, buddy. You know. Let's – let's find a back corner and talk about what's troubling you. And that's what we do for one another. If I failed to do it for you, I failed you as a brother. If you fail to do it for me, you certainly failed me as a brother; because we're joined together; we're bound together. Okay? Everything – our survival depends on that. That one man and the crew don't – and not do the job and – and survival of the crew is at risk. That's who _____ just as much as it's true of our own army. We cover one of those backsides, and that's the way that goes. Are there any more questions on this or comments? Yes?

Lady. _____ before we go to the Lord's Table. Is it not?

Conrad Bowman. You mean if there's a dissension between you?

Lady. Right.

Conrad Bowman. Sure.

Lady. So ...

Conrad Bowman. Let's say you've got a brother, and he comes up and you haven't forgiven him for it.

Lady.

Conrad Bowman. You should. There would be no reason whatsoever not to do that.

Lady. Are you still forgiven if you haven't done that?

Conrad Bowman. Yeah.

Mary Chambliss. Your brother does not always forgive you, it says. Does it not?

Conrad Bowman. I'm going to hold that one. [Laughter].

[Class chatter].

Conrad Bowman. Address that on at another place. Yeah. We'll come back and get that.

Zoe Tannerhill.

Conrad Bowman. Zoie, maybe your thinking about your brother did something to offend you, and you're waiting for him to come and apologize to you for it. Is that ...

Zoe Tannerhill.

Conrad Bowman. It's all done. It's all done. See, if we're harboring something – let's say something goes down between us. _____ says something snide to us. You know. And _____. Maybe is was, and maybe it wasn't, but we took it that way. Well, the first thing you do is back away from that person, and you wait for them to come to you and apologize. _____ usually is a long time; usually is a long time. That usually – you can trace those pathways up and down the halls of the church for years waiting for that to happen. You know. But that's really not what its talking about; because it's not talking about other people coming to you to make things right that happened between you and them. It's intensely more personal than that. It's you going to them and saying, I'm really sorry we had this breach between us. I want to move it out of the way. I want to apologize to you for anything I've done, or said, or thought, that caused this

breach between us. See. You assume the burden. Isn't that what Galatians 6 says? Bear you one another's load, and bear your own load, but carry the other's overload. Take it on yourself. You see, because the one who addresses that and does that, is considered the bigger of the two. Okay. Now be careful. You don't wan to do it to be big. It'll burn you, right where you stand. But – but – but at the same time, it does say, when there's a problem between you, and there's no movement, and nobody's saying anything, somebody's got to take the leadership and say, we've got this problem; let's get rid of it; and then be the first one to hit the table with forgiveness; and be long suffering. _____. They might not even be aware that they've offended. They may be as totally blind to it as I am to most things. Okay? I just don't see those things. Norma points them out to me if I miss it completely. Do you realize what you said to so and so? [Laughter]. I say, for heavens' sake; and we have this thing in our house called, the obligatory morning after call. You know. Every time we get in a – you know what I'm talking about. You get in a family innocuous family gathering, and you start talking amongst yourselves, and you say something entirely stupid; and it offends somebody; and tomorrow you've got the obligatory morning after call to make. You have to call that person and say, last night I said this; and they will swear up and down they didn't hear it; and they're lying and you know it. [Laughter]. Isn't that the way it goes? But, you have to make the move on that call. You still have to make that call. You do. You have to lay yourself bare – okay – in order to get by that moment, and keep the Body glued together with the Ministry of Reconciliation. You see, because we not only have been reconciled to God, we've been reconciled with one another. _____. But we have been reconciled to one another.

Lady. At the cross. At the cross. We were reconciled to one another at the cross.

Conrad Bowman. Yes ma'am. Yes ma'am. We sure were; and that's to all men, believers and unbelievers alike. It's not just for this group that you appreciate and grow with. It's also with those that are outside. Why? Because that's where you were when the Lord found you. No different. So why should we treat those that we know of that are outside the Body of Christ any different than He treated them? He was reconciled to them too. You see what happens? The heart of the Lord just opens up _____; and your life begins to take on the proportions of His life that the Father really desires to see. You had your hand up a year ago.

Joyce Wood?

Conrad Bowman. That's right. That's right. In other words – in other words, that passage in Corinthians says,

Let every man examine himself.

Okay.

Because you don't want to take the Body and Blood of Christ in a manner unworthy. For this cause, many have died, and many have slept.

Okay? So there's a penalty for taking the Lord's Table. Why is that? That's because – boy it seems so plain, doesn't it? Here's this little plate of crumbled up cracker coming down the row; and – and you take that; and you take it in your hand, and – and you think about your brother who's three rows back; or sister, that's four rows back, and you don't get along with her too well; you don't get along with him too well; so you just avoid them; you shun them; and you withhold yourself from them. Is that worthy? It is not. If I had not – if I had not confessed my attitude toward that brother or sister, I need to put that bread aside; because I'm not ready to give the testimony to the rest of my brothers and sisters that I'm living the life of Christ before them; because I'm not. It may be a very private thing – that offense. You better skip it. You better skip it, because there's a warning that goes with. Same with that – with that little cup, because it represents that Blood of Christ that keeps on cleansing us from all sin, 1st John tells us. There's a testimony to that. You don't want to take that. You want to lay that aside. Best not to give a false testimony than to give a false testimony and have to be face to face with the Lord that you just lied about. You don't want to do that. You just do not want to do that. Okay? Everybody understand that? Okay. This Lord's Table business is serious. It really is serious. It's not just a – it's not just a thing that we do in front of the kids. As a matter of fact, it is everything – anything but that. The Lord's Table is solemn testimony between us, because what we hold in common is the glue that holds us together. See the way that goes? The truth that we believe about that Lord's Table is what takes my heart and Ed's heart and Katherine's heart – it's what takes our hearts and binds them together into the heart of Christ; so that we have His mind in us, driven by His heart within us; pumping out the love that only He can have – the *agape* love, to a lost world – desperately needs this; and we don't want to be found short on that one. We want to come up fully armed and loaded. John, you've been trying to say something.

John Young. I want to know if you're going to comment on Mary's comment.

Mary Chambliss.

John Young. I withdraw it.

Conrad Bowman. _____

Gentleman. Lawyer.

Conrad Bowman. Lawyer.

Mary Chambliss. I'll see you privately.

Conrad Bowman. Yes ma'am. Do you mind if I bring my lawyer with me? [Laughter]. Alright. Now, look at this.

17. I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them.

18. For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.

19. For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil.

20. The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.

I'm going to stop there tonight

The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you. We'll pick up right there ...

Lady. Evelyn's not here to keep ...

Conrad Bowman. ... next week. I'm marking this right here. Evelyn, she'll get the tape. Alright. Any other questions? Comments? Norma?

Norma Bowman. _____ for the last few months. This gentleman who's working here in Houston; but Mike lives in Georgetown. Is that right, Mike?

Mike Donaldson. Yes.

Norma Bowman. And

Conrad Bowman. Okay. Alright. Thank you. Thank you sir. Let's close with prayer.

Father, the beauty of the Word is just- is magnificent. You put it together for us and preserved it, and put it in our hands and gave us the work of good men to unfold it for us; and we love them, Father, even though they've been long, long since gone. We thank You Father for the way You minister to us and fill our life full with the – with the joy of sharing Your Word. Lead us through the rest of this week; give – give Kent a special blessing, as he – as he leaves us, and let him carry the things forward that he's picked up here. We thank You in Christ's name, because He paid for it all. Amen.