

Mature!

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[0 : 00] I would like you, if you would, to turn back with me to the passage we read together in Hebrews chapter 6.

This morning I'm really just going to look at the first section through to verse 12, the following section kind of fits in as well.

Thanks John. A little bit more with the following chapter. So we're going to look at this rather difficult section. It's a really serious passage and there's no getting away from that.

There's times when we can be comforted and encouraged and excited, but there's also times when the Gospel is really serious.

It's always serious, but sometimes it's serious with a smile, sometimes it's serious, just serious. And this is a really serious passage. And it's all about the importance of growing up as Christians and growing up as Christians a certain way by digging down.

[1 : 12] It's all about growing up by digging down with the Gospel into your heart. It's all about the importance of seeing that Jesus Christ must get beyond the surface of what we are and what we do.

That He, it's literally about the heart of the matter. That the Gospel is about the heart of the matter because it deals with the matter of the heart.

And we need to be honest today as we open scripture and we need to allow ourselves to be spoken to by God and allow Him into our hearts and allow our thinking to be such that enables us to recognize that God must get beyond the surface of our lives.

It must be more than the ritual of coming to church. It must be more than the ritual of belonging to a fellowship. It must be about our eyeball to eyeball contact with the living God as it were.

As He sees our hearts and as we progress in our knowledge of Him. At the end of chapter 5, in many ways we probably should have read from the end of chapter 5 because that in a sense is the beginning.

[2 : 31] We have much to say about this, He says, but it's hard to explain to you now but you're slow to learn. In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food.

Anyone who lives on milk still being an infant is not acquainted with the teachings about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

Therefore, let us leave the elementary teachings. So it's talking about going on to maturity, becoming and being and developing and to mature Christianity. So that's the plea therefore very much here is that God's looking at your lives today, He's looking at my life and He's saying you need to look at your lives and see whether you're developing in your Christian lives towards maturity.

It's this great encouragement not to be standing still. We can never be, I'll go on and say a little bit more about that. The standing still is Christians. And He finishes this section verse 12 by saying we do not want you to become lazy but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.

So there's an encouragement at the beginning not to be to go on to maturity and then He finishes by saying well you'll go on to maturity if you spiritually avoid being lazy.

[3 : 47] So in other words being casual or being careless about your faith and careless about your faith so it's kind of sloppy and it doesn't matter how we live and it doesn't matter how we think and it's that great encouragement to be alert and to be aware and to be thinking and to move forward in our Christian life.

So if we come away with anything today I want you to come away with the thought of well am I moving forward in my Christian life? Or maybe even before that one's like am I a Christian and if I am a Christian am I moving forward in my Christian life?

Am I developing by God's grace and in God's power? Am I clutching holding on to Him, recognizing my need of Him or have I become lazy?

Or is it something that's just a periphery of my life and there's so many serious and important questions that I want you to ask yourself. I can't ask you. I'm wrestling with asking myself these questions.

So you must ask yourself these questions. The dangers I guess in this plea and it comes from the background to this book which is a Jewish people who have become Christians who were in danger of slipping back into Judaism because they were afraid that Jesus wasn't everything they thought He was going to be and because they were being persecuted.

[5 : 11] So they were suffering and because they were suffering they were saying well I'm not sure if that's what it was meant to be. Why am I suffering if I'm a Christian? And because they were in danger of not having their roots firmly placed in Jesus they were thinking of well we'll just slip back into Judaism and to that ritual of religion that we enjoyed or at least we said we enjoyed beforehand.

And so the writer to the Hebrews is encouraging. Remember the first, for those of you who haven't been here, we were looking at the first number of chapters which really just highlights how significant Jesus is, how great Jesus is, how worthy He is of worship, how significant and how much, you know, it's just not worth falling away from Him.

And so having done so then He then goes on to warn them about the dangers of slipping back into something that isn't life and that will not help them. So I guess for ourselves the dangers are at least twofold, there may be a lot more and you may have your own senses of weakness that you may be aware of but at least, I can think of at least a couple of dangers that we face.

One is a static faith that you know that idea that you were converted, that you became a Christian and that you accepted truth, you accepted the Bible.

This is what I believe, this is what I believed, this is what I came to understand and it's unchanging. And I think we can be mixed up there and we can mix up the unchanging truth that we believe, the unchanging nature of coming to faith and the reality that we have a faith and a God and a doctrine that never changes and we mix that up with somehow an unchanged life.

[6 : 55] You know we mixed up that thing, we're simply living on the gas fumes of our conversion from many years ago thinking that, it's obvious I've been in the States, the gas fumes, the petrol fumes of that experience and we believe in the unchanging truth and that we became a Christian once for all but yet we've forgotten that there's a fluidity and a flexibility about becoming Christians which means we're always changing.

The truth doesn't change, grace doesn't change, Christ doesn't change but we do change. We change all the time and it's a grace in our lives to transform us, to make us more like Jesus, to grant us holiness so that there's this daily need, absolute daily need for contact with God, for breathing in Christ, for drinking the living water, for depending on the Holy Spirit and for living by grace and we can be transformed in our own.

Christianity is not something we came to and believed in, we've always been the same since. It's a living organic changing reality in our lives and we need God on a daily basis so this idea of a static faith, oh yeah I became a Christian 30 years ago as if it was simply a change of state and that really nothing has happened since then other than an intellectual assent to the need for Jesus and the need for forgiveness.

So that's maybe one danger and another danger might be involved for ourselves in this plea to move on to maturity is seeing our Christianity as simply a lifestyle choice.

That's something you do on a Sunday, you've always done it on a Sunday, you've always come to church, you are Christian in every outward way.

[8 : 46] It affects what you do, you may be even read the Bible, you may be even occasionally prayed but it's a lifestyle choice, it's a ritual that you go through, it's just part of something that you do in your life rather than what you are and if you're honest there is no heart work.

There's nothing that is happening where God through the power of the Spirit and the work and word of Jesus Christ is changing your heart.

You never let Him near there, it's a ritual, it's something you do, not something you are or have become, you're not a new creation in Christ at that level.

Your prayer life is hollow or maybe even non-existent. It's a moralistic moralism that you are living, a lifestyle choice, Christian by kind of conviction in an outward way, a lifestyle way rather than allowing this deep and personal relationship with Jesus to transform you on an ongoing and daily basis.

So the plea here is to move on to maturity and not to become lazy and there's a great and serious warning in this passage and it's in verses 4 to 6.

[10 : 15] It's impossible for those who have once been enlightened to have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, tasted the goodness of the word of God if they fall away to be brought back to repentance because to their loss they are crucified and the Son of God all over again subjecting Him to public disgrace.

It's a really difficult few verses. A lot of ink has been spilled on these verses and a lot of people have asked the question, well, does that mean that someone who has become a Christian can lose their salvation?

Does it mean that they can fall away and never be able to repent again? That seems a solemn and a serious thing and it's serious for each of us as we think about it.

So I'm just going to ask several questions. I've been asked who, how, what and why quickly. But please stay with me here. It's very significant and important.

Who's been spoken of here when it speaks about those who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Spirit, if they tasted the goodness of the word of God, if they fall away.

[11 : 25] Who's been spoken of? Well we can always take it in line with other scripture. We need to. We need to always look at scripture in the light of other scripture and we need to be assured and be convinced that it is not speaking about a genuine believer, someone who has been born again of the Spirit of God.

Jesus Christ in John chapter 10 and verse 28 says, I give them eternal life.

They shall never perish. No one can snatch them out of my hand. Jesus Christ gives eternal life. The gift is His.

If you're a believer in Jesus Christ and a genuine believer in Him, great or small faith, you are always secure in Jesus Christ.

He has died for your sins. He has paid the price. Our salvation, our assurance, our justification, our sanctification is all safe in Jesus Christ.

[12 : 31] It is His great work and He is the one who redeems us. And we recognize with an authentic faith that we are safe in Jesus Christ. Now there are marks of authenticity in our lives that we'll go on to speak about a little bit, but we can be assured that as we trust and hold on to Jesus Christ, He is the one who will never let go of us.

But in remembering that, in remembering the significance and the assurance that Jesus Christ redeems us and that we are safe in Him, that is never for us. Never goes on to become an excuse for us to say, oh well, that's great.

If Jesus saved us and I'm safe in Him because no one can snatch us out of His hand, doesn't matter how we live, doesn't matter what we do, because whatever happens, I'm safe.

That is simply not the response of someone filled with the Spirit of God and who has had His heart changed and who knows grace and if she knows grace in her life, the Holy Spirit will teach us and transform us because we are touched by grace and touched by love and we want to serve and we want to persevere.

But this passage is not speaking about the genuine believer, no one can be lost to his genuinely Christ, nor is it referring to the unconverted, otherwise there's no hope for anyone, is there?

[13 : 50] This is referring to someone, now tell you this is serious, because we're church, this is about church people and it's really about someone who is a Christian in name only.

Someone who gives every evidence of being a Christian, someone who seems to be a Christian, someone who maybe outwardly even lives like a Christian but is not a genuine believer and it's that person that's spoken of here who has fallen away or if they fall away, the condition of falling away.

Who might that be? Well obviously you don't want to name names do you? But there's one name I think that's helpful for us to consider and that is that of Judas Iscariot.

Judas Iscariot is maybe the example in many ways of this passage, Judas who is a disciple of Jesus and distinguishable from all the other disciples of Jesus, probably preached like the other disciples of Jesus, wasn't recognized as an unbeliever even among the twelve who travelled together for three years, had all the benefits, all the blessings, all the fellowship, tasted the heavenly gift, heard of the teachings of Jesus but for whom there was no inner change, no inner repentance, no inner bowing of the knee as it were to the Lord Jesus Christ as His Savior and Lord.

Who ended up bitterly opposing Jesus, ended up absolutely standing against Jesus for money, for position, for His own benefit and who argued against Jesus as it were and as it were who sold his soul to Satan.

[15 : 37] Jesus gave him every opportunity to turn and he certainly wouldn't do that, all the trimmings of being a disciple. And that really is the dangerous position that is spoken of here, the person who is involved in church, who has maybe even made an outward profession of belonging to Christ, who lives like a Christian, who may be indistinguishable from a Christian outwardly but for whom there has been no inner change.

Christ has not moved beyond the surface of their lives. Christ is not personal to them, Christ is not utterly known to them, they don't love Christ, they simply live outwardly as if they belong.

Now if anyone is in that position here or if anyone is in that position anywhere, they are in a dangerous place. If you don't know Christ, whether it's from a position of privilege and baptism and upbringing and relationship with others, then it's a great blessing but it's also a great danger to be in that place where you have all these privileges but don't act on them and you leave Christ out of your heart.

You leave Him out of that place that needs transformation and your content simply with belonging to a Christian church or simply ritualistically doing what you've always done in the past.

That's the kind of person that is spoken of here that's in danger here. How can such a person, and you look at your own heart and I look at my own, how can we be this, how can that type of person be distinguished from the true believer?

[17 : 26] In this life they may never fall away as I'm going to describe here but that person is still in great danger. How can we comfort ourselves or challenge ourselves if we are to assure ourselves that we are not in that place?

And I think we all have a duty to do so. I think verses 7 and 8 are very important here because 7 and 8 talks about the kind of fruit that we will bear. He's landed drinks in the rain often falling on it and it produces a crop useful to those for whom it is found to receive a blessing from God.

But land that produces thorns and thistles is worthless and is danger of being cursed in the end it will be burned. So really for our challenge and for our action and for our self-examination it's really all about the kind of fruit we are bearing.

And whether our lives are responding in grace, responding in a Christ-like way to the various challenges that come our way and the various opportunities that we face.

Remember this book was written as I said earlier to the Christian, Jewish or a Jewish believers who were tempted to go back to Judaism. Why were they tempted to go back to Judaism?

[18 : 41] Because they were suffering, because they were persecuted. So very often it is in suffering and in persecution that the fruit that we are bearing or the core reality of our lives, what our heart is like is reflected.

So it's not so much when things are going great or when things are easy. It's when we're struggling, when we're suffering, when things are difficult for us that we will reveal whether the fruit we have is miraculous, whether it's from God, whether it's grace, grace touched, whether we respond in a way that makes clear that we are children of God, whether we have the characteristics of God, a changed heart.

But it may be in a reaction to lust or to bitterness or to greed or to pride or to opposition or to struggle or to death in a family or to...

How do we respond? If we respond in a way that is bearing the fruit of the Spirit then that is great evidence for us of our regeneration that Christ is indeed in our hearts.

And also that we go to Him every day. They were going to Him when we faced these battles and struggles and sufferings and persecutions and lusts and troubles.

[20 : 02] They were going to say, I can't live this life. If you're content to live your Christian life without Christ's power and strength and prayer, then you're in a place where you do need to ask the question, what kind of faith is it that I have?

But if daily prayer isn't a perfunctory act, it's not something you do, it's not a ritual. We do it because we can't live as Christians without it. It's like breathing.

It's absolutely essential to us and we go. We're praying because we need to pray. I'm praying because I can't live as a Christian tomorrow without prayer.

And if I live as a Christian tomorrow without prayer, it will probably be a rubbish day. And I don't want to make that sort of as if you'll say, well, I didn't pray today, my day will be rubbish in a kind of superstitious way.

But in a needy reality way that we're coming to God, recognizing that daily there is fruit, daily there is a response, daily we'll be asked to be challenged about how to live our lives and we need Christ a daily basis.

[21 : 07] The fruit of our lives is hugely significant. And the battles that we face, how we respond to them will reveal what's in our heart, reveals what's deep down.

So thoroughly, what does it mean to fall away here? Because a lot of people have been troubled by these words. What does it mean? Does it mean if a Christian falls away?

Does it mean if they backslide they can never come back? It seems to be suggested here. Well, we need to recognize again what the wider scripture teaches.

This does not refer to both in the tense of the Greek and also just in the general emphasis of the passage. It simply doesn't mean the Christian that gives into a particular sin.

And however brutal that sin is, David, a man after God's own heart, he slept with someone else's wife and then to cover up, he murdered the husband.

[22 : 05] They're brutal sins. He was drifted from the Lord at that point, but he was, he repented and came back. It was heinous. Peter denied his Savior.

He swore in blasphemy that he didn't know Jesus. He spent three years with Jesus, but he swore in blasphemy that he didn't even know him. And yet he repented and turned back. It's not about giving into a particular sin.

It's not saying that I've sinned such a terrible sin that I can never repent that if I've fallen away in such a bad way, I can never come back. It's not saying that. Not even talking about prolonged backsliding.

I know from experience of many people who have spent a long time in the desert spiritually, who have come back to the Lord after many years of repented and turned back to them.

The story of Israel, the story of the prodigal son, many things remind us that it's not even about prolonged, how long you stay away from Lord, fallen back from Lord, is it where?

[23 : 00] It's rather here speaking of something much more serious. It's, it's, can I go back to the example of Judas? It's the whole idea of complete apostasy, of publicly disgracing and crucifying the Son of God all over again and making him a disgrace.

It's the whole idea of turning away from this outward potential lifestyle that seemed Christian and turning away from absolutely to become as it were an apologist for atheism, for making it your goal to then almost stand against what you previously said you believed in.

It's that position where you, you're ridicule Christ and you say, oh I use, you know in my stupid days I used to believe in that stuff but it doesn't work. And I want to spend the rest of my days exposing the folly and the ignorance and the ridiculousness of being a Christian.

That's the kind of falling away that's spoken of here. Why is there no possibility for that person to repent?

It's impossible for them to be brought back because they have no desire.

[24 : 20] They will never ask for repentance. They will never seek repentance. Their hearts have turned completely. And you know people have looked at this passage and talked about the unforgivable sin and many people, maybe not so much now but in a day when people knew more about the Bible and grew up around the Bible more maybe and they would look at a passage like this and they would say, well I think I've committed the unforgivable sin.

I don't think I could ever come back. And it can absolutely tear people apart to think that somehow they can't ever be accepted as if they've lived a life that is too wanting or too wild to come back.

But that softness, that concern, that fear, that worry of even having committed that sin is a sure sign that they're miles from it because the person who's described here as someone who never seeks that, who never looks for that, is unconcerned about that, who's ridiculed everything to do with Christ and the Gospel.

Timothy speaks about some guys in the church that he's writing to in 1 Timothy who have abandoned the faith to follow demons, who have turned aside to myths, who have shipwrecked their faith.

And the very thing that comes is the kind of Judas person. And I think that condition is rare. I don't think it happens very often but the warning is there because it's very real.

[25 : 49] And the importance is that we act on what warning is given here because the writer to Hebrews finishes with a great encouragement and that's what I want to finish with because he includes himself, like any good leader or teacher, he includes himself both in the challenge to move forward but also in the encouragement that he gives.

He says, let us leave the elementary teachings. We've all got to move forward together. And then he says in verse 9, even though we speak like this, dear friends, we are confident of better things, in your case things, that accompany salvation, that there's fruit and there's love in your lives.

And that's very significant. He says basically, I'm giving this warning, God is giving me this warning, he says, but I don't think, I don't feel there's anyone in that category in the Hebrew church.

But he does want them to look at their hearts. He does want to challenge them about the danger of falling away. He really wants to kind of rattle their cage and say, don't go back to Judaism, there's nothing there.

It's an empty religion. He says Christ is your all in all. Stick with him. Not only stick with him, but grow in him and love him and serve him and know that it all comes from him.

[27 : 10] That's what he's wanting to do here. He's wanting us to also remind ourselves, to challenge ourselves, to look at ourselves and to kind of give ourselves a bit of a shake and to point us back to Jesus Christ, to see the evidence of genuine faith and of a changed heart.

Not in ritualism, not going to church, not at the outward things, but the inner change of heart. What I know Derek Lamont to be by nature in all the grubbiness and pride and selfishness and ignorance of that heart, to see and look at that heart and say, yes, I can see the Spirit is changing.

That I am not as selfish, I'm not as lustful, I'm not as proud because Christ is changing. Christ is working. Christ is moving. That's what we are to look for in our lives as we examine whether we are of the faith, not to pat ourselves in the back, but to give thanks to God that He is at work in our lives.

And that is hugely significant for us. As a great old writer, JC Reil who speaks about this passage and speaking about the importance of the work, you know, verse 10, he says, God is not unjust.

He will not forget your work and the love you've shown to him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. This was an evidence that they were genuinely Christ, that they worked and that they served and that they helped one another and they loved Christ.

[28 : 37] And JC Reil says, he that supposes that works are of no importance because they cannot justify us before God, you know. It's not our works that make us right before God. It's grace and salvation.

But he goes on and says, works of no importance because they cannot justify us is a very ignorant Christian, unless he opens his eyes, he will find to his cost that if he comes to the bar of God without some evidence of grace, he had better never to have been born.

You see, grace is God's gift to us. But there's evidence of grace changing our hearts. Isn't that the key?

It's changing our hearts. And that therefore will change who we live. Are we progressing? This is a call to maturity.

It's a call to service and work and become acquainted with solid teaching about righteousness. That's what he's saying in these great words that we have to learn more and grow more and develop more.

[29 : 48] That last great verse of chapter 5, you know, we become mature because we've trained ourselves to distinguish between good and evil.

You're kidding yourself. And I'm kidding myself if we think there's no evil in our hearts that needs to be dealt with and cleansed and washed away and forgiven.

And that's an ongoing, there's an ongoing, there's a once for all repentance when we turn to Christ. Then there's a daily repentance, daily turning, daily washing, daily allowing His light to shine in the dark places.

And as we mature, He will shine in places in our hearts that we never thought there was anything. And He will develop and mature as we go forward. Are we progressing? Are we trained in righteousness?

We can't stay as spiritual babies. We can't stay, we can't allow ourselves to become lazy. We can't be in a rut.

[30 : 45] We'll be saying, oh, I became a Christian 30 years ago, that's fine, that's what I'm relying on. There's this ongoing change, an absolute necessity of praying and of depending on the spirit of God and of growing.

And the encouragement here, therefore, for each of us is to persevere. We want each of you, verse 11, to show the same diligence to the very end. Now, to the very end, for the older people, the ends may be more in sight, it might not be.

If the young people maybe sometimes you struggle with that concept, persevere into the very end, you feel so young. It's so long, so far away, it's such a struggle, such a battle.

Just take a day, just take a day, do it day at a time. Leave the rest to God. But He has empowered us. He gives us everything we need. There's nothing that we don't have that will enable us to grow and to develop and to inherit what has been given to us.

So I want you to become more aware of that significance, of that importance. And I just want to finish with a plea, we've gone over my time.

[32 : 02] I want you to recognise again and be refreshed and I'll be refreshed again by the importance of prayer. Absolutely crucial, both individually and as a church.

In Acts chapter 2, which is kind of the beginning of the New Testament church, you get that great picture of the early church which I don't think has ever been surpassed.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. These are great marks of the Christian church.

And that is what we want to, I want to encourage you about praying. And it's a mark of a spiritual church, is praying.

Not just praying alone, not just praying, so I pray, but we pray. We pray together. We pray because we're the body of Christ. We pray because we have a commander in chief.

[33 : 04] And we pray because we need one another. It's not simply enough to battle on in our Christian lives alone. We need one another.

And the mark of a spiritual church is it's a praying church. Now it's great to see relatively a lot of people here.

There's no one up there, there's no one up there whatsoever. Not that many up there, there's quite a few. But half full, or a full full church, at one level is irrelevant.

The mark of a spiritual church is a church if we will pray together. If we will commit the time to pray for one hour together. How many hours of a TV documentary or film series will you watch this week?

How many hours will we spend on Facebook? How many hours will we spend at work? How many hours will we do other things that can you give one hour on a Wednesday?

[34 : 12] When we gather here this Wednesday to pray, the elders will not be there. Because they will be taught and learning about pastoral care.

But they will be praying. And will you be in their absence coming to pray? Now it's typical. I go away to America and 19 people become members of the church.

I'm going to go away more often. It's always a good idea. And that was a great encouragement. And it was wonderful last week to have these 19 new members. And it's a great blessing.

And I don't decry what a wonderful encouragement that was to see that happen. And I know many of them have been Christians for many years and that's a great thing.

But what I want to say is, a year from now, how many people are we going to see? And what about if next year there were 19 more?

[35 : 08] But every single one of them were new believers. Conversions to Christ. Baptised people. Now can I just ask you, if a year from now that some of your friends, who you're praying for, who you think they will never come at Christ, will be up here as believers?

19 is really a drop in the ocean. 500,000 people in the city. Hardly any of them know Jesus Christ. We can't be content with 19.

We simply are not into the numbers game. But are you praying for the people that will one day stand up here and confess Jesus Christ as Lord?

Your friends, your neighbours, your colleagues, the people you have contact with, I never see. The people that you love that are close to you.

You praying for them, you pleading for them, you weeping for them. Because if we believe this, then that is significant. It's simply not enough to go through the motions.

[36 : 20] It's simply not enough to be content with mediocrity. Because Christ is Lord. And because if we believe the Gospel, those whom we love, who we are passionate about, who don't know Jesus, are heading for a lost eternity.

And if we don't believe that, then we may as well close the doors. But let us be people, not only who are concerned for those outside who don't know Christ, but also for those inside who don't know Christ.

And I appeal to you and challenge you if you are someone who has made Christianity part of your life, part of your ritual, but you have over many years kept Him out of your heart.

You have not committed to Him as Lord and God. You have not bowed the knee to Him and confessed Him publicly as your Saviour. To recognise the danger of your position and to do something about it today.

To come to Him. You don't need to wait. Nothing sparkling is going to happen. There is no going to be any lightning from Heaven. He has done it all. He is waiting for you to accept Him as Lord and Saviour.

[37 : 39] The ritual of church, the belonging to church, the tasting of church, and a fellowship on the Holy Spirit is simply not enough as you will stand before Him on that last great day.

You need the confidence of knowing that He has taken you and changed your heart. And you need the confidence of knowing your heart has been changed bit by bit by His grace and Holy Spirit as you pray and rely on Him.

May that be our hope and our concern to you. Let's bow our heads and pray. Father, we ask and pray that we would move beyond simply being content with what we have.

We do pray that you will bless your word to us. There would be a living, powerful word. We pray that you would bless our fellowship.

That we would be prayerful for one another. Concerned that we would believe in the power of prayer. That we believe in the centrality of prayer. That we are a miraculous spiritual organisation.

[38 : 51] We are not simply a society of people who mentally are sent to certain truths. We are here because we have been born. I knew that we need God.

We can't live without Him. That we can't breathe without Him. That we can't love Him and serve Him. We can't deal with bitterness and anger and unbelief, doubt and fear and inability.

We can't deal with that on our own. We can't have vision. We can't love one another as we ought and we can't serve and we can't go the extra mile. We can't do all that we are asked to do to be like Jesus unless we have the power of God and the Holy Spirit Transforming us.

We ask Holy Spirit to come among us so that we have a vision for what we can see up the front here. Our friends and those that we love.

Who in many ways are better than as humanly speaking. Nicer, more moral, more kind, polite.

[39 : 56] But who don't know Jesus and who are eternally damned and lost without Him. We pray for them. We pray that you would open their eyes, that you would forgive their sins. But you would forgive our sins for not praying for them and for not believing and for not catching this great privilege that we have of seeing this promise fulfilled of many people in this city that are yours.

So Lord bless us and keep us and unite us, protect us from the evil one and from sin, from division, from gossip, from discontentment, from standing on the edges of commitment.

And may we fall at your knees and submission and belief today for Jesus sake. Amen.